

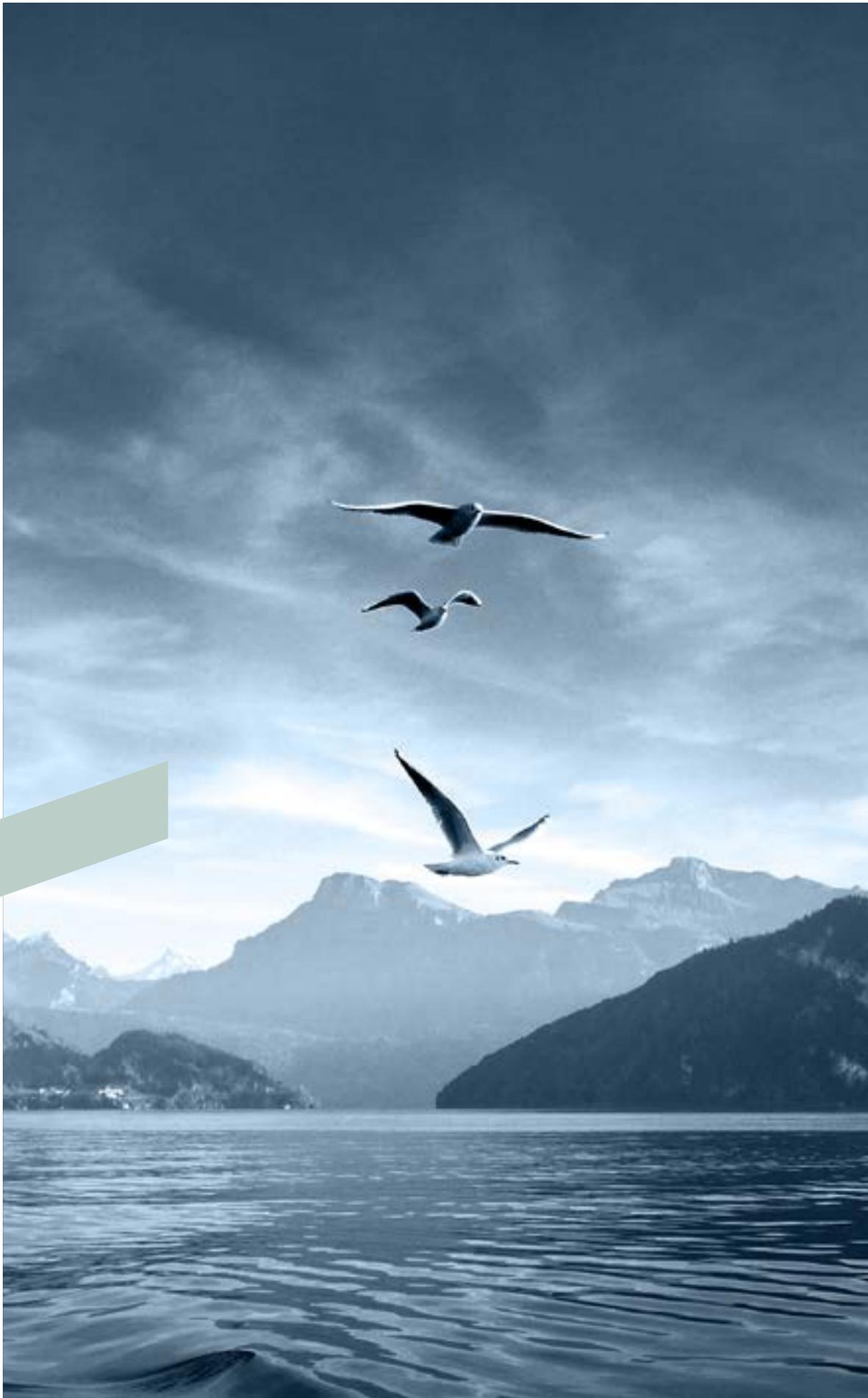
# Journal of the Comenius Association

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Education  
in the 21st  
century

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At the time of writing, the member institutes of the Comenius Association, but beyond them, their respective countries and indeed the whole world, are immersed in an unprecedented health crisis with enormous repercussions at all levels: human, social, environmental, political and economic.

This earthquake, which bears the name Covid 19, has indeed had major impacts, particularly also on the world of Education and, among others, on the training of teachers and social educators.

Indeed, since March 2020, the world has turned differently and our Universities and Schools of Higher education Schools have been forced to adapt and to increase their creativity and efficiency so that their training missions can be continued but at a distance.

From then on, all activities, meetings, international weeks, mobility projects, everything has either been suspended, reorganised online or postponed.

In this context, it was fascinating to note the professionalism of the academic and administrative staff, trainers and international coordinators in adapting, adjusting, supporting, valuing, recognising and supporting students and colleagues involved in international projects.

And yet it has been long and difficult, physically and morally exhausting in more ways than one, but so far we have managed to do it, as far as we can and it is not yet over.

For this academic year 2020/21, we were hoping for a gradual resumption and reorganisation of some of our activities. However, as some had announced, a second health wave forced us to be cautious and to pursue drastic prevention. So, no face-to-face autumn meeting but via an online platform, reduced mobility and in any case impacted by the context.

However, despite this very worrying context, it seems to us essential and a priority to keep our European network alive and active more than ever.

The partnership links between the members of the Comenius Association are indeed particularly valuable and promising in this context and will undoubtedly enable us to keep our distance in the face of the current situation.

This context also forces us to develop our creativity to generate and pursue our numerous international projects both @home and with our partners.

More than ever, internationalisation makes sense in the face of current challenges.

Indeed, we have a responsibility as citizens but also as trainers of teachers and social educators to ensure that our students - and the young people they will accompany themselves - evolve in a fairer and more sustainable society.

So we want to continue to offer quality training, open to the world, so that young people in turn can be committed and responsible citizens.

This new edition of the journal is itself a sign of our desire to continue the actions of our European network. In the following pages, readers will discover articles on the central theme of Education in the 21st century, where the stakes are immense, as well as various articles and testimonials of experiences related to the Comenius Association's current activities.

The future is full of challenges that we will take up even better together in a spirit of partnership and international solidarity.

The Comenius Association is determined to do so.

Geneviève Laloy  
President of the Comenius Association

A l'heure où nous écrivons ces lignes, les instituts membres de l'Association Comenius, mais au-delà d'eux, leurs pays respectifs et à vrai dire, le monde entier, sont plongés dans une crise sanitaire sans précédent dont les répercussions sont énormes à tous les niveaux : humain, social, environnemental, politique et économique.

Ce séisme qui porte le nom de Covid 19, a en effet des impacts majeurs et notamment aussi sur le monde de l'Éducation et entre autres, la formation des enseignants et des éducateurs sociaux.

En effet, depuis mars 2020, le monde a tourné autrement et nos Universités et Hautes écoles ont été forcées de s'adapter et de doubler de créativité et d'efficacité pour que leurs missions de formations soient poursuivies mais à distance.

Dès lors, toutes les activités, rencontres, semaines internationales, projets de mobilités, tout a été soit suspendu, soit réorganisé en ligne soit reporté.

Dans ce contexte il a été fascinant de constater le professionnalisme du personnel académique et administratif, des formateurs, des coordinateurs internationaux pour adapter, ajuster, soutenir, valoriser, reconnaître, épauler les étudiants et les collègues engagés dans des projets internationaux.

Et pourtant cela a été long et difficile, physiquement et moralement épuisant à plus d'un titre mais nous y sommes arrivés jusqu'à présent, tant que faire se peut et ce n'est pas encore terminé.

Pour l'année académique 2020/21, nous espérons une reprise progressive et la réorganisation de certaines de nos activités. Or, comme certains l'avaient annoncé, une deuxième vague sanitaire nous a contraint à la prudence et la poursuite d'une prévention drastique. Aussi, pas de rencontre d'automne en présentiel mais bien via une plateforme en ligne, des mobilités réduites et en tout cas impactées par le contexte.

Cependant, malgré ce contexte très préoccupant, il nous semble essentiel et prioritaire de maintenir plus que jamais notre réseau européen vivant et actif.

Les liens de partenariat entre les membres de l'Association Comenius sont en effet particulièrement précieux et porteurs dans ce contexte et nous permettront sans aucun doute de tenir la distance face à la situation actuelle.

Ce contexte nous force également à développer notre créativité pour générer et poursuivre nos nombreux projets internationaux que ce soit @ home et chez nos partenaires.

Plus que jamais, l'internationalisation a son sens face aux enjeux actuels.

Nous avons en effet une responsabilité en tant que citoyens mais aussi formateurs d'enseignants et d'éducateurs sociaux pour que nos étudiants - et les jeunes qu'ils vont accompagner eux-mêmes - évoluent dans une société plus juste et plus durable.

Ainsi nous voulons continuer à offrir des formations de qualité, ouvertes sur le monde, pour que les jeunes puissent à leur tour être des citoyens engagés et responsables.

Cette nouvelle édition du journal est elle-même un signe de notre volonté de poursuivre les actions de notre réseau européen. Dans les pages qui suivent les lecteurs pourront y découvrir des articles autour du thème central de l'Éducation au 21<sup>e</sup> siècle dont les enjeux sont immenses mais également divers articles et témoignages d'expériences liés à l'actualité de l'Association Comenius.

L'avenir s'annonce plein de défis que nous relèverons encore mieux tous ensemble dans un esprit de partenariat et de solidarité internationale.

L'Association Comenius est bien déterminée à agir en ce sens.

Geneviève Laloy  
Présidente de l'Association Comenius



# Perspectives - “Education in the 21st century”



#### ABSTRACT

Project-based learning is one of the most effective ways to help students acquire the 4 key competencies of 21st century education: creativity, critical thinking, effective communication and collaboration. The yearly projects having been run by the Tale Project groups of English and Hungarian students at the University of Winchester and AVCC since 2015, are based on a four Cs foundation. In the 2019/20 academic year the project centered around topics which both emphatically represented the values of creativity, critical thinking in their theme (eg: working on a silent book entitled HOME during the quarantine), and inspired us to apply project activities demanding alternative patterns of thinking and problem-solving (online project work in the spring semester), and new ways of cooperation in the challenging circumstances due to the coronavirus pandemic.

#### RÉSUMÉ

L'apprentissage par projet est l'un des moyens les plus efficaces d'aider les étudiants à acquérir les quatre compétences clés de l'éducation du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle : la créativité, la pensée critique, la communication efficace et la collaboration. Les projets annuels, qui sont menés depuis 2015 par les groupes d'étudiants anglais et hongrois du projet Tale à l'université de Winchester et à l'AVCC, sont basés sur une base de quatre C. Au cours de l'année universitaire 2019/20, le projet s'est concentré sur des sujets qui, à la fois, représentaient avec force les valeurs de la créativité et de la pensée critique dans leur thème (par exemple : le travail sur un livre muet intitulé HOME pendant la quarantaine), et nous ont inspiré pour appliquer des activités de projet exigeant des modèles alternatifs de pensée et de résolution de problèmes (travail de projet en ligne au semestre de printemps), et de nouveaux modes de coopération dans les circonstances difficiles dues à la pandémie de coronavirus.



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# PANDEMIC TALE PROJECT: DEVELOPING THE 4 C'S THROUGH TALES, DRAMA, AND PICTURE BOOKS

## Project work in the 2019/20 academic year until the Covid 19 lockdown

The initiation phase was marked by establishing the foundation for the project topic, which was dedicated to Developing the 4 Cs through folk and fairy tales using objects and images. Students were encouraged to identify the topic to be investigated within this framework bearing in mind that the main questions are: What, Why and For whom?

In the autumn term the pedagogical work of the Hungarian students centred around the Hungarian folktale entitled *The Mayor's Clever Daughter*. Students presented it first to Hungarian primary-school pupils (pre-intermediate level of English) and then to English primary-school pupils (native speakers) in the project-week in Winchester.

At the beginning of the enquiry phase students were encouraged to participate in discussions promoting in-depth understanding of the complexity of the issue of "being a clever girl/woman" today and how it was represented in the society in the past. During the discussions students were supposed to express their views and to communicate them persuasively while respecting the opinion of the others.



Students investigated the text to search for passages which can inspire children's creativity/critical thinking and elements in the tale which can be irrelevant, incomprehensible or inconceivable for children. Students shared their personal impressions, drew on their pedagogical experience concerning this issue and they came to the agreement that the text contains some erotic scenes which are not suitable for young children, some of the riddles in the tale are out of date and are not supposed to engage children, the narrative part is too overwhelming, and there are few dialogues which could make the performance dynamic.

Having outlined the problems concerning the text, and preparing a script based on dialogues, students set out to do research on the formal possibilities of adaptation in the context of puppetry, animation and theatrical performances. After getting the guidelines, students worked cooperatively and defined the research processes themselves. They investigated the possibilities offered by object animation (Ellinger, 2017) – which explores the dramatic power of everyday objects – familiarised themselves with rules of table-top puppetry, and how to apply it creatively.

They followed the processes of collecting and selecting objects on the basis of the analysis of their symbolic meaning. Finally, students decided to place the story in a new context using kitchen utensils and everyday objects and substituted child-friendly riddles.

During the project-week in Winchester, Hungarian and English students collaboratively prepared to carry out the project activity with English primary-school children. The English students learned new methods of engaging children with a fairytale, through communicating the story in different ways and developing their responses using creative activities.

During the autumn term English students were also preparing for the project-activity at AVCC in Vác. For most of the year they communicated and collaborated with face-to-face meetings and a Whatsapp group. They planned to enable children to fulfil creative purposes of: using imagination; pursuing purposes; being original and judging value (NACCCE, 1999) and focusing children on generating ideas; moving-on other people's ideas; working towards a goal and evaluating, adapting and improving their work. (Desailly, 2012)

The inspiration for English students was an interactive picture book *'Inside the Villains'* by Clotilde Perrin (2018). The book explores the characteristics and personalities of villains most commonly found in

fairytale including the wolf, the giant and the witch. The use of flaps helps children to investigate and explore the deeper levels of the characters. Critical thinking is emphasised because children are invited to think in deeper ways about the characters and different portrayals of them and how the author invites readers to interpret and respond to them. Rich illustrations, symbols and text means that the information can be accessed and discussed by everyone.

The basis of the classroom activity was to analyse and adapt traditional fairytale characters to support a 3D interactive story that children authored. Children analysed specific character features through the use of cue cards and then created a mindmap exploring similarities and differences supported by a range of pictures of wolves, witches, and giants by various illustrators. Children were to make their own versions of the overlaid characters inspired by Art Promoter using card and cellophane. Drawing on the cellophane enables the children to give their characters layers of meaning. They could discuss, design and defend their choices e.g. how clothing or facial expressions reflect interior or hidden characteristics.

Through this task, the children could work collaboratively, creatively and critically. Children were to use their characters to create their own version of an interactive '3D' story on the classroom floor with large cardboard fairytale motif buildings e.g. castle, hollow tree, cottage. The children were to work creatively as a group, compose their own version of the fairytale and make key decisions about narrative paths the characters will take.



### Project work during the Covid-19 lockdown

Pandemic quarantine prevented English students from meeting the Hungarian students in Vác, and the project-week at AVCC was cancelled. We had to use online platforms and new learning strategies, in which personal experience became even more important. The situation inspired us to find a new topic, demanding even more creative alternative patterns of thinking and problem-solving, and new ways of communicating so we could collaborate effectively in the challenging circumstances.

Finally, we decided to investigate OTTHON (meaning home), a silent book by a Hungarian artist, Kinga Rofusz (2018). There were several reasons for choosing this book during the lockdown. Firstly, as a silent book without text at all, it supported critical thinking and creativity by inspiring students to create their own stories entirely through illustrations. In this way we expected to collect as many stories as there are project participants. Secondly the title, the theme home was thought to evoke new associations, new symbolic meanings concerning the concept home during the quarantine period, to inspire new ways of interpreting feelings, emotions relating to the condition of staying at home. The theme provoked questions like „What does home mean during this period? How does this connect to the book and how does it inspire thoughts on this concept of home?”

Rich themes to critically discuss included change, home and moving. The range of emotions invited questions about what texts do to readers, the authors' point of view and how the text positions the reader. (Roche, 2015). Discussions were rich between students about what the pictures mean, how and why the author constructed them, focusing on perspective, tone, positioning, size and colour (Moebius, 1990).

As the project went online we had to determine which platform is the right fit for our needs. Finally we used several ones: Students joined a class on Google classroom, and also collaborated with each other using Zoom and Skype for their online meetings. Sharing information, using the newly acquired knowledge, and making decisions, students finally created their own online products. They produced diafilms/filmstrips based on their own stories, stop motion video scenes reflecting their emotions evoked by the theme, videos of students performing the stories using different kinds of storytelling and drama techniques in their rooms or in the garden incorporating nature in the product. Students critically read the story together and developed ideas through dialogue. They interpreted the book through the parents' perspective and collaboratively authored and created a digital storystring, using a variety of online platforms to write, design, film and edit story sections. They were able to create an innovative shared outcome that drew from the original book itself using the 4C's.



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# COMBINATORICS AND PROBABILITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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In 2003, Peter M Evans wrote the following sentences in connection to The Association of Teachers of Mathematics' TV programme (Primary Maths – How Do They Do It in Hungary?<sup>1</sup>) that the Hungarian maths teachers are so successful because:

*...their teaching is rooted in a joy of a subject that is untainted by any sense of utility or concern with application. There is no curricular ambiguity in that country, only a curriculum rooted in the uniqueness that is mathematics and mathematical problem solving'.<sup>2</sup>*

The Hungarian primary Math-teaching involves building up mathematical thinking from an early age by manipulating objects, using visual models, and developing mental maths techniques. These methods are essential in combinatorics and probability as well. Combinatorics and probability have an essential role in the Hungarian National Curriculum because they help develop pupils' mathematical thinking, but it is also used in other subjects.

To understand the purpose of combinatorics, let's start with a funny nursery rhyme dating back to the 18th century. Of course we can illustrate it with pictures, or the children can draw and play the story:

*As I was going to St. Ives,  
I met a man with seven wives,  
Each wife had seven sacks,  
Each sack had seven cats,  
Each cat had seven kits.  
Kits, cats, sacks and wives,  
How many were going to St. Ives?'<sup>3</sup>*

Obviously only the narrator was going to St. Ives, the others were going in the opposite direction. But, how many were going from St. Ives? This question leads us to the concept of combinatorics which means the mathematical theory of counting the combinations of objects belonging to a finite set. The question to be answered is: 'How many possibilities are there?'

Parents - and some teachers too - sometimes ask: Why do primary school children have to deal with combinatorics so early in elementary school? Here are only some reasons why it is

necessary: we need to count the number of possibilities; develops the numeracy skills of children; can get the same result using different ways, solution methods; develops the logical thinking of children. Generally two main problems occur in finding of possibilities: 1, pupils do not find each option and it is difficult to notice this by themselves; 2, pupils write down twice (or more times) the same case.

How can we use these problems? We can use a specific system, or alphabetical or other order. Systematization is a very useful way to avoid errors. There are a lot of opportunities for differentiation, for example flag-colouring problems. Easy: You have got a red and a yellow pencil. Using both pencils, colour the flags in all possible ways with such that no colour is repeated! More difficult: You have got a red, a green and a yellow pencil. Using all pencils, colour the tricolour flags in all possible ways with such that no colour is repeated! Most difficult: The text is the same as above, but there are more places, than needed.

Of course teachers have to know the exact combinatorics formulas for calculating and checking the solutions, but they MUSTN'T teach those. It is advisable to use many-many pictures, drawings, tables, games, animations, examples from real life. We can use combinatorial knowledge in other fields of mathematics (logic, number of geometrical objects, number of dividers), and of course in other subjects (family-trees of kings, melody-making).

Why do we need to teach probability? Because randomness rules our world. It is present in gambling, insurance, meteorology, medical science, chemistry, space-research, and so on. Probability describes the world in which we live. Many everyday skills depend on knowing and understanding probability. The inclusion of activities dealing

with experimental probability in elementary school develops children's problem-solving skills and provides variety and challenges for children in a mathematics program. Experimental probability is one of the basic skill areas. It should occupy a more prominent place in the school curriculum. What does probability deal with? Probability examines events which occur many-many times, randomly. Both parts of this definition are important. It makes no sense to ask: What is the probability of getting married within two months? (This event does not occur many times – hopefully – in one's lifetime). What is the probability that the Sun will rise tomorrow? (This event is not a random event.) Answering these above mentioned questions does not belong to the topic of probability. The only teaching method that we can use in teaching probability is to conduct experiments, do trials. The following well-known example by Tamás Varga can be an interesting introduction of the problem for pupils.<sup>4</sup> A class of school children is divided into two

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groups. In one of them each child is given a coin which he throws two hundred times, recording the resulting head and tail sequence on a piece of paper. In the other section the children do not receive coins but are told instead that they should try to write down a 'random' head and tail sequence of length of 200. Collecting all the slips of paper, he then tries to subdivide them into their original groups. Most of the time he succeeds quite well. His secret is that he has observed the following: in a randomly produced sequence of length of two hundred, there are, say, head-runs of length of seven. On the other hand, he has also observed that most of those children who had to write down an imaginary random sequence are usually afraid of writing down runs longer than four. Hence, in order to find the slips coming from the coin tossing group, he simply selects the ones which contain runs longer than five. This trial is very spectacular and interesting for children, but very time-consuming. We cannot teach probability without manual experiments. There are a lot of computer programs, games which save time and show some trials what we cannot do in reality. Pupils will be able to make a distinction between possible and impossible events, make a distinction between random and sure events. Choose 2 balls from 7 different balls, where choosing 2 same coloured balls at the same time, is impossible, while if we choose them one after the other,

#### ABSTRACT

Hungarian Math-teaching is prestigious, deservedly renowned nowadays too. The Hungarian primary Math-teaching involves building up mathematical thinking from an early age by manipulating objects, using visual models, and developing mental maths techniques. These methods are essential in combinatorics and probability as well.

The aim of this paper is to present why combinatorics and probability are important to be introduced in early childhood, emphasizing why combinatorial thinking is essential in the 21st century. It is also presented how teachers can differentiate pupils and help develop their mathematical thinking.

Combinatorics and probability have an essential role in the Hungarian National Curriculum because they help develop pupils' mathematical thinking, but it is also used in other subjects.

We can see that teaching probability is not easy for mathematics teachers because in arithmetic or geometry an operation can be repeated, for example we can add two numbers and get a result that is the same, no matter how many times we repeat the operation, but probability experiments cannot be repeated.

#### RÉSUMÉ

L'enseignement des mathématiques en Hongrie est prestigieux, il est aussi reconnu à juste titre aujourd'hui. L'enseignement primaire des mathématiques en Hongrie consiste à développer la pensée mathématique dès le plus jeune âge en manipulant des objets, en utilisant des modèles visuels et en développant des techniques de calcul mental. Ces méthodes sont également essentielles en combinatoire et en probabilité.

L'objectif de cet article est de présenter les raisons pour lesquelles il est important d'introduire la combinatoire et les probabilités dès la petite enfance, en soulignant pourquoi la pensée combinatoire est essentielle au 21e siècle. Il est également présenté comment les enseignants peuvent différencier les élèves et les aider à développer leur pensée mathématique.

La combinatoire et les probabilités jouent un rôle essentiel dans le programme national hongrois car elles aident à développer la pensée mathématique des élèves, mais elles sont également utilisées dans d'autres matières.

Nous pouvons voir que l'enseignement des probabilités n'est pas facile pour les professeurs de mathématiques car en arithmétique ou en géométrie, une opération peut être répétée. Par exemple, nous pouvons additionner deux nombres et obtenir un résultat identique, quel que soit le nombre de fois où nous répétons l'opération, mais les expériences de probabilité ne peuvent pas être répétées.

replacing the first one, then our event mentioned is possible. Pupils will be able to make a distinction between relative frequency and probability of an event. Children can see that if an event does not occur during an experiment, that does not mean that the event is impossible. (So far I have not won the lottery, or thrown a six with one single regular die. So is it impossible? Maybe not!), if they repeat the experiment more times then the fluctuation of the relative frequency will be smaller.

We can see that teaching probability is not easy for mathematics teachers. In arithmetic or geometry an operation can be repeated, for example we can add two numbers and get a result that is the same, no matter how many times we repeat the operation.

When carrying out a random experiment we obtain different results and the results can not be repeated. Simulation has a very important function in stabilising intuition and in materialising probabilistic problems.

#### Footnotes

1 <https://www.stem.org.uk/resources/elibrary/resource/30522/how-do-they-do-it-hungary>

2 <https://www.atm.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Consultations/ATM-Subject-Specialism-2003-10-00.pdf>

3 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=chi.79376108&view=1up&seq=144>, The Weekly Magazine, or Edinburgh Amusement. Edinburgh: Ruddiman. xlv: 132. 1779-08-04.

4 [https://www.renyi.hu/~p\\_erdos/1975-47.pdf](https://www.renyi.hu/~p_erdos/1975-47.pdf)

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# AVOIR OU NE PAS AVOIR... DES ROBOTS EN ÉDUCATION... TELLE EST LA QUESTION!

### ABSTRACT

While robots are everywhere in society, whether in shops, airports, and in some cases, directly in private homes, there is a question that remains central: should we integrate this type of tool in education and implement them into classrooms?

This article gives an overview on initiatives in this area and describes in particular their impact on students in terms of learning and socialization, with an emphasis on students with special needs.

Indeed, we find that these tools that were intended for science fiction and literature a few decades ago, have taken a strong place in the society and education in the 21st century. Through examples of integration in primary and secondary schools, we will describe some innovative devices using robots in school context and we will address the major questions that the use of robots imply, including ethical respect and fight against inequalities.

### RÉSUMÉ

Ils sont partout, nous aident au quotidien, nous supportent sans sourciller, nous font peur quelques fois et nous impressionnent souvent. Ils ont investi la société et cette dynamique ne semble pas prête de s'arrêter. Qu'ils parlent, roulent, marchent, courent parfois, ils sont de plus en plus présents autour de nous et en viennent même à intégrer les salles de classe pour devenir de réels vecteurs de l'éducation au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle (Romero et Sanabria, 2017). Mais de qui parle-t-on ? Nous parlons bien évidemment des robots ! Ces outils qui font parfois débat, entre fervents défenseurs de ces machines qui voient leur potentiel dans différents domaines et utilisateurs craintifs qui redoutent leur présence trop forte au quotidien, arguant le fait qu'ils prendraient la place de l'homme, et donc une part de notre humanité. Ainsi, et alors qu'il est régulièrement fait état de la nécessité d'initier les élèves aux compétences

dites du 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle (OECD, 2015), cet article présente différentes initiatives dans lesquelles des robots sont utilisés en contexte scolaire et leurs effets constatés sur les élèves. Nous tenterons ainsi de donner une brève réponse à la question qui fait office de titre pour cet article.

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## Des robots en classe, pour initier à la science informatique

Alors que les machines, et en particulier les robots, ont longtemps appartenu au domaine de la science-fiction, on constate aujourd'hui à quel point l'évolution est forte et en a fait de véritables outils suppléant l'homme dans de multiples situations, y compris les plus importantes et délicates, telles que la robotique chirurgicale (Hockstein et al., 2007). Mais il n'est plus nécessaire d'entrer dans des contextes si spécifiques pour interagir avec des robots aujourd'hui. En effet, multiples sont aujourd'hui les projets qui font le pont entre utilisation de robots et apprentissages scolaires à des fins de préparation des plus jeunes à la société d'aujourd'hui et de demain. La majorité de ces projets visent à l'initiation à la science informatique, en particulier à la programmation et à la compréhension du fonctionnement d'une machine et des algorithmes. Il est important de souligner que ces objectifs d'apprentissages sont loin d'être nouveaux et que Seymour Papert (1981) cherchait à les intégrer à l'école il y a plusieurs dizaines d'années déjà avec sa tortue LOGO. Aujourd'hui, les outils changent, mais les objectifs restent les mêmes : permettre aux apprenants de développer leurs capacités de résolution de problèmes (Clements et Nastasi, 1999 ; Keane et al., 2016), leurs compétences en mathématiques (Temperman et al., 2014) tout en stimulant leur créativité (Romero et al, 2018 ; Moreno-León, Robles et Román-González, 2016). En ce sens, il est d'ailleurs régulièrement fait un parallèle entre ces usages robotiques et le développement de ce que l'on appelle communément la « pensée computationnelle » (Wing, 2011), soit le processus de formulation d'un problème et sa résolution, de manière à ce que cette résolution puisse être effectuée par une machine. Pour ce faire, on peut utiliser une gamme de robots très large. Des robots de sol qui roulent et agissent comme des automates, aux robots humanoïdes qui peuvent courir ou danser. Certains de ces outils sont d'ailleurs présents depuis des années dans les salles de classe, comme par exemple les robots Bee-Bot, que l'on qualifie de jouets programmables (Barrué et Vigot, 2017) et qui ont

montré leurs impacts positifs sur des élèves à l'école maternelle (Komis & al, 2011), en particulier car ils bénéficient d'une interface intégrée et permettent une observation immédiate de tout programme effectué par l'élève (Misirli et Komis, 2016). D'autres sont apparus au rythme des évolutions matérielles et de la concrétisation de certains projets, comme par exemple le robot Thymio, utilisé dans le projet pilote d'Éducation Numérique du Canton de Vaud en Suisse depuis 2018, ou encore mBot et Bot Ranger qui furent utilisés pour la préparation du plan d'action numérique au Québec (Canada) mis en place en 2018. Dans la province du Québec certains robots sont même aujourd'hui proposés en tant que matériel disponible pour la classe via le projet d'expérimentation intitulé Robot 360 et qui permettait à tous les établissements de la province de bénéficier d'un « Combo numérique » permettant de s'équiper avec du matériel robotique et de former le personnel. Parmi les robots proposés, on retrouvait même un robot d'un type particulier, à savoir le robot humanoïde NAO. Car ce robot, qui a l'apparence d'un être humain, aussi surprenant que cela puisse paraître, peut être utilisé en classe à des fins d'initiation à la science informatique mais aussi d'apprentissages disciplinaires et sociaux (Bugmann et Karsenti, 2018).

### Les robots humanoïdes pour aider les élèves à besoins particuliers

Mais ce robot, des plus surprenants, ne fait pas que permettre des apprentissages, il est aussi facilitateur d'interactions pour des élèves à besoins particuliers, comme c'est le cas lorsqu'il est utilisé avec des élèves avec troubles du spectre de l'autisme (TSA). Dans la province du Québec, le robot humanoïde NAO a notamment été utilisé pour amener des élèves avec TSA vers une stimulation de leurs interactions langagières et vers de nouveaux apprentissages (Karsenti et al., 2017). Dans le cadre de ce projet, le robot humanoïde NAO effectuait des visites régulières en classe, et, par la mise en œuvre d'un scénario pensé et conçu en accord avec les enseignant-e-s., il a été constaté un développement du langage, de la collaboration entre ces élèves, des

compétences en mathématiques mais aussi en lecture. D'autres projets confirment d'ailleurs ces usages novateurs des robots humanoïdes auprès d'enfants avec troubles du spectre de l'autisme et mettent en évidence leur utilité dans un travail thérapeutique en « motivant l'interaction dynamique et l'attention conjointe, ou en faisant figure de médiateurs entre l'enfant et l'adulte » (Tapus et al., 2018).

### Une intégration des robots à encadrer

Il reste cependant de nombreuses choses à accomplir pour favoriser l'intégration et l'adoption de telles activités au quotidien dans les écoles. En effet, le manque de formation des enseignants dans ce domaine tout à fait nouveau, mais aussi simplement le manque de moyens pour acquérir ces outils ou encore de ressources pédagogiques pour les utiliser en classe de manière efficiente et efficace. Certains dispositifs novateurs, comme par exemple le projet Programmation et Robotique à l'École Primaire (PREP), proposent aux enseignants de participer à la conception de scénarios pédagogiques à appliquer en classe avec différents robots pédagogiques pour combler ce manque de formation de moyens d'enseignements (Chaker et Njingang Mbadjoin, 2020). Les auteurs soulignent d'ailleurs l'importance, pour toute réussite d'activités de ce type, de prendre en compte « le degré de prescription du scénario pédagogique : ce qu'il permet de faire, ce qu'il doit permettre de faire, et le degré de flexibilité pour parer à d'éventuels obstacles en situation ».

Enfin, et pour répondre à la question « avoir ou ne pas avoir... des robots en éducation... » aujourd'hui, dans l'éducation au XXIe siècle, il convient donc d'apporter une réponse mesurée, à savoir « Oui, mais... » car il sera important de clarifier, dès l'entame de toute activité, l'organisation à mettre en œuvre et le scénario pédagogique à suivre en fonction des objectifs d'apprentissages fixés. Car, rappelons-le, ces robots, aussi intéressants et performants soient-ils, ne restent que des outils à utiliser avec un cadre défini et un scénario pédagogique adapté.

The background of the page is a light grey color with a subtle, repeating pattern of white, spherical virus particles with protruding spikes, resembling coronaviruses. A large, white rectangular box is positioned in the lower right quadrant, outlined by a thin, dotted grey border. A teal-colored arrow points from the left edge of the page towards the top-left corner of this white box. The text 'Covid-19 pandemic' is centered within the white box in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# Covid-19 pandemic

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION MUSIC PRACTICUM GOES ONLINE

## ABSTRACT

As a result of campuses closing across Europe and much of the rest of the world in March, 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, instructors were required to convert to digital teaching platforms overnight. While some science courses may be well-suited for online learning, other courses are completely compromised by such a switch to digital mediums. Among the latter types, the music practicum at the Apor Vilmos Catholic College was designed to give early childhood teacher trainees many hours of hands-on experience in leading music activities for pre-schoolers. The learning and singing of numerous children's songs, rhythmic developmental activities using simple instruments, and some part-singing and small group work were among the original objectives. The video-conference platform did not prove conducive to leading ensemble activities, but the students benefited beyond expectations from the one-on-one singing sessions, individualized attention, and increased practice time for sharpening their music skills. They were required to memorize twenty children's songs, including some from a required list and others of their own choice. Less-confident singers were not left to hide in the back rows of a large group, but were able to address problems that would not have been possible in a large group setting. Therefore, despite the difficulties caused by the sudden change to online teaching, substantial individual progress was achieved.

## RÉSUMÉ

En conséquence de la fermeture des universités et des écoles à travers le monde à cause de la pandémie Covid-19, les enseignants étaient forcés de passer aux plateformes en ligne. Tandis que certains cours scientifiques sont mieux adaptés pour l'enseignement en ligne, d'autres semblent être inaptes. Parmi ces derniers, le cours pratique de pédagogie musicale de la petite enfance à l'Haute École Catholique Vilmos Apor a été conçu pour fournir de l'expérience pratique importante aux étudiants en guidant des activités musicales pour les enfants d'âge préscolaire. Parmi les objectifs originaux figuraient entre autres l'apprentissage de nombreux chants d'enfant, le développement rythmique à l'aide d'instruments simples, la pratique du chant pluri-vocal et le travail de groupe. La plate-forme de vidéoconférence s'est révélée inadaptée à la direction d'activités de groupe, mais les étudiants ont bénéficié au-delà des attentes des séances de chant individuelles, de l'attention personnalisée et du temps de pratique augmenté pour affiner leurs compétences musicales. Les étudiants étaient obligés d'apprendre par cœur vingt chansons d'enfant dont certaines qu'ils choisissaient eux-mêmes. Ceux qui étaient moins confiants en leur capacité de chant pouvaient donc résoudre des problèmes difficilement résolubles en groupe. Ainsi, malgré les difficultés du changement d'enseignement, du progrès individuel important a été réalisé.



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Teaching music to pre-school children ideally requires plenty of imagination, expression, and movement. Students in early childhood teacher training programs learn to prepare detailed activity plans for children aged 3-7, incorporating appropriate pedagogical methods and age-specific tasks to facilitate the holistic development of a particular skill area. Music pedagogy workshop courses are designed to offer a constructive setting for trying out these ideas in a group setting, utilizing plenty of singing and movement; rhythmic activities such as clapping, tapping, or emphasizing designated beats with tambourines, triangles, or handmade drums; and other structured or improvisational elements of play.

Such course goals can hardly be accomplished sitting in front of a screen! When campuses across Europe and much of the rest of the world closed in mid-March, 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, instructors were required to convert to digital teaching platforms overnight. This sudden conversion posed unforeseen challenges, but teachers and students everywhere strove to make the best of the situation. In particular, music courses were completely compromised by the exclusive use of online mediums, and even more so when movement and group interaction formed integral parts of the objectives. This is mainly because online video conferencing platforms are designed for the speaking voice rather than for singing. Distortion of the sound quality worsens dramatically when recorders or any other kind of wind instrument are played, and disruptive time lags are recurrent problems. This article provides a brief overview of my experiences teaching a specialty workshop, "Leading Activities for Music Development" to students in the Early Childhood Education degree program at the Apur Vilmos Catholic College during the crisis.

### Original course objectives and assignments

This course was designed to strengthen the musical skills of second-year, early childhood teacher trainees in a workshop environment, where they could interact with one another and try out their own music activity plans. The original objectives included learning a wide range of children's songs, rhythmic developmental activities such as clapping and marking beats with instruments, small ensemble work, and simple part-singing (e.g. canons, songs with an optional second part, quodlibets). The requirements outlined at the beginning of the term included the memorization of twenty songs, to be sung with solmization and text, as well as played on the soprano recorder. More than half of these songs were taught in class during the first six weeks of the semester, and pertained to either animals or the Carnival season. The other half was comprised of Hungarian folk songs and simple art songs about nature<sup>1</sup>, from which students selected the remainder of songs for their lists. They could also include three children's songs of their own choosing.<sup>2</sup> Additional music writing assignments, such as transposition of a song and notation of a rhythmic part below a melodic line, were geared to enhance the students' music writing skills along with their understanding of fundamental musical principles. The final project consisted of composing a short, simple song (approximately eight bars of music) about an everyday activity, and writing a corresponding plan for pre-schoolers that incorporated the song.<sup>3</sup> These original songs and activity plans were intended to be taught in class by the students later in the term.

### Modified course objectives and assignments

When campuses closed on 12 March, 2020, due to the burgeoning pandemic, provisional plans using distance learning had to be quickly implemented for an initial period of three weeks, but which lasted for the remainder of the semester. The overall goals of the course did not change significantly, but the methods used had to be completely altered. Because the online video-conferencing platforms did not prove conducive to leading ensemble activities, students participated in one-on-one singing sessions via the Skype and Messenger programs. The benefits of this method included: 1. individualized attention, 2. increased practice time for skill development, and 3. the chance for students to ask questions freely and address difficulties that would not have been possible in a large group setting. This format was particularly helpful for the less-confident singers, who otherwise tended to hide in the back rows of the group.

Initially, students were hesitant to sing in front of a web camera, but these fears were soon allayed and replaced by a greater sense of motivation. The opportunity to receive regular instruction and feedback in the form of shorter, individual lessons proved useful for their overall development. In some cases, the teacher trainees were advised to choose pieces from the songlist that better suited their abilities, as, for example, if a song proved too difficult. or if several of the freely-chosen selections needed to be replaced due to the subject or nature of the lyrics. By the end of the eighth week, all students had succeeded in singing/playing their complete lists of twenty songs.

The sound quality of the online lessons was largely determined by the types of devices students were able to use. Many only had mobile phones, which provide less stable sound quality than a laptop or desk computer. Some were missing textbooks, their instruments, or other study materials because of the sudden move out of the dormitories, which often resulted in makeshift living situations. Numerous pages of songs had to be scanned and uploaded to make them available for the group. Most students also requested recordings to help them learn the songs and as an aid in solmization and rhythm. Due to the plethora of recordings available on the internet, and depending on their level of music reading skill, many students tend to rely more on listening than on written scores to learn pieces. I recorded all of the songs for them to avoid the discrepancies and variations that invariably occur with the use of uncontrolled sources.

The music writing assignments were easily collectible online, and the necessary corrections and clarifications were then scanned and returned digitally to the students. The various mistakes made in these assignments revealed gaps in the students' understanding of music rudiments that otherwise may not have come to the fore, including the proper use of key signatures, meters, accidentals, and typical score formatting abbreviations.

## Final projects

Although some of the teacher trainees initially expressed uncertainty regarding their ability to compose a short song or lyrics about an everyday activity, all of them successfully completed this project as well. But because this was their first attempt at this kind of creative project, repeated written and verbal explanations and intermittent assistance were necessary.

The songs covered a wide spectrum of refreshing topics and typical activities-made-fun, from hand-washing to the welcoming of spring, various animals and special events, such as Mother's Day and saying goodbye to kindergarten. The corresponding activity plans were filled with excellent ideas, although they were much more detailed than what was requested. The students may have been striving to compensate in writing for the loss of the group teaching experience.

## Survey questions and results

After all assessments were completed, I formulated a short survey of five questions to provide an opportunity for students to give feedback about the course. Completion was voluntary but not anonymous because of the use of e-mail.

- 1 What was the most useful activity for the development of your musical skills and understanding?
- 2 To what degree were your expectations about this new course fulfilled?
3. Which aspect of the sudden changeover to online teaching was the most useful? Which aspect was the most difficult?
- 4 Were there any pre-school music activities that you hoped to have covered during the term but that were not included in the course?
- 5 Do you have any suggestions or other observations regarding the course?

Space limitations do not allow for a detailed account of the answers received, but what was most encouraging to read was that all of the students felt they had made substantial progress. The majority (75%) stated that the solmization was the most useful activity for their musical development, although they found it difficult or had previously lacked motivation for this activity. The other twenty-five percent listed associative listening and other activities we had done in the live class setting. Everyone expressed satisfaction with the course experience, despite the disruptive circumstances, and especially with the amount of songs learned. Exposure

to some classical music in addition to new children's songs was also appreciated. As expected, students missed the opportunity to sing together in small groups and do the practice teaching of their projects. But as the initial strangeness of having to sing and play music in an online setting was overcome, they quickly grew accustomed to it. Other comments included: 1. the recordings provided much-needed help in learning the songs, 2. having to write their own songs was an interesting and useful challenge, and 3. they hope to continue learning many more new songs in the future.

In conclusion, the frustrations and difficulties caused by the sudden change to online teaching did not prove insurmountable. Albeit through compromise, but even in the area of music, an unexpectedly positive outcome could be achieved.

## Footnotes

- 1 The songs ranged from the 13-century (Moniot d'Arras: *Ce fut en mai* and J. of Fonsete: *Sumer is icumen in*) to Beethoven (*Ode to Joy* and *Das Blumchen Wunderhold*) and Liszt (*Morgenlied*), all sung here in Hungarian.
- 2 Sheet music had to be provided if the song was not in any of the standard textbooks.
- 3 As an alternative, the students could compose lyrics to an existing song, which likewise had to be written out in music notation.

# ONLINE EDUCATION – TRANSITION TO ONLINE ASSESSMENT

The ongoing epidemic has greatly affected the whole world. Undoubtedly, these new and unprecedented conditions have started to affect our lives from one day to the next. Both young and old have been forced to stay at home – including the employees and students. The quarantine has also caused tension, hopelessness and anxiety in many people. Under these circumstances, it can be especially difficult to remain calm and adapt smoothly to the new rhythm of life as dictated by the virus. Nevertheless, health considerations are of paramount importance now, and so we must respond accordingly. While the gates of educational institutions have been closed, teaching and learning needed to continue regardless and so were forced to make drastic transformations. There hasn't been enough time for the "DIGITAL SWITCHOVER", so a thoroughly prepared education reform, has been completely out of the question. The principle of stay-at-home has proven to be one of the best forms of protection, schools have had to implement distance learning

methods so as to continue. Without the use of digital technology this would have been



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very difficult, nigh on impossible. We should think realistically about how a similar pandemic would have affected our society fifty to sixty years ago, aka, "before the Internet".

Preparation for digital pedagogy is a process that requires sufficient learning and rehearsal. Ample time is needed for the teacher to master its basic elements and incorporate it into the reality of daily use. Based on these – among others – education implemented at the time of the pandemic wasn't necessarily meant to implement digital pedagogy methods.

This kind of distance learning has rarely been used, face-to-face contact with students and systematic distribution of study material has always been par for the course.

Regarding to aforementioned examples, we will employ the phrase "ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING" when referring to distance learning implemented during the pandemic.

Online distance learning in our perception, excludes face-to-face contact with students, but nevertheless by use of the appropriate digital tools, there remains a regular teacher-student interaction, by which one can still hope to achieve their educational objectives.

It is plainly evident that one of the most difficult parts of online distance learning is the process of assessment and examination. It has certainly become apparent that our traditional assessment practice is ineffective in the current climate. Therefore, new evaluation and assessment strategies have to come to the fore. In the usual "offline" education environment the diagnostic and summative assessment tools have often been used. However, within online education it is more highly recommended to create by way of example a portfolio, to monitor student progress and improvement thus

providing formative assessment methods and tools.

In the following, we focus our attention to the topic of online assessment and examination, in particular methodological recommendations that have proved successful pedagogical practice. It is important to observe that in order to achieve the desired effect it is necessary to consider well in advance among other things the

- subjects' possibilities and conditions.
- assessments' purpose, phases, frequency, etc.
- digital technology's' possibilities and limitations.

According to Ragupathi (2016), well-designed assessments set clear expectations while also establishing a reasonable workload, and provide continuous opportunities for students to self-learn, rehearse, practise and receive feedback. However, if designed poorly it can be a major hinderance to thinking and learning in our students. Assessments should be able to provide students with feedback on their progress and be able to help them in identifying their potential to proceed to the next level of any given module.

Effective feedback strategy can bridge the gap in student learning. Therefore, it is important to use the assessment approaches which maximize learning and development, except of course those which focus exclusively on grading. In the following we present brief description of some good practices of online assessment tools and methodologies. We consider it important to emphasize that the following good practices do not preclude variation of each other and the digital tools we have used are replaceable with other appropriate tools and technologies. Furthermore, in addition to asynchronous teaching, synchronous teaching form is also absolutely essential within online distance learning.

## ABSTRACT

The pandemic affects almost every segment of our daily lives although some of the effects are also expected in the near future. Epidemiological measures have also been initiated in education, which have posed unexpected challenges for most educators. It was necessary to switch to digital distance learning overnight, as this was almost the only way to continue in teaching and learning. Many educators have previously mastered the use and implementation of some digital tools and/or methods in their pedagogical practice. However, a special situation has developed, because we were forced to stop using digital tools as a kind of supplement in our teaching and start using them as a kind of substitute for “face-to-face” teaching and learning. In the following we will discuss the issue of online assessment and examination in digital distance learning in more detail – among other things we briefly present some of the tools and possibilities of online assessment and examination, while also mention some good practice of their implementation.

## RÉSUMÉ

Dans presque tous les domaines de notre vie quotidienne, il se manifeste l'impact de la situation entraînée par l'épidémie vitale et, dans une certaine mesure, il devrait affecter notre vie future. Dans le domaine de l'enseignement également, la mise en place des mesures épidémiologiques pose des défis inattendus pour la plupart des enseignants. Du jour au lendemain, il était nécessaire de passer à l'éducation numérique à distance, car c'était pratiquement le seul moyen pour permettre de poursuivre l'éducation des étudiants. Et bien que de nombreux enseignants se soient déjà familiarisés avec l'utilisation d'un outil ou d'une méthode numérique, une situation particulière s'est produite par le fait, que nous ne les utilisons pas comme une sorte de complément au contexte de l'enseignement traditionnel “face à face”, mais en tant que substitut. Dans ce qui suit, nous abordons plus en détail la question des tests – évaluation en ligne dans l'éducation numérique à distance-entre autres, nous présentons brièvement certains outils et possibilités des tests en ligne, ainsi que quelques bonnes pratiques.

### Interactive lecture

The best way to make the presentation engaging is by providing interactive actions (feedback) during the presentation, which hold audience attention and even allows them to participate. The simplest form is when the teacher provides an online lecture while the students are actively involved. It is vital that students are not just listening but actually participating in their lecture. By increasing interactivity, we are also able to increase the student understanding and learning. To do so, it may be advisable to suggest to students that they make their own notes during lectures, but that there should also be time to question and analyse the information presented in order to earn additional data about their understandings or misconceptions. Using online voting systems and real-time chatting should also be efficient. *Digital tools: Skype + Mentimeter*

### Interactive presentation

The typical use of asynchronous learning is when (interactive) presentation is given to students. The presentations' interactivity should be increased by

using various technics and features of presentation software. The presentation with special elements included can force and encourage the student to be active – mentally or by doing some practices, and exercises. A good practice is when the teachers' voice is recorded in the presentation and at certain intervals the students are asked to perform some activities – answer questions, solve tasks, etc. *Digital tools: MS PowerPoint + Socrative*

### Problem-solving in pairs (groups) with screen sharing/document sharing

There are several digital tools which are very useful when problem solving in pairs or groups is required. Another good practice is when the students shares their screens with the teacher, or the teacher share the special interactive board with students and asks them to solve a problem cooperatively. It is the kind of synchronous learning where students can work on projects with their peers in real-time. The process of collaboration is inevitably increased and so the social interactions between students should be also encouraged. *Digital tools: MS Word + ZOOM*

### Sharing a pre-build online test

A general form of online assessment, when the teacher prepares the digital test/quiz in advance and then makes it available for students at a predetermined time. *Digital tool: exam.net*

### Group interactive room

A special form on online students' cooperation. The teacher creates smaller groups within the classroom by using “break out rooms” feature based on the principle of cooperative education. A good practice is when in a foreign language class, the teacher shares different figures/pictures with groups, while asking them to create and share a good story about the subject presented. *Digital tools: ZOOM*

Each of the examples mentioned above provide an opportunity for students' active participation. These are what we consider to be the essential conditions in providing effective assessment, preceded by continuous assessment of students' level of knowledge and competencies.



# **Visions, projects & practices**

**(testimonials and experiences)**

## ABSTRACT

In the current socio-political situation in Europe (and even more so in the pandemic), Education for Citizenship, Human Rights and Democracy plays a more than ever important role in our education and training of teachers and student teachers. Conspiracy theories, populist ideas and growing nationalism challenge our democratic, pluralistic and free societies. The Comenius Association can help in the current situation. The Association invited to participate in the seminar "Europe, Education and Democracy - at the re-discovering the European Institutions". From 29th to 31st January 2020, trainers teachers from Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, UK and Japan exchanged good practices and participated in inspiring visits from the European Institutions in Strasbourg together.

## RÉSUMÉ

Dans la situation socio-politique actuelle en Europe (et même plus dans la situation pandémique), Éducation à la Citoyenneté, aux Droits de l'Homme et à la Démocratie joue un rôle plus important que jamais dans notre enseignement et dans la formation des enseignants. Des théories de complot, des idées populistes et un nationalisme croissant mettent en question nos sociétés démocratiques, pluralistes et libres. L'Association Comenius peut contribuer beaucoup à aider dans la situation actuelle. Pour ce but, le Bureau de l'Association avait invité à participer au séminaire "Europe, Éducation et Démocratie – à la re-découverte des Institutions Européennes". Du 29 au 31 Janvier 2020, des formateurs d'enseignants de la Belgique, les Pays-Bas, le Portugal, l'Espagne, la Suisse, l'Allemagne et le Japon échangeaient de bonnes pratiques et participaient à des visites inspirantes des Institutions Européennes à Strasbourg ensemble.

In the current sociopolitical situation in Europe (and even more in the pandemic situation worldwide), Education for Citizenship, Human Rights and Democracy plays a more important role than ever at schools and in teacher training. Conspiracy theories, populist thinking and a growing nationalism are fundamentally questioning our democratic, pluralistic and diverse societies. At every member institution of the Comenius Association, researchers and teacher trainers are contributing their knowledge to this ongoing challenge. In order to bring their expertise together, in order to exchange good practice from different European countries and to develop new joint activities, the Board of the Comenius Association organized a seminar which took place in Strasbourg from January 29 – January 31, 2020 at the Centre St. Thomas. An additional purpose of the seminar was to re-discover the European Institutions and to explore their potential for teacher training students. Despite – or just because of the the small number, the participants from very different backgrounds created intensive exchanges opportunities in theory and practice.

The opening contribution of the seminar showed that the challenges mentioned above are not a European phenomenon. In his presentation "Learn Democracy with the movie night 'Korean Schools in Japan'", Dr. Shinji Nakagama from Kwansai Gakuin University, Japan, and currently a visiting scholar at Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark Graz, Austria, illustrated how the Korean community in Japan is fighting for schools in which their native language is valued and where their children have access to Korean traditions. The schools exist since the 1950ies, but are currently under financial and political pressure in Japan. The film describes the Korean school in Osaka (Japan), explains the historical background and

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# EUROPE, EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY REDISCOVERING THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS



which function the Korean schools in Japan have. Shinji Nakagama explained how that documentary produced in 2018 has been integrated into a “Human Rights Day” at different universities in Europe and has helped students developing a political awareness by comparing the situation in Europe and in Japan.

With Dr. Anna de Monserrat i Vallve, FPCEE Blanquerna-Ramon Llull University Barcelona, Spain, and Riet Berkers, Maurick College Nijmegen, Netherlands, the perspective switched to Europe: In their contribution “*European Citizenship: A European Network between Schools and Universities*” they showed the impact of a long-standing cooperation between European Universities and Schools in Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and the UK. The core element of the cooperation are projects imbedded in the official curriculum of the pupils. Personal exchanges (including homestays) help European pupils to develop a spirit or awareness of European citizenship through various contents, improve language skills for communicating in foreign languages, facilitate real-world environments in which students manage to position themselves, understand, adapt and develop effectively. Working in coop-

eration with other European students helps them to discover and build a knowledge about Europe, interdisciplinary, to obtain global perspectives. Living, experiencing and reflecting on the values that make up European citizenship.

The morning of the second day was entirely dedicated to a visit at The Europe Direct information centre “*Lieu d’Europe*”. In a very personal and intensive workshop, Nina Christensen, the pedagogical director of *Lieu d’Europe* first introduced the treasure hunt “*Destination Europe*”, explained the didactic approach of the game and gave the participants the unique opportunity to look behind the scenes of the multiple activities of information centre in the heart of the European Quarter<sup>1</sup>.

In the afternoon, Chantal Muller from Haute Ecole de Namur-Liège-Luxembourg, Belgium, shared her profound knowledge and experience about the pedagogical resources produced by the Council of Europe. In her presentation “*Educational Tools offered by the Council of Europe*”, she gave an overview of teaching material and of background information about multilingualism, cultural diversity and intercultural learning. Especially the European Council of Modern Languages at the Council of Europe (ECML) is offering a huge database of material – including lesson plans for different levels and age groups. The Council of Europe has also published a *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Values* as well as a large variety of practical material for teachers, educators and teacher trainers in the field of Human Rights Education, European Values or Fight against Hate Speech. For more information:<sup>2</sup>.

A visit of the *European Parliament* gave a promising glimpse at the future:

The participants of the seminar had the chance to attend a debating competition of pupils: The huge “Hemicycle” of the Parliament alive with teenagers from all over Europe, practicing democracy and actively debating topics which an immediate impact on their future, ranging from climate change, free access to digital communication to youth employment and measures against cyberbullying.

The last contribution of the seminar came from the President of the Comenius Association. In her presentation “*The Conference of Independent NGOs at the Council of Europe and the Comenius Association: Perspectives*”, Geneviève Laloy from Haute École Léonard de Vinci Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, emphasized the role of the Comenius Association within the INGO’s conference and encouraged the participants to become more active in this organization so important for Civil Society. Being the president of the Comenius Association, Geneviève Laloy also made a summary of the seminar and discussed possible next steps with the participants.

Only a few days after the seminar, Covid19 appeared on the scene and turned our lives, the political agenda and its priorities upside down. It seemed that topics considered important so far were just put aside – but only at a first glance: The pandemic has turned out to be an accelerator of big ongoing changes in society. The current crisis has very quickly shown that neither Democracy nor Civil Rights nor Education can be taken for granted, and that teachers and teacher trainers have a lot to contribute to strengthen what makes Europe strong.



#### Footnotes

1 <https://lieudeurope.strasbourg.eu>

2 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/education>

# BACK TO NATURE...

A quick report on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic

In the introduction – from the perspective of education – the effects of the epidemic situation on the time scale of the children are to be examined. As a basis of this study two sets of surveys conducted by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in 2011 and the spring of 2020 including the whole population<sup>1</sup> and in 2014 and the spring of 2020 including school students<sup>2</sup> have been taken into consideration. The basis of the national surveys was the results of the timescale diaries with consideration of the EU's recommendations. Thus, three different categories of activities have been identified: social-bound activities, activities to satisfy physiological needs, and free-style activities. To observe in detail the studies concerning the registered changes of the children's daily timeframe would be beyond the frames of this study, however, some remarkable correlations shall be highlighted.

In Hungary, as is the case in most of the EU member states, more than 90% of families with children have Internet connection. In 2014, school aged children were spending 13% of their time on their own choosing, 25% on school work, 8% on studying at home. In the spring of 2020 – during the quarantine period – children were spending 13% of their time on e-learning, 12% on doing home work, 23% on social activities, and 16% on solitary activities e.g. watching TV, playing computer games, etc. In this new situation, compared to the results of the 2014 survey, children were spending almost 10% less time on learning and 10% more on social activities. During this spring children were spending twice as much time seeking personal contacts within their families (15%) than seeking online contacts with their peers (8%). A new element in the 2020 survey is the solitary timeframe category (16%), which might be compared to the timeframe that was at the children's disposal. During this spring 40% of the activities of the children (learning, social activities, etc.) took place online. In order to be able to understand the snapshot of 2020, a generational progress with a wider timescale ought to be observed. Since the end of the Communist era in 1990 the adult population have been spending half of their free time (18% of a 24-hour day) in front of a screen with only 2% being spent on hiking – this amount of time has been decreased the most severely.

The number of studies dealing with the effects of the epidemic from the perspective of education will be doubtlessly high. Some conclusions of the new experiences, however, might already be drawn from the perspective of mental health. These conclusions may prove extremely important when the challenges of the near future is considered. What will be the main focuses of education in the 21st century? According to the survey conducted during the spring of 2020 the lack of

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### ABSTRACT

The natural sciences constitute a thorough knowledge and approach to nature, the understanding of which is based on the conviction that there is an order that governs nature and that man can understand. The Apor Vilmos Catholic Institute has launched a pedagogical research programme on natural science thinking in children. The central concept is the garden. Our aim is to support active and communal methods of learning, carried out in the open air on the basis of experimentation. This study provides an overview of the programme initiated for the first year of teaching. The pandemic we are experiencing places Rousseau's thinking in a special context.

### RÉSUMÉ

Les sciences naturelles constituent une connaissance et une approche approfondies de la nature, dont la compréhension se base sur la conviction qu'il existe un ordre qui régent la nature et que l'homme peut comprendre. L'Institut de Professorat Catholique Apor Vilmos a lancé un programme de recherche pédagogique sur la pensée des sciences naturelles chez l'enfant. Le concept central en est le jardin. Notre objectif est de soutenir des méthodes actives et communautaires d'apprentissage, réalisées en plein air sur la base de l'expérimentation. La présente étude donne un aperçu du programme initié pour la première année d'enseignement. La pandémie que nous sommes en train de vivre place dans un contexte particulier la pensée de Rousseau.

physical activities and the poor quality of solitary time endangers most the health of tweens. At the same time, however, parents rated their children's quality of life higher than the children themselves. According to the data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office 90% of those employed raising children under 15 could not work at home during the quarantine. It might be assumed that the prolonged epidemic situation will stimulate the spread of digital technologies in the field of education. Children between the ages of seven and fourteen as an 'endangered group' shall have distinguished attention.

In the autumn of 2019 at the Department of Mathematics, Science and Informatics of AVKF (Vilmos Apó Catholic College) we started a research program. Those days we hardly guessed the awaiting great challenge. Today, we believe that the aspirations we were outlining may only bring us closer to finding the solutions to the problems that emerged in the spring of 2020.

### Theoretical ideas

In old Hungarian the word literacy (*műveltség* – the translator) meant intellectual capacity, moral nobleness, social delicacy, and politeness. Back in those days the fundament of the curriculum was Latin and its cultural heritage. The situation has been dramatically changed. Literacy is conveyed in the national language, where language as such is no longer the pillar of literacy but simply a means of conveyance. Since the age of Enlightenment the scientific subjects have been enjoying more and more weight in education from primary level to university education. This process also highlights the fact that one of the fundamentals of our European literacy is scientific reasoning. According to our interpretation scientific literacy is content knowledge and a set of skills to understand, protect, and responsible shaping of the environment and the created universe. The very basis of this idea is the conviction that in the environment and the created universe order is a prevailing force. This order is mirrored in landscapes, which contribute significantly to the literacy ideal of Europe. This knowledge is part of our culture, which is indispensable in finding lasting sustainability and harmony of all things existing.

From the second half of the 20th century onwards, the perspectives and paradigms of organizational development have seen an ever increasing role in public education and teacher trainings. A turning point has been

the spread of digital technologies. (McFarlane, Donovan A. 2011) Today, researches and methods concerning the grading of the results of teachers are based on measures of efficiency. In this pragmatic spirit it would be anachronistic to refer to the original Latin- or one of the English meaning of the word *disciplina*. *Disciplina* as discipline, and commitment to the teachings of a trustworthy person is the basis of reasoning. Subjects and disciplines taught at school convey the harmony between the external order that prevails in the world and the internal order of reasoning, which is the solution and sustaining force of the community in which they have been created. Traditionally, pedagogy is perceived as a tool to transmit culture. The latest studies of cognitive sciences highlight the fact that pedagogical activities are based on the lurking preconceptions that we have of the surrounding world. We believe that our results based on experiments are consistent with the preserved meaning-content of the Hungarian language.



Laboratories studying the reasoning of toddlers claim that teaching is the guidance of attention. Toddlers know and particularly learn more than we have ever imagined. (Gopnik, Meltzoff, Kuhl 1999) From infancy the personal presence of the parent/tender bears the most significance in developing childhood reasoning. The ability of critical reasoning is established by the relationship of trust between the toddler and the parent. Hungarian researchers have suggested that the social nature of humans and human cooperation – placed in an evolutionary context – are rooted in acquiring consciousness. (Kovács, Téglás, Endress, 2010) The pedagogical transmission of knowledge is more lasting and results a different quality learning than the learning process with peers based on observations. As a precondition, there must be trust earned in the learning process between the pupil and the adult teacher. One recognition of the sciences dealing with communication is that everything is about fighting for attention. Neuro-

physiology researchers claim based on their studies concerning the consequences of knowledge acquisition via digital technologies that the constant searching, information-hunger, superficial processing, the lack of contacts in a natural pedagogical situation (e.g. body language) may carry serious dangers. (Greenfield 2008) The ICT generation lives in the world of here and now, their sensibility towards the past and the future is de-emphasized. Based on these studies the use of digital devices is not recommended for children under the age of ten. Even though these devices are tempting for them (seem to) simplify and fasten most processes. In real life the shared devices (with teachers and students) direct the attention in a way that slows and thus deepens the learning process. In a natural or near-natural environment the experiences gained via free-style activities are getting a more and more important role in establishing scientific reasoning. Creating these topological and pedagogical environments and tools set a new task for teacher training. (Maciver 2013)

### Educating Space

#### Concerning the aim of the program

The aim of the program set by our department mirrors the theoretical principles discussed above by creating an educating space which is fit for establishing and developing scientific and mathematical reasoning. Students could be educated outdoors in a space which is set for them with the purpose of learning while doing physical activities, in small groups, fit for their age and needs, in correspondence, naturally, with the demands of the school's curriculum. On the long run, we intend to teach cultural domains such as Environmental Studies, or Mathematics by a wide spectrum of experiments and gaining direct experiences with the involvement of cultural subjects such as Literature and Arts. The whole program – from planning through creating the topological space to outlining the pedagogical program – is realized with the involvement of the students. An essential element of the program for the teacher candidates is to be committed towards creating similar spaces. Also, they should see reason in perceiving the needs of the local community, familiarizing themselves with the local conditions via the aspects of geography, town history, ecology, or church history. Possessing knowledge on organizational development the candidates may initiate educating spaces fit for their teaching goals with the involvement of the lo-

cal communities. The experiences of the quarantine period may enrich the original purposes with new elements. A garden might prove to be an ideal place even in the lockdown period for experience-centered education, teaching, or keeping in touch with others. In the followings a greater emphasis will be placed on the possible interconnection between the virtual and real space, and the educating garden.

### Concerning the results of the first year

During the first term of the program, one group of students were researching the history of one of the College's buildings and its garden in the local archives, map collections, and local collections. The other group of students were mapping the physical spaces of the building and the garden exploring their botanical, soil scientific features. The building, located at the square, and with its past of almost two hundred years, is integrated into the town's history of secular and Catholic education. We found that the 400m<sup>2</sup> garden may only be cultivated or used as an open-air exhibition area after a thorough preparation. The local history of the surrounding area provides us an exciting challenge. The cellar and

fundament of the College were built of the stones and bricks of the late Saint Nicolas Church, which had been standing there. It also came to light that in the andesite fundament of the 40 metres long fence the visible stones are remnants of the medieval fortress' walls. We have added new elements to our aims within the program based on the researches concerning the surrounding spaces. We believe that the revealed cellar is apt for creating a museum pedagogical demonstration site, especially if related to the fields of scientific reasoning and environmental education. Due to its importance in local town history it may also be apt for local school children as an exhibition site presenting local and church history, as a place of education, or a place to relax.

In the second term of the program students – as a means to elaborate the pedagogical program – in order to gain experiences, spent a day on 22/02/2020 in Vácrátót, in a garden created with a scientific sophistication, in the National Botanic Garden of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Centre for Ecological Research. The day-long ecological and botanical programs were led by the garden's biologists of great renown. During the day the students discovered the Rowan Berry Visitor Centre and the greenhouses, as well as their educational and pedagogical potential. They were analyzing, drawing, debating about, and taking photos of the most special manners of presenting topics with live substance. There was a student who even improvised a poem. During the afternoon presentation – with a walk in the garden – students were learning about the cultural history of gardens from Biblical times to Romanticism. Also, the role of gardens in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic faith were highlighted. Finally, as an interactive, practical part, the presenter was talking about the connection between people, cultures, and plants, while providing opportunity to try many cultic objects of use as well as the opportunity to play certain Asian musical instruments.

As a conclusion, some quotations from students will be shared below on the pedagogical and mental health efficiency of the program. Students were requested to give feedback on two fields: to describe their experiences in connection with the botanic garden as a space, and what new aspects they were learning about communities as biological organizational organizations.

*"What is a garden? A garden is a piece of land surrounded by a fence, with a quality on the inside that distinguish it from the lands on the other side of the fence. It imitates nature, however, every square inch of it is artificial but as we walk in a garden it feels like a piece of the natural landscape. A garden provides us tranquility, clean, fresh air, shades, and the possibility to relax."*

*"I have only known nature by telly documentaries. I was astonished by the fact that male and female trees actually exist. I was shocked by this piece of information, so after getting home I started to look into this topic. I have never given any thought of the question whether trees can talk or not. I keep asking this question for myself and my children. Do they keep distance in hope of getting more light, or do they detest each other? I had seen roots reaching out from the ground near lakes but I have never seen such beautiful formations as the breathing roots in the arboretum. It is possible that I hadn't noticed them before, though."*

*"Learning is about life and gaining experiences constantly. A kind of curiosity towards the aspects of life. The fact that we do not teach children frontally in a classroom is an innovation that does not require much money but energy and proper pedagogical planning. A garden is positively the best place for it."*

*"In an educational environment the student's interactions and experiences with the surroundings incorporate into his/her self-image re-organizing the acquired knowledge of the world."*

### Footnotes

1 <https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/idomerleg/idomerleg0910.pdf>

2 <https://www.elte.hu/content/maradjotthon-hogy-birod.t.21110>

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*"Whether we talk about adults or children, spending time in nature is a useful way of learning. We will be calmer and chaotic things will find order in our heads. We will arrive at conclusions. If we can find the place where the nightingale nests, or which plant grows better next to which then perhaps we will get closer in understanding nature's logic. We do not always need books to interpret or understand a phenomenon. Nature, the space – whether it is artificial or natural – teaches us if we can learn how to pay attention to her."*

*"A garden liberate, delight, impress, and enchant us. All this at the same time in the same place. It teaches us about plants, about respect between humans and nature, about appreciation and humility, and quiet observation. It teaches us through our thoughts and senses. It liberates us from our everyday burdens. This is the place where time and place cease to exist for the visitor. In one of the greenhouses one may walk in America, whereas in another at the shores of Asia. The experience of travelling in space and time. And what is the best source of inspiration if not one's own experiences?"*

# APPLES AND ORANGES OR WHAT WE LEARNT FROM COMPARING GROUP WORK IN SWISS AND ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to describe and reflect on a short-term mobility project that brought together 10 future primary teachers from the University of Winchester (UK) and the Haute Ecole pédagogique du Canton de Vaud (Switzerland). The goal of our collaboration was to compare and contrast ways in which group work and learning stations are used in UK and Swiss schools and identify practices that can help integrate these methods more effectively into the fabric of class life.

With Swiss teachers encouraged to foster inclusion and personalized learning, we set out to observe and experiment how group work and learning stations enable pupils to learn in a range of modalities, while making differentiation manageable for the teacher. We developed observation tools to monitor the impact of the teacher's instructional methods, task setting and group composition. We reflected on the benefits of these modalities on pupils' engagement and motivation and put our thoughts to the test of fire by teaching a series of group work lessons, first in the students' placement school, then in an English classroom.

The intercultural interactions with students, teachers and pupils, both in and out of the classroom, challenged us to consider the multiple perspectives of what constitutes good teaching and learning. What better way to prepare preservice teachers for the complex challenges of tomorrow's diverse classroom?

## RÉSUMÉ

Notre article décrit un projet de mobilité courte qui a rassemblé 10 futur.e.s enseignant.e.s primaires de l'Université de Winchester (Royaume-Uni) et de la Haute École pédagogique du Canton de Vaud (Suisse). Les écoles suisses ayant fixé le cap sur l'inclusion, l'objectif de notre collaboration était de comparer les modalités de mise en œuvre du travail de groupe dans les écoles britanniques et suisses afin d'identifier les pratiques aptes à ancrer ces méthodes au quotidien dans la classe.

Pour ce faire, nous avons entrepris d'observer et d'expérimenter comment les diverses modalités de travaux de groupe permettent aux élèves de progresser selon des trajectoires individuelles tout en rendant la différenciation gérable pour l'enseignant.e. Nous avons développé des grilles d'observation pour capturer les effets des gestes professionnels de l'enseignant.e sur les consignes de travail et la composition des groupes. Nous avons réfléchi aux avantages des modalités de travail par groupe sur la motivation des élèves et leur engagement dans la tâche et avons mis nos réflexions à l'épreuve du feu en enseignant une série de leçons, d'abord dans les classes de stage des étudiant.e.s suisses, puis dans des classes anglaises.

Les interactions interculturelles avec les enseignant.e.s et les élèves et entre étudiant.e.s, à la fois dans la salle de classe et en dehors, nous ont mis au défi de considérer les multiples perspectives de ce qui constitue des enseignements et apprentissages de qualité. Quelle meilleure façon de préparer nos enseignant.e.s en formation initiale à la complexe gestion de l'hétérogénéité?

Which forms of classroom organization provide the best possible teaching and learning opportunities for primary pupils with diverse needs? To tackle this question, our yearlong collaborative project brought together five students from the HEP Vaud, Switzerland, five students from the University of Winchester and their tutors. Through classroom observation and teaching, we experimented and reflected on our different school systems and the role group work and station rotations can play in differentiation.

To acknowledge the diversity of pupils' needs and backgrounds and provide identical educational opportunities to all children, Swiss school authorities have decided, in recent years, to develop more inclusive classrooms with a strong focus on differentiation and the integration of teaching assistants. These approaches are not yet widespread in Swiss French-speaking classrooms, so English schools' well-established group work practice was of great interest.

Before travelling to England, the Swiss students experimented technology-supported group work in their autumn placement classrooms: they developed lessons in which groups of pupils were encouraged to demonstrate their learning by creating multimedia projects, be it wikimini encyclopedic articles, video book reports, comic strips or virtual class exchanges. With a limited number of computers and tablets available, station rotations allowed an efficient sharing of resources. Each big project was broken down into interdependent tasks like the pieces of a puzzle, so that students, organized in mixed-ability groups, depended on each other's work and strengths to succeed. Very precise instructions and checklists were produced to make sure each pupil knew exactly what he had to do, could

work independently and pull his or her weight.

By February we had developed an observation grid (to track spatial organization, group work set up, student engagement, teachers' classroom management skills and communication of learning objectives) and were eager to explore our first English school, a highly rated Church of England Junior school near Southampton, with a wonderful, caring atmosphere, colorful displays and an enthusiastic and dedicated headteacher.

When Swiss teachers walk into an English school, the differences in organization and methodology are quite striking. The school showed a fairly typical set up with classes of 30+ children led by a class teacher and supported by a classroom assistant. The school had more than one class per year group so was managed by a Year leader, with the preparation of learning shared between the teachers, under the guidance of school subject coordinators.

The school adopted groups of children sitting around tables to encourage discussion within a community of enquiry. At the beginning of each term, pupils are put into groups based on their results on preliminary Maths and English tests. Children typically receive a whole class introduction before being sent off to differentiated tasks. The teacher would regularly keep certain children with her (not necessarily those with weakest ability) to enhance their learning. The classroom assistant would have been briefed as to their role in each lesson. Many schools adopt variable seating arrangements so that children can benefit from a range of abilities throughout the day. Much work would have been put into teaching Respect, Responsibility and Resilience so that the groups of children would cope well in a group situation. This was apparent within each class that we visited.

We attended a Year 6 English lesson, then Year 4 Math and Spanish lessons,

and could observe first-hand how the teachers skillfully managed large, heterogeneous classes with students grouped by ability. The lessons we observed started with the teacher making a lively whole class introduction, with content often presented on an interactive whiteboard. Then came the group work. Students were placed in groups of 4 to 8 pupils (mostly 6), with the more able pupils seated at the back of the class, and the students needing more help seated in front, close to the teacher. A sheet with guidelines encouraged autonomy throughout the different activities that they undertook. In the math lesson we could observe how skillfully the teacher managed the rotation of tasks, how well-established the students' routines were and how she could sit at a table providing one on one instruction to a student while keeping an eye on the class as a whole. The flexibility of the classroom organization was very helpful in that respect.

The second part of our stay involved teaching groups of Year 4 pupils French. Parachuting into a class with a prepared lesson, not knowing the school teachers or children is always problematic. Through careful planning of the lesson, we had considered many of the likely difficulties and, as a result, the children were engaged with the French lesson, benefitting from the "novelty" of having that multilingual element with their new teachers. Nevertheless, we struggled with the noise level and with some children's behavior. We noticed that a few pupils had quite good French skills while others were lost in the task and would have needed more help than what we could provide in the chosen set up. This experience was eye opening for us; we realized the challenge it can be to work with such a large number of pupils, even with the support of a classroom assistant, while still managing each student's learning path.

Group work is based predominantly on a social constructivism theory that requires pupils to interact. We observed that when in groups, pupils often worked alone, side by side, and wondered if the focus on grouping by abilities was not enhancing the gap between the different ability groups. If collaboration is carefully managed in mixed ability groups, the stronger pupils can have a very positive influence on the performance of the "weaker" pupils. Many researches have highlighted how homogeneous grouping has benefits for higher attaining pupils but can be detrimental to the learning and self-confidence of average and lower attaining pupils (Francis et al., 2014; Ireson et al., 2002; Kutnick et al., 2005; Peacock, 2016; Taylor et al; 2016 as cited in Blatchford et al., 2018).

We also wondered if sending the struggling pupils to the corridors to work with less qualified classroom assistants was a good idea. When the weakest students are taken out of the classroom, they miss the motivational effect of whole classroom teaching and feel separated from their classmates. Data suggests there is a negative relationship between the amount of classroom and pupil support-based staff and progress made by lower ability groups (Blatchford et al., 2012).

During the time in Winchester we contrasted lemons and oranges and saw much to keep on both sides of the pond. The Swiss students left Winchester with no clear-cut answers but so much inspiration and food for thought. We are immensely grateful for the opportunity to experience another vision of teaching and learning and thank all the dedicated teachers who opened their classrooms and the pupils who shared their learning.

Our only sadness was that the reciprocal visit to Lausanne was cancelled due to COVID so the UK students could not learn first-hand in Swiss schools or try out their teaching methods in the same way that their Swiss counterparts had done.

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# ALL CHILDREN ENJOYING AND LEARNING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## PEERS project structure

The aim of PEERS programs (Projets d'Etudiants et d'Enseignants-chercheur en réseaux sociaux) is to articulate student exchanges around a defined research project by a group of four students from the University of Teacher Education of the State of Vaud in Switzerland (HEP Vaud) in association with a group of four students from a partner institution, which is in 2019-2020 the Centro de Estudios Superiores Alberta Giménez (CESAG) in Palma de Mallorca in Spain. Each PEERS project is supervised by a teacher-researcher of both Institutes of Education and lasts one academic year, combining face-to-face (one week in fall and another week in spring) with distance collaborative work phases. The presented PEERS project between HEP Vaud and CESAG focuses on students with additional needs in Physical Education (PE).

## Inclusion of students with additional needs in Physical Education

Mostly, PE teachers are the first to experience the inclusion of a student with additional needs (Alquraini & Gut, 2012). Often PE is experienced positively, as it provides access to a community of fun with regular students (Turpin et al., 1997). Research also shows that the PE environment is a support for the development of educational solutions aimed at inclusion (O'Brien, Kudláček, & Howe, 2009) and that it also has a strong power of socialization that promotes positive interpersonal relationships among students (Qi & Ha, 2012). On the other hand, PE is also a medium encouraging competitive activities and performance measures, which can lead some struggling students to social isolation (André, Deneuve, & Louvet, 2010). Informed by the literature this project is interested in educational actions related to the inclusion of students with additional needs in both countries, Switzerland and Spain. The students answered three research questions after the lessons observations: a) What professional skills of teachers did you observe in all classes you observed? b) What are the challenges that teachers face to include children with additional needs? c) Can you describe how engaged students with additional needs are in the PE lesson (security, involvement, learning, social involvement)?

## Context and participants

The students involved in the project were Swiss specialist PE teachers (n=4) and Spanish generalist teachers (n=4), accompanied by two PE lecturers. In both countries the students observe PE classes (primary and secondary) (n=12) where students with additional needs

were included. They observed students with Autism, Down Syndrome, cognitive difficulties, dyspraxia, dwarfism, Brittle bone disease, disruptive behaviours. After the class observations, they did research meetings around the topic and shared together a cultural and sport program. The Spanish students learned ice-skating and indoor climbing, taught by the Swiss PE student teachers and they ate a cheese fondue. They compared the different learning approaches in both education systems and talked about the best way to include students with additional needs. The semi-structured interviews were recorded at the end of each week.

## ABSTRACT

A student mobility project combining face-to-face and distance working time, supervised by two trainers from teacher training centres, focuses on the inclusion of pupils with special needs in physical and sports education. The partnership between the Haute Ecole Pédagogique du canton de Vaud in Switzerland and the Centro de Estudios Superiores Alberta Giménez in Palma de Mallorca in Spain are collaborating for the first time during the 2019-2020 academic year on a research project. The numerous class visits, both in Palma and in the canton of Vaud, were the highlight of this project. The class visits were accompanied by work and reflection sessions on the inclusion of pupils with special needs in physical and sports education. The implications of these inclusive practices for the pupil concerned, peers and teachers were also discussed and researched.

## RÉSUMÉ

Un projet de mobilité estudiantine alliant temps de travail en présentiel et à distance, encadré par deux formateurs de centres de formation des enseignants, a pour thème l'inclusion des élèves à besoins spécifiques en éducation physique et sportive. Le partenariat entre la Haute Ecole Pédagogique du canton de Vaud en Suisse et le Centro de Estudios Superiores Alberta Giménez à Palma de Mallorca en Espagne collaborent pour la première fois durant l'année académique 2019-2020 autour d'un projet de recherche. Les nombreuses visites de classe, tant à Palma que dans le canton de Vaud, ont été le point saillant de ce projet. Les visites de classes ont été accompagnées par des séances de travail et de réflexion sur l'inclusion des élèves à besoins particuliers en éducation physique et sportive. Les implications de ces pratiques inclusives pour l'élève concerné, les pairs et les enseignants ont été discutées également et ont fait l'objet de travaux de recherche.

# MOBILITY PROGRAM BETWEEN TWO INSTITUTES OF EDUCATION IN LAUSANNE (SWITZERLAND) AND PALMA DE MALLORCA (SPAIN)

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### Key outcomes

All students noted the adaptation skills of the teachers as they included a student with additional needs. Each teacher had the goal to engage the student with additional needs as well as goals for the rest of the class. They noted also the high quality organizational skills. The communication was another observed skill. Explaining activities in a clear and concise way seems essential for a PE teacher including a student with additional needs. Finally regarding the first research question, the students observed a strong teamwork around the students with additional needs.

The second research question aims to define the challenges that teachers had to include positively the students with additional needs. The students highlighted four challenges: a) the importance of learning about each disability and knowing the personal characteristics of each student with additional needs, because even with the same disability, characteristics may be different, b) the importance of choosing an activity in which the student with additional needs can be active, even if the easiest way could be to give him a passive role, c) the importance of adapting quickly if the lesson plan doesn't work for the student with additional needs, d) the most important challenge is to teach to meet the additional needs of the student with special needs and to meet the needs of the rest of the class. Maintaining this balance is very challenging, because the teacher has to focus on both aspects, to teach and supervise the student with additional needs and to teach and supervise the entire class.

The third research question concerns the student with additional needs. All students believed that the social involvement represented the most important aspect for the student. The positive interactions between the student with additional needs and the rest of the class is the objective of good teaching: the teacher should differentiate his teaching for all his students and not only for the student with additional needs and the teacher's focus should reach beyond consideration of motor skills. The emotional and social components play an essential role in successful inclusion in PE.

### Conclusion

Sharing a PEERS project with students and lecturers coming from two different countries, about the inclusion of a student with additional needs in PE is a wonderful opportunity in the curriculum. The highlights are to discover different cultures, different ways to teach PE and different education systems. This project helped the students to become more open minded and to accept any differences. Additionally they determined that the new norm is to adopt the view that each student, with or without additional needs is an individual with his own needs and characteristics. PE provides a perfect opportunity to include students with additional needs in positive ways because of its power of socialization. It seems that the aim of the PEERS project which is to promote global teachers in a global world has been achieved.

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# SENIOR UNIVERSITIES IN PORTUGAL CHARACTERIZATION, MOTIVATION AND HEALTH IMPACT



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## ABSTRACT

Given the growth of the number of senior universities (US or U3A) in Portugal we think it is important to know who frequents these institutions, what are their motivations and the impact it has on their health.

Portugal has now, June 2020, 368 US (70% of them were created by associations) with 62.000 students and 7.500 volunteers professors. Of the 368, 296 were registered in RUTIS's national network.

The authors have created a survey that was administered in 1.016 senior students in Portugal. With this study, it was possible to trace the profile of the students who attend Senior Universities.

We now know that there are essentially women, aged between 60-75 years and of all social and educational levels. As for the motives, essentially social interaction, getting active and learning, are the top reasons people join. The majority of students has noticed a development in mental and physical health, the increase of their social contacts, improvement of their ICT skills and the reduction of depression cases.

## RÉSUMÉ

Vu la croissance du nombre d'universités du troisième âge au Portugal, nous considérons qu'il est important de connaître le public qui fréquente ces établissements, leurs motivations, l'impact sur la santé et s'il existe des différences significatives entre les deux pays. Les auteurs ont élaboré une enquête qui a été appliquée à 1016 étudiants seniors au Portugal.

Selon cette étude, ça a été possible d'établir le profil des étudiants qui fréquentent les universités du troisième âge (UTA ou U3A) au Portugal.

En juin 2020, le Portugal avait 368 UTA (70% créés par des associations) avec 62 000 élèves et 7 500 enseignants volontaires, dont 296 sont inscrits sur le Réseau national (RUTIS).

Après cette étude, nous savons maintenant que ce sont principalement des femmes âgées de 60 à 75 ans et de tous niveaux sociaux et éducatifs.

En ce qui concerne les motifs, c'est avant tout la convivialité, être actif et apprendre.

La plupart des interrogés ont reconnu, des gains de santé physique et mentale, augmenté le réseau de contacts sociaux, augmenté ses connaissances en informatique et ont de faibles niveaux de dépression.

## Introduction

With the current and progressive ageing of the population in the West, the urgency of creating a specific theoretical and educational model for older adults, in which the professional purpose is not the most important. The ideas of pedagogical gerontology or of educational gerontology arise, as the authors. According to Osorio, "the purpose (of educational Gerontology) is to prevent the premature decline, facilitate the development of significant roles for senior people, psychological development, so as to prolong the health and productive years and increase the quality of life of senior people" (2005, p. 280).

The education for the elderly has been the subject of several investigations and are currently accepted two complementary theories: one that conceives education as a strategy of "social therapy", promoting and encouraging the social integration (and in this case the education is an instrument for the promotion and social integration), the second perspective understands that a better aging for those

that keep the mind active through educational activities. In this vision, education is simultaneously a kind of mental gymnastics, which prevents the deterioration of cognitive abilities and an instrument for the acquisition of new knowledge.

In this situation emerge the Senior Universities (US), which is a larger example of citizenship, education, social inclusion, volunteering, knowledge, learning and community development. It existed in June 2020 in Portugal, 338 Senior Universities recorded in Portugal and close to 62,000 students and 7,500 volunteer teachers. (Jacob, 2020), of this US, 70% are created by associations and the other 30% by counties.

The Senior Universities emerged in 1972 in France as a specific educational movement for the seniors at the University of Toulouse, with Dr. Pierre Vellas. The model quickly grew and reached other countries that adapted to their reality. Currently there are two great models of organization of the US: the French model and the English model. The French model associates the US to formal universities, while the British model was developed based on volunteering, non-profit associations or self-organizing groups. In addition to these two great models there are several mixed models and with small variants.

Thus, the University of the third age or Senior University, are the “educational answers that seek to create and streamline regularly activities in the social, cultural areas of knowledge and conviviality, from 50 years of age, continued by public or private entities, whether for profit or not,” according to the Council of Ministers Resolution nº 76/2016).

In April 2016 the Portuguese Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security (MSTSS) wrote the following text illuminating the importance of US: “The results of the action of the universities and Senior Academies are unquestionable as they provide welfare, both in strengthening the perspectives of social integration and participation in improving the conditions and quality of life of the people who attend them. .... The added values are not only in the maintenance of intellectual and physical nature activities and acquisition of knowledge, but also the primary nature of socialization and maintaining social contacts. If, on the one hand, the stimulus to learning capacity and participation can contribute to society to distance themselves from some of the stereotypes and negative images attributed to aging and old age, on the other hand, and from the individual point of view, help perspective projects and future goals, promoting, thus,

the increase in life expectancy with quality and dignity”.

“Senior Universities regularly provide classes, lectures, events and cultural guides, thematic workshops, meetings, outreach and information sessions, surveys, voluntary and solidarity actions, performances, floral games, contests, seminars, intergenerational days and visits to museums, theatres and monuments to all seniors, regardless of their academic, economic or social level.” Jacob (2017).

Several scientific and academic studies, demonstrate and confirm that attending a senior University enhances the quality of life of its regulars, improves one’s general health, reduces feelings of depression and isolation, diminishes the consumption of medicines and increases social integration (see Jacob, 2009; Jesus, 2010; Pocinho, 2015, Rebelo, 2016).

### Materials and Methods

To meet the students of the senior universities and their motivations, the authors have created a survey with close-ended questions that they delivered personally to the students to fill out. The questionnaire was applied to 1.016 people from all over the country, in the months of February and March 2018. In the study on depression the Geriatric Depression Scale of Yesavage was applied, short version of 15 questions.

### Results of the student’s characterisation:

In the following table we present a summary of the characterisation of Portuguese and students.

Table 1 – characterization of senior students in Portugal	
Data	Portugal
Participants	1.016
Gender	Female – 71.9% Male – 28.1%
Age:	
under 64 years	28.1%
between 65 a 75 years	57.1%
over 75 years	14.8%
How many days they stay at the US	1 day – 11.8% 2 days – 35.5% 3 days – 22.7% 4 days – 23.6% 5 days – 6.4%
How many subjects they enrol in	1 – 5.9% 2 – 23.8% 3 – 23.8% 4 – 17.8% 5 – 15.8% Over 6 – 12.9%

Regarding the educational level the groups are very heterogeneous. The highlight goes to the students with the 5th and 7th grade and between the 10th and 12th grade in Portugal. The women represent 71,9% of the group, 90% are retired and the most common age between 65 and 75 years old. The students usually spent 2 to 3 days in the US and take part in 2 to 4 subjects.

### Results of motivations

Another objective of the study was to know what motivated the students to attend these institutions and what

they hoped to achieve by attending them. The results obtained are consistent with the existing literature. According to Florindo (2008, p. 67), “The main justification for going back to school is the need or desire to learn and improve your knowledge (40%), followed by the desire to keep active (13%).”

In our survey in Portugal the main motivations were, in order: keep active (76%); Learn and knowledge acquisition in general (52.6%) and meet new people/socialization (51%).

### Results of health impact

As for the impact of the US frequency on their lives, respondents indicated almost no “meaningless” points, with the greatest gains being in having an active life, improving their mental health, increasing their knowledge, better physical health and more self-esteem. We can see that the impact of the frequency of US on the health of the elderly is quite significant, as we can see in the table 2.

Table 2 – Health impact, after bee in a US	
Question	Answer
In relation to your general health condition, you think that:	
Improved:	51.7%
Worsened:	1%
It was the same:	47.3%

Applying the Yesavage Geriatric Depression Scale in its short version of 15 questions it was possible to verify that the number of respondents with symptoms of mild depression or

recorded depression are much lower than in the general elderly population.

	Seniores Students	Seniores in Portugal
without depression	92%	57%
mild depression	7.4%	43%
severe depression	0.6%	

\* Depression in elderly: prevalence and associated factors  
<http://www.rpmgf.pt/ojs/index.php/rpmgf/article/view/10764/10500,2010>

### Discussion and Conclusion

This study shows that the audience is mainly female but very heterogeneous in educational level, income and age and the attendance has a real positive impact in the lives of its regular students. The motivations that lead the seniors to these institutions is the social gathering, keep active and learn more.

The impact of these organizations on health is very significant, with the vast majority of respondents feeling better, mentally and physically. After being in the US, the consumption of anxiety medications has dropped significantly and the levels of depression are very low.

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# COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING - LEARNING BY DOING FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY

## ABSTRACT

For two years now, we have been implementing a new curriculum for the three-year teacher training primary education teacher training at the Artevelde University of Applied Sciences in Ghent, Belgium. In addition to the subject-related, didactic and pedagogical aspects, we also wanted to give a thoughtful place to social engagement in the study program. In Flanders, there has recently been a lot of attention for an innovative approach, called service learning. In this article we will reflect on our first experiences of this promising approach. What added value does community service-learning offer for a future teacher and what pitfalls did we fall into?

## RÉSUMÉ

Depuis deux ans maintenant, nous mettons en œuvre un nouveau programme pour la formation en trois ans des enseignants de l'enseignement primaire à l'Université des sciences appliquées Artevelde à Gand, en Belgique. Outre les aspects thématiques, didactiques et pédagogiques, nous avons également voulu donner une place importante à l'engagement social dans le programme d'études. En Flandre, on a récemment accordé beaucoup d'attention à une approche innovante, appelée apprentissage par le service. Dans cet article, nous allons réfléchir à nos premières expériences de cette approche prometteuse. Quelle valeur ajoutée l'apprentissage par le service communautaire offre-t-il à un futur enseignant et dans quels pièges sommes-nous tombés ?

## What's this community service learning?

Service learning is an approach that aims to integrate engagement into the curriculum of our students. Service learning consists of three parts. In addition to the engagement itself, there is a necessary link with previously acquired theoretical contents and the student is also expected to reflect critically on his experiences.

## Engagement and its place in our curriculum

Our curriculum consists of a number of learning tracks. One of these learning tracks is about the student's professional and personal development. In this track, during the first year we go in the introspective direction and together with the student we investigate who he is and what he stands for. Why did he choose this wonderful profession, what is he strong in and what can he still grow into? The focus of the second year is on the student in relation to his environment. In order to realize this, we ask the student to make a commitment. Finally, the third year is a prelude to the profession as such.



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### How we shaped the course

In this course, we have chosen to see engagement as a means to achieve a number of specific goals. We extensively reflect on the student's identity and the impact on how he looks at others in general and the pupils in his profession in particular. We confront the student with possible stereotypes and allow him to come into contact with children from social classes other than his own. The importance of a student's deontological integrity is specific in this respect. Secondly, we attach great importance to the development of conversation and coaching skills. Finally, we work extensively on reflection skills. All these aspects come together during the engagement the student takes on and offer the ideal opportunity for practice.

### Extensive cooperation with external partners

The student takes a commitment in organisations that work with children living in socially vulnerable situations. Some organisations have been partners for a long time. We worked with other organisations for the first time. The students could choose from projects that focus on tutoring, on reading skills among non-native newcomers, on exercise recreation among children who have limited resources to join a sports club or on learning to programme. In addition to this offer from the teacher training, the interested student could propose a project (e.g. supervising underage refugees) himself/herself.

### Challenges

The biggest challenge for a course like this is organisational complexity. A total of ten external organisations worked together to create a challenging learning environment for 110 students. It is necessary to ensure clear learning objectives, to align the expectations of all parties (teacher training, student and organisation) and to adjust quickly in the event of any problems.

In addition, we were also confronted with the coronavirus outbreak. Physical contact moments were not possible during the lockdown period in Belgium. Due to the social vulnerability of the pupils, it was anything but obvious to simply switch to a digital environment. Some pupils did not have access to a computer or an internet connection. For many students it was quite a challenge to find a solution to keep in touch with their pupils. The creativity and energy of some to help these pupils during this difficult time was heartwarming.

### What our students learned

At the start of this course, many students were rather reluctant. They looked a bit suspicious about the commitment but were ultimately very positive about the added value of the commitment for their development as teachers. By being given the opportunity to learn by doing and to get in contact with a group of pupils with whom many often have little or no feeling, their perspective broadened. This practical aspect is very important in my opinion. You can talk about children living in socially vulnerable situations so often during theoretical lessons, experiencing and understanding the impact this has on the daily lives of those pupils is essential for a teacher.

### Pitfalls?

This year was a pioneering year and especially on the organisational level we had to solve a lot of problems. From finding partners over the selection process for the students to integrating this commitment in the weekly planning of the student, ... we knew a steep learning curve.

The students were challenged to take matters into their own hands. It is important though to guide the student in this and not to leave them like a fish on dry land.

### Conclusion

We are convinced of the added value of this approach in our curriculum. It ensures that we break out, that we look for the real world. The majority of students are confronted with a world in which children grow up in less privileged circumstances. To strive for that unconditional acceptance of his pupils by a teacher, this learning experience is crucial.

In addition, it is clear that the commitment is also very important for the community of which he is part.

### Call

I would very much like to hear what experience other partners have with community service learning. You can always reach me via my email.

### Additional info

<https://www.eoslhe.eu/> - European Observatory of Service-Learning in Higher Education



# **Window on the world**

**(contributions from  
outside of the association)**

## ABSTRACT

In this paper, we will describe an intercultural and pedagogic pre-service and in-service teacher exchange project that took place in Switzerland and India during the first academic semester of 2019-2020 between the Haute Ecole Pédagogique in the Vaud canton of Switzerland and the NorthStar School in the Gujarat region of India. Ten pre-service teachers and two teacher trainers from Switzerland and eight in-service teachers and five teacher trainers and managers from India took part in this project. The exchange focused on implementing cross-curricular teaching in NorthStar classes, grades 3 to 8. This paper will first describe the details of what participants needed to do and how these activities and projects were achieved during the period prior to arrival in India. Then it will outline what participants managed to achieve during the two weeks on site in India and the outcomes they needed to produce once the on-site period was over. Finally, the paper will review the strengths and potential weaknesses of such a project by considering its significance and concrete usefulness to all participants concerned.

## RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article, nous décrivons un projet d'échange interculturel et pédagogique d'enseignants en formation initiale et continue qui a eu lieu en Suisse et en Inde au cours du premier semestre académique de 2019-2020 entre la Haute Ecole Pédagogique du canton de Vaud en Suisse et la NorthStar School dans la région du Gujarat en Inde. Dix enseignants en formation initiale et deux formateurs d'enseignants de Suisse, ainsi que huit enseignants en formation continue et cinq formateurs et gestionnaires d'enseignants d'Inde ont participé à ce projet. L'échange s'est concentré sur la mise en œuvre d'un enseignement pluridisciplinaire dans les classes de l'école NorthStar, de la troisième à la huitième année. Le présent document décrit tout d'abord les détails de ce que les participants devaient faire et comment ces activités et projets ont été réalisés au cours de la période précédant leur arrivée en Inde. Ensuite, il décrira ce que les participants ont réussi à réaliser pendant les deux semaines sur place en Inde et les résultats qu'ils devaient produire une fois la période sur place terminée. Enfin, le document passera en revue les forces et les faiblesses potentielles d'un tel projet en examinant sa signification et son utilité concrète pour tous les participants concernés.

# VIRTUAL AND ON-SITE PEDAGOGIC EXCHANGE BETWEEN SWISS PRE-SERVICE AND INDIAN IN-SERVICE TEACHERS





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As a young child I used to sit on my grandfather's lap with eyes as large as saucers, while he recounted his adventures in India during the 1930s. In hindsight, these were fabricated, vastly exaggerated stories such as fighting off a streak of tigers single-handedly. However, this exotic fiction would stay with me and when an email plopped into my inbox in April 2019 about a mobility project to a school India, I responded by firing off a one liner to my trusted colleague "Shall we go to India?" (Lucy Kottsieper, HEP Vaud 2019)

### Context

The Haute Ecole Pédagogique (HEP), Vaud, Switzerland is a teacher training college that offers Bachelors and Masters degrees to pre-service teachers from primary to secondary level in the state sector. The Northstar School (TNS) in the Gujarat region of India is a relatively new school with small classes ranging from pre to high school. The Bureau de la Mobilité at the HEP instigated a collaborative project between the two and delegated the organisation on the Swiss side to us in July 2019. At the start of the academic year 19-20, the project counted ten pre-service Bachelor and Master students from the HEP and eight in-service teachers, concerned with grades 1 to 8, from TNS, plus trainers from both institutions.



### Initial period of virtual collaboration: September to January 2019-20

Swiss and Indian project management met via Skype to discuss the angle of our collaborative venture and to agree each step of the way. We were interested in diverging from standard teaching to focus on the practice of cross-curricular teaching and learning (CCTL). The idea was that each HEP student would partner up with a TNS educator and plan CCTL sequences that would be put into place in TNS over a two-week on-site visit. The project offered 6 ACTS credits to our students and therefore the outcomes needed to be clearly defined. HEP students were expected to complete the project with a planned and practiced 8-11 hour CCTL sequence, keep regular entries in a learning journal and create a 180 second video with their Indian partner on what they had learnt during the project.

Over the autumn semester, ten seminars were held for the Swiss participants. They were fundamental for developing knowledge on cross-curricular teaching, as our students had very little experience of this kind of teaching prior to joining the project. The seminars also focused on developing deeper intercultural competence, easing international collaboration, sharing knowledge of e-tools, developing content for their selected themes of work, sharing ideas for planning and didactics, materials, teaching activities/tasks, and perhaps most importantly, creating good group dynamics.

TNS project members held their own development sessions. Early on in the semester we held a group skype meeting so that all participants could introduce themselves in English. As English was not the first language for most participants, it was important to have the visual exchanges. Introductory videos were supplied by each participant, which were useful for linking names to faces and learning more about each other before arriving on site.

The benefits of using 21st Century e-tools shone through in this project; they were essential as a means for organisation and collaboration. For example we used Moodle as a platform for all internal HEP communication and information, and between TNS and HEP we used Padlet for sharing theoretical knowledge, Google docs for sharing lesson plans,



videos on Google Drive, Skype and WhatsApp for video-talks between Swiss and Indian partners.

It was important for project management on both sides to have pre and post-project information from TNS and HEP participants; they were asked to answer questionnaires about cross-curricular teaching and about their learning throughout the exchange. This offered invaluable insight into students' points of view and were useful when assessing the true added value to such ventures compared to the time and energy invested.

Once the HEP students and TNS educators were paired up and their teaching themes were settled, the first challenge was to start one-to-one discussions and sharing ideas for planning a significant number of hours of collaborative teaching. Inevitably some partners found this easier than others but through gentle nudging, sub-group sharing in some of our seminars, and encouragement from other participants, everybody managed to sketch out some kind of sequence by the time we were scheduled to leave Switzerland.

To develop intercultural competence, we asked our HEP students to complete a questionnaire prior to discussions in small groups, whereupon rich and occasionally heated exchanges ensued. Culture is a strong thread throughout a project such as this, and our students were asked to bring some Swiss culture into the Indian classrooms, as few, if any of the Indian pupils had been to Switzerland or Europe. This proved a hard but rewarding task requiring much thought and planning.

### On-site collaboration

We were overwhelmed by a superb welcoming ceremony before being shown around the campus. We began to learn about TNS and its workings. Our students and TNS educators had five three-hour sessions during week one to develop and finalise their teaching sequences. Materials were created and students were able to observe the classes they would co-teach the following week.

As from day four, the cross-curricular sequences were put into action. We were able to observe the classes, film and take photos. Needless to say, the collaboration paid off and pupils, students and educators alike learned and gained from this shared experience.

At the end of week two, the first drafts of students' learning journals were due. This proved to be a wake-up call for some, who had to spend a long night penning in their memories. The final day before departure was devoted to creating 180-second videos with their TNS partners, based on the aforementioned journals. This caused laughter and tears, with some participants feeling it was the biggest challenge of all. However, the results were commendable. Once back home, the students had a week to finalise their reflective learning journals. Post-project questionnaires with compulsory completion were distributed and analysed.

Our own outcome was to keep a daily blog of our adventures. For full details and many photos, see <https://heptns.home.blog>.



### Potential challenges

Such a project had the potential for being unbalanced. It was a challenge to find the right amount of sharing between pre-service teachers who had relatively little class-responsible teaching practice behind them, and in-service teachers, some of who had years of experience.

The Indian in-service teachers could have balked at welcoming pre-service teachers into their classrooms. Likewise, our students had to tread the fine line of how to assert themselves into someone else's ways of teaching their class. However, everyone collaborated as best they could for mutual enrichment.

We were also aware of the efforts our hosts were making and wondered if our stay could have been shorter. Two weeks taken out of a busy school curriculum is potentially a lot to ask. If such a project is run in the future, we could possibly shorten it.

Our students were impressed with TNS' 12 habits of mind skills but felt that these were difficult to implement in their own teaching contexts. Likewise, some felt that CCTL would be fairly impossible to integrate into an 'inflexible' Swiss curriculum. However, further discussion reminded our students of how the Vaud education curriculum does include similar objectives that unfortunately get overlooked when 'getting through the syllabus'.

Students were made aware that CCTL can be incorporated into smaller teaching sequences, in subjects such as language, for example. Habits of mind could equally be included in lesson planning. This needed discussing so that the gap between the two education systems seemed narrower.

We as trainers and project managers also needed to be aware of, and treat potential or concrete weaknesses, as we went along, which was a challenge in itself. If we missed something important or did not take the time to discuss something, the learning curve might have been less important for some. This meant constant attention to detail and several discussions with our team.

### Opportunities

Opportunities could be gained from all perspectives and in all the phases along the way. All participants involved in the preparation and planning phase could appreciate how vital this was. Open and frequent communication between TNS and HEP participants demonstrated how misunderstandings could be avoided or smoothed over. The advantages and frustrations of international teamwork and collaboration were tackled with varying degrees of enthusiasm and some long-lasting working relationships were formed.

Discovering new teaching approaches in a different context and in a foreign language enhanced our students' - and our own - reflective skills. After some initial surprise at different 'ways of teaching', keeping an open mind definitely led to gaining in objectivity and deeper personal and professional development. TNS pupils gained from having a real reason to display their work and engage with enthusiastic foreign visitors.

Both parties learnt about each other's cultural similarities and differences. There were several 'aha' moments when our students' pre-conceived ideas about India were shown to be quite wrong. Sharing Swiss cultural aspects

also surely opened pupils' and teachers' minds about certain stereotypical notions of Switzerland. The 180-second videos that the teams created at the end of the project, and the learning journals, clearly showed that they all gained in professional and personal maturity.

For us, as teacher trainers and project managers, the professional and personal gains were vast. Getting to know a different education system and being part of this interesting school for two weeks offered us deeper knowledge into how children learn and what motivates (or de-motivates!) teachers and staff. We saw what an excellent private school can offer.

We felt the learners' interest and enthusiasm and experienced first-hand how CCTL can motivate both learners and teachers alike. And perhaps equally importantly, we met India and learnt how a country can enter and take over one's senses and soul. We learnt how a culturally different country, with all its contrasts and conflicts imagined from afar, can carry you away with its smiles and kindness. We also learnt, through reading our students' learning journals that were such an essential part of this project, that at times - possibly through fatigue or lack of time - we had misjudged behaviour or attitudes, that there was a much deeper problem at heart that the person was dealing with and that we, too, needed to remind ourselves to be more micro-interculturally tolerant and open-minded.

### Conclusion

Mobility exchanges take all its participants on a considerable learning curve and no one comes away without some kind of personal and professional change. Our students gained a sense of achievement, of having accomplished a cross-curricular sequence in a new context and culture and in a different language. They brushed up their organisational skills, planning and constantly adapting, and most importantly gaining a view of their teaching from the outside in.

Although there are many challenges to such a project, we would never hesitate in undertaking such a venture again. It is a win-win situation. The advantages outweigh the disadvantages by far.

Yes, there are difficult moments, yes, our comfort zones were challenged, yes, we felt the effects of the responsibility of taking ten students to a country that neither of us had ever been to, but the benefits made it all so very worthwhile.

*We came home tired but elated; we hadn't fought any tigers but certainly had genuine stories of exotic, impressionable experiences to recount.*



# Mobility experiences

**(student mobility reports;  
teacher mobility reports;  
E+-projects; conferences)**

# SPUNK EXPEDITION: DISCOVERING INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS ON 6000KM OF ROAD TRIPS

## ABSTRACT

Six weeks and 6.000 km on the road through Austria, Germany and Switzerland. A group of primary school- education students (student teachers) from Vienna explored the fifteen most extraordinary schools they could find. The result of those adventures: 13 nights of bonfires, 1 festival, 1 drag show and many many more experiences worth telling. What defines the Spunk group is their ideal of democracy. All decisions regarding the organisation have been made democratically and responsibility was shared and divided equally within the group. Following this mindset, the collective brains of all Spunks collaborated in writing this article to finally put the Spunk-Project on paper.

To share their experiences with others, a Spunk-Blog has been created ([spunktour.wordpress.com](http://spunktour.wordpress.com)), likewise in form of a collective project. Creating space for individuality, democracy and the curiosity to explore new ways of education is the message the Spunk group wants to spread to the world.

## RÉSUMÉ

Six semaines et 6.000 km sur la route à travers l'Autriche, l'Allemagne et la Suisse. Un groupe d'élèves de l'enseignement primaire (élèves-enseignants) de Vienne a exploré les quinze écoles les plus extraordinaires qu'ils ont pu trouver. Le résultat de ces aventures : 13 nuits de feux de joie, 1 festival, 1 spectacle de travestis et bien d'autres expériences qui méritent d'être racontées. Ce qui définit le groupe Spunk, c'est son idéal de démocratie. Toutes les décisions concernant l'organisation ont été prises démocratiquement et la responsabilité a été partagée et répartie de manière égale au sein du groupe. C'est dans cet esprit que les cerveaux collectifs de tous les Spunk ont collaboré à la rédaction de cet article pour finalement mettre le projet Spunk sur papier. Pour partager leurs expériences avec d'autres, un Spunk-Blog a été créé ([spunktour.wordpress.com](http://spunktour.wordpress.com)), également sous la forme d'un projet collectif. Créer un espace pour l'individualité, la démocratie et la curiosité d'explorer de nouvelles voies d'éducation est le message que le groupe Spunk veut faire passer au monde.

## Spunk-Expedition - An introduction

The word SPUNK [ ʃpʊŋk ] was invented by Pippi Longstocking. We borrowed it and used it as an abbreviation, translated to english it could mean "Incredibly curious students roll out criss-cross through the world". The simple idea for this project was born during an ordinary moment in a shower around Christmas in the midst of the first semester of studying. A short message about a road trip, the common need for authentic experiences concerning big words like individualisation and democratic school culture, and the lust for adventure were the initial vital sparks for this project. The first Spunk-Expedition hit the road in summer 2017, followed by two further tours 2018 and 2019. Altogether we traveled for 6 weeks, about 6000km through central Europe. Together we visited 15 extraordinary schools, talked to many headmasters, teachers, children (sometimes for hours). We jumped into 16 rivers or lakes, explored 6 big cities, climbed mountains and visited most of our families. Our average expenses per week per person were about 150€ and about 4.6 meetings were necessary to organise each of our three road trips. Our shortest reflection meeting took us 1 minute, the longest about 9 hours. During our adventures we grew together and became friends. Furthermore we had countless inspirational moments in schools (and outside). Now real images and experiences pop up in our minds when thinking or talking about individualisation, inclusion, Berlin, camping in the rain or democratic school culture. Altogether a significant and life-changing project for all of us.

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Teresa Vicentini, Robert Brezovsky,  
Benedikt Hageneder, Olga Bilek,  
Elias Kühn**

**Students KPH Wien/ Krems  
Kirchliche Pädagogische  
Hochschule Wien/ Krems  
Vienna, Austria**

### Important Experiences

**Elias:** I would like to point out that the Spunk-project gave me an opportunity to run through a process of personal growth. A group of people with an open mindset gives space to grow, learn and develop important things for life; I learned a lot about myself and what my future could look like, but also experienced how a group can travel closely together and listen to all the different needs and opinions through some simple techniques and reflection meetings.

**Robert:** Somehow, our Spunk-Expeditions always were about change. Not only did it change me as a person, through learning new skills and being an equally vital part of a group, it also changed my perception of education. There were moments during my studies, when I had a difficult time finding my own way of teaching I personally could be satisfied about. Taking these trips and exploring different school-systems changed my way of thinking and showed me how many possibilities and opportunities there are. We witnessed such diverse styles of teaching, that I gained an extensive look on what is possible! The Spunk-Project helped me in gathering different puzzle-pieces of pedagogy, methods, and techniques that I could fit together into an individual picture of teaching, which I am happy about – however, there is always room for new pieces to add and pieces to drop. It's all about staying flexible and being able to change. To me, Spunk is about venturing out and trying to discover the real live versions of seemingly conceptual terms, which we are only taught theoretically. All it takes is a group of students sharing the same intriguing visions, who are motivated, pumped and ready to make a change.

**Benedikt:** If you are not happy with your current situation or you want to learn something new. Don't wait until someone (friends, university, a stranger ...) helps you, or offers a solution. Open the door, go out and try to find your own way. I recommend finding a group, together it's much more fun and easier to get along in this world.

**Teresa:** One really special thing about our group is the way we communicate with each other. We developed a very honest and direct way of talking, so conflicts can be resolved quickly, or they don't show up at all. This is possible because we often create a safe space where everyone can reflect and talk about their emotional state, difficulties and problems within the group, without being judged, immediately confronted or feeling like something can't be spoken out.

**Victor:** To me, the most fascinating thing about our Spunk-Tours is the preparation and planning process behind every tour, which always worked pretty well and made the organisation easy and smooth. Starting in January we met up, collected and discussed our first ideas, inspirations and wishes, created a time table for the following meetings and the tour itself. (Which is very important, as it is not that easy to find dates, which are suitable for 7 people at the same time). From then on, we met again about 3 or 4 times until the tour started, to discuss all the details, distribute the responsibilities, and of course to decide the areas and especially the schools we wanted to visit. Therefore, everyone did some research on his\*her own, contacting some schools. As a result, we collectively chose from a list, lining up all the schools which agreed to be part of our project. In June we also organised a weekend, which consisted of planning the last steps, answering uncertain questions and of course having a lot of fun, painting T-shirts, barbecuing, swimming, dancing and being excited about the upcoming tour.

After the tour, in October/ November, we held a reflexion meeting, discussing the trip, our impressions and how to get the most out of our experiences for the next tour.

**Julia:** The most interesting thing for me regarding our project is to see how many approaches there are to implement democracy in groups. In some schools we were told that the children are responsible for leading group discussions and solving problems on their own. Although, during our visit we realized that teachers often still had the ultimate authority. In other schools we experienced children, who managed an extensive decision-making process without the presence of their teacher. For us as a group, it is also important to follow principles of democracy. Therefore we share responsibility and everyone's opinion is considered. That's what I love about the Spunk people.

**Olga:** What fascinates me the most about the Spunk tour, is the fact that it changed and shaped my way of thinking concerning learning environments. I believe that you can only convey values to children you are passionate about. This applies also to learning approaches. Sometimes we had quite high expectations towards certain schools or concepts. I learned on the Spunk journey to realize and accept that a school is and will always be a dynamic and changing community. As people and technology change with time, school culture, concepts, or ideals can also change. We stayed critical, we stayed optimistic, we stayed appreciative. But the most important thing is that we stayed open to gain new perspectives.





### **Most important discoveries**

What were our most fascinating and most important discoveries? What changed our minds about what a school can look like?

We saw very modern school buildings with old-fashioned education-systems and very old buildings with progressive and innovative education-systems. We realised, school is primarily defined by the people who teach there and what their visions are about. Teaching materials and the state of the building are only of second priority.

One very impressive school we visited was the “Bildungsschule Harzberg” (educational school Harzberg) in Germany. Falko Peschel is the headmaster and founder of the school and also wrote some books about “open” education. In this school we discovered an intense learning atmosphere together with a highly opened concept of learning. The students decide on their own about the content, the method of learning and their daily organisation. Class hours as usual don’t happen. The social community meets up to three times a day in a circle which is led by students. In this particular setting they talk about what exercises they’ll do during the day and present their finished works, plan big projects, discuss a wide variety of problems which occur in the school, vote for school-rules, etc... The teacher tries to keep up the children’s intrinsic motivation to learn, sets impulses, explains something if needed and communicates his or her own opinion about the learning process throughout the day, without forcing students to do, or not to do something.

In a Freinet-school two girls led us through the building and explained the most important facts about their way of learning. They had a “Rage-Room”,

this room gives the students space to play without teachers. Every friday this room is used for “poetry reading” where the whole school takes part and pupils can present their exercises, sketches, poems, songs etc. which they produced during the last weeks. The program is primarily led by students. A particular phenomenon accompanied us throughout schools in which children were given a high self-responsibility: The students had conspicuous high self-esteem and a conscious mind.

What surprised us again and again was the hospitality in so many places on our

6 000 km of road trips. These trips created a whole new vision of how schools could look like and will shape our future. There already were and certainly will be lots of moments when we’ll reminisce about how these special schools handled critical aspects of education.

### **Closing words**

We realised that our studies won’t show the schools or concepts which we would like to work at. So we decided that we have to take matters into our own hands for our future: we asked for what we needed and got what we wanted. The fact that we could see and feel “how school can look like” and that we could communicate with so many school-experts, influenced us heavily and shaped our visions. In conclusion, the tour was an extraordinary example of how sustainable learning and teaching can look like and how people are also able to learn from each other while beautiful friendships develop.

We want to end this article with a quote we were told during our second tour and since then stuck with us:

“Do have inspiration and courage to change!”

# EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF GRUNDTVIG AND TEACHERS IN DENMARK

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## ABSTRACT

Denmark attracts students from different countries. What makes education in Denmark unique? Philosophy behind Danish education is one of the features. Especially, educational philosophy of N.F.S. Grundtvig has had a lasting impact on Danish education and he is considered as the father of modern education in Denmark.

In this article, the question: how educational philosophy of Grundtvig impacts on teaching approaches of today's teachers in Denmark is explored based on literatures and what I observed during school visits. School visits are a part of the Erasmus program in University College South Denmark. I visited Rødding Højskole, Vojens Gymnastik- & Idrætsefterskole, and Fællesskolen Favrdal-Fjelstrup. First, the role of educational philosophy is addressed. Second, Grundtvig's idea on education is reviewed. Finally, how teachers in Denmark show up in class is examined in the context of Grundtvig's educational philosophy.

## RÉSUMÉ

Le Danemark attire des étudiants de différents pays. Qu'est-ce qui rend l'éducation au Danemark unique ? La philosophie qui sous-tend l'éducation danoise est l'une des caractéristiques. La philosophie éducative de N.F.S. Grundtvig, en particulier, a eu un impact durable sur l'éducation danoise et il est considéré comme le père de l'éducation moderne au Danemark.

Dans cet article, la question de l'impact de la philosophie éducative de Grundtvig sur les méthodes d'enseignement des enseignants d'aujourd'hui au Danemark est étudiée sur la base de la littérature et de ce que j'ai observé lors de visites d'écoles. Les visites d'écoles font partie du programme Erasmus du University College South Denmark. J'ai visité le Rødding Højskole, le Vojens Gymnastik- & Idrætsefterskole, et le Fællesskolen Favrdal-Fjelstrup. Tout d'abord, le rôle de la philosophie de l'éducation est abordé. Ensuite, l'idée de Grundtvig sur l'éducation est passée en revue. Enfin, la manière dont les enseignants danois se présentent en classe est examinée dans le contexte de la philosophie de l'éducation de Grundtvig.

## Educational philosophy

What is educational philosophy? What are the roles of educational philosophy? How does it help teachers? David T. Hansen, a professor of the Philosophy and Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University, answers that “educational philosophy provides educators with an articulate sense of values, with a moral compass, and with an engine of ideas for use in the actual work of teaching” (Hansen, 2007, p. 14). Hansen further explains about these three components of educational philosophy. Educational philosophy, as a statement of values, indicates what educators’ esteem. The moral compass guides educators in making decisions, and as an engine of ideas, enables educators to respond to new situations and conditions (Hansen, 2007). The absence of educational philosophy means that educators do not have any resources other than their own habit, their memories of their teachers, and experiences as a student and may end up relying on something incompatible (Hansen, 2007). Therefore, educational philosophy has a profound impact on educators and plays a significant role in their teaching approach. Next, Grundtvig’s idea on education will be reviewed.

### Educational philosophy of N.F.S. Grundtvig

N.F.S. Grundtvig’s central idea on education is described as “the school for life”. He criticizes education in his time as “the school for death” where students were taught Latin focusing on its grammar and books were the main tool (Lawson, 1993). For him, education in such traditional schools back then was spiritless and lifeless since it did not spring from the life of the people (Lawson, 1993). He argues that knowledge without having people’s actual lives as the underlying basis such as book knowledge and bible studies is “dead knowledge” (The Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark, 2019). What he values instead of “dead knowledge” is called “the living word”.

*“Grundtvig meant that the ‘living word’ was not formal instruction or lecturing as such but the communication of personal life between teacher and taught; either the teachings live in the life of the teacher and are actively responded to by the student or they do not live at all, the teachings being mere dead words. The ‘living word’*

*is not Biblical fundamentalism but the spiritual communication of ‘the truth’, words of power and authority evoking an active response in the listener” (Lawson, 1993, p.3).*

Therefore, for him, books should be replaced by the spoken word and experience. Regarding teacher-student relationship, Grundtvig emphasizes fellowship and togetherness, and dialogue between teachers and students is given the highest priority as living interaction (The Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark, 2019). Teachers and students are equal, and they learn from each other. Non-authoritarian relationship between teachers and students and mutual learning are central to Grundtvig’s idea on teacher-student relationship.

His contributions are not confined to folk high school. The whole Danish school has been influenced by his thoughts on education (Grundtvig Forum, n.d.).

### Teachers in Denmark

Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, and Hohmann (2014) conducted comparative research on teacher’s role in Denmark and England. The researchers collected qualitative data from 8 teachers from each country. All the teachers are language teachers. The researchers conducted both classroom observation and interviews. The findings suggest that the roles of English teacher in classroom are different from those of Danish teachers (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014). For instance, regarding instructional discourse, English teachers emphasize development of student’s skills and play a coaching role, while Danish teachers focus on cultural exploration and democratic citizenship (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014). In addition, English teachers attempt to form their pupil activity strongly, however, Danish teachers play a role as a facilitator in the classroom (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014).

Furthermore, communication between English teachers and their students them is often one way, while Danish teachers consider themselves as adult companions of their students (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014). The researchers concluded that the differences in teacher’s role in England and Denmark are resulted in the difference in pedagogy. How Danish teachers show up in the classroom examined this research also can be seen in relation to Grundtvig’s idea on education

especially the way the teacher conduct their class, their roles in classroom, and their belief about teacher-student relationship.

Grundtvig’s educational philosophy is also practiced by teachers whom I met during school visits. In Rødning Højskole, a teacher teaching politics conducted an interactive class. He did not use any textbook although he provided a piece of paper with the information about the theme of the class written on it. After a brief introduction by the teacher, a whole-class discussion began. The teacher facilitated the discussion rather than leading it or giving a lecture. In addition, the teacher asked questions to us, the Erasmus students and said he wanted to learn different perspectives from us. It can be said that his teaching approaches reflect educational idea of Grundtvig.

During a visit to Vojens Gymnastik- & Idrætsefterskole, one of the Erasmus students asked a teacher if it is not hard work to stay at the school to take care of students three times a week. The teacher answered that she is happy to work here and she also learn every day from her students. Her values as a teacher can be understood in relation to Grundtvig’s educational philosophy.

In Fællesskolen Favrdal-Fjelstrup, an English teacher explained that he focuses on speaking skills rather than writing skills or grammar because English should be a mean of communication. He also said that his students’ study not merely for the exams but for their lives. In fact, his students have a high level of speaking skill. He can be understood as a teacher who practices Grundtvig’s idea on education.

### Conclusion

Educational philosophy of Grundtvig: education for life is embedded in how teachers in Denmark show up in class. Teachers in Denmark emphasize on cultural practices, facilitate a class, and value in mutual respect, according to the research. Educational philosophy of Grundtvig can be seen in teaching approaches of teachers in schools which I visited. Further research on this research question is needed since the number of teachers who were interviewed and observed is limited and the other educational idea such as Bildung may have influence on educators in Denmark as well as educational philosophy of Grundtvig.

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#### ABSTRACT

During my Erasmus in Denmark, I had the opportunity to take part in the collective project Edu-dream of the exchange programme at University College South Denmark. Gathered in small international groups, we had a week to imagine our ideal school. We were instructed to use at least two philosophical thinkers and one Ted Talk film per person as sources, and we had to focus on the ideas, values and goals of our school, leaving aside its structure. As for the rest, we were totally free. At the end of the week, each group would have 45 minutes to present their ideal school in a creative way, bringing together sources and pathways, while including the audience in some way. Each performance was a surprise full of inventiveness, ingenuity and diversity. This project is a beautiful representation of Danish pedagogy condensed into one week. Here I express my group's background, my student's point of view and my opinion on the project.

#### RÉSUMÉ

Lors de mon Erasmus au Danemark, j'ai eu l'opportunité de participer au projet collectif Edu-dream du programme d'échange de la University College South Denmark. Rassemblés en petits groupes internationaux, nous avons une semaine pour imaginer notre école idéale. Nous avons pour consignes d'utiliser comme sources minimum deux penseurs philosophiques et un film Ted Talk par personne, et nous devons nous focaliser sur les idées, les valeurs et les buts de notre école, en laissant de côté sa structure. Pour le reste, nous étions totalement libres. À la fin de la semaine, chacun des groupes aurait 45 minutes pour présenter son école idéale de manière créative, rassemblant sources et cheminement, tout en incluant le public d'une façon ou d'une autre. Chacune des performances était une surprise pleine d'inventivité, d'ingéniosité et de diversité. Ce projet est une belle représentation de la pédagogie danoise condensée en une semaine.

J'exprime ici le parcours de mon groupe, mon point de vue d'étudiante et mon opinion sur le projet.

#### Educational philosophy

What is educational philosophy? What are the roles of educational philosophy? How does it help teachers? David T. Hansen, a professor of the Philosophy and Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University, answers that "educational philosophy provides educators with an articulate sense of values, with a moral compass, and with an engine of ideas for use in the actual work of teaching" (Hansen, 2007, p. 14). Hansen further explains about these three components of educational philosophy. Educational philosophy, as a statement of values, indicates what educators' esteem. The moral compass guides educators in making decisions, and as an engine of ideas, enables educators to respond to new situations and conditions (Hansen, 2007). The absence of educational philosophy means that educators do not have any resources other than their own habit, their memories of their teachers, and experiences as a student and may end up relying on something incompatible (Hansen, 2007). Therefore, educational philosophy has a profound impact on educators and plays a significant role in their teaching approach. Next, Grundtvig's idea on education will be reviewed.

#### Educational philosophy of N.F.S. Grundtvig

N.F.S Grundtvig's central idea on education is described as "the school for life". He criticizes education in his time as "the school for death" where students were taught

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# EDU-DREAM: AN INTERNATIONAL PROJECT OPENING NEW PERSPECTIVES AND MAKING IDEALS MORE FEASIBLE

Latin focusing on its grammar and books were the main tool (Lawson, 1993). For him, education in such traditional schools back then was spiritless and lifeless since it did not spring from the life of the people (Lawson, 1993). He argues that knowledge without having people's actual lives as the underlying basis such as book knowledge and bible studies is "dead knowledge" (The Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark, 2019). What he values instead of "dead knowledge" is called "the living word".

*"Grundtvig meant that the 'living word' was not formal instruction or lecturing as such but the communication of personal life between teacher and taught; either the teachings live in the life of the teacher and are actively responded to by the student or they do not live at all, the teachings being mere dead words. The 'living word' is not Biblical fundamentalism but the spiritual communication of 'the truth'; words of power and authority evoking an active response in the listener"* (Lawson, 1993, p.3).

Therefore, for him, books should be replaced by the spoken word and experience. Regarding teacher-student relationship, Grundtvig emphasizes fellowship and togetherness, and dialogue between teachers and students is given the highest priority as living interaction (The Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark, 2019). Teachers and students are equal, and they learn from each other. Non-authoritarian relationship between teachers and students and mutual learning are central to Grundtvig's idea on teacher-student relationship.

His contributions are not confined to folk high school. The whole Danish school has been influenced by his thoughts on education (Grundtvig Forum, n.d.).

## Teachers in Denmark

Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, and Hohmann (2014) conducted comparative research on teacher's role in Denmark and England. The researchers collected qualitative data from 8 teachers from each country. All the teachers are language teachers. The researchers conducted both classroom observation and interviews. The findings suggest that the roles of English teacher in classroom are different from those of Danish teachers (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014). For instance, regarding instructional discourse, English teachers emphasize development of student's skills and play a coaching role, while Danish teachers focus on cultural exploration and democratic citizenship (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014). In addition, English teachers attempt to form their pupil activity strongly, however, Danish teachers play a role as a facilitator in the classroom (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014).

Furthermore, communication between English teachers and their students them is often one way, while Danish teachers consider themselves as adult companions of their students (Kelly, Dorf, Pratt, & Hohmann, 2014). The researchers concluded that the differences in teacher's role in England and Denmark are resulted in the difference in pedagogy. How Danish teachers show up in the classroom examined this research also can be seen in relation to Grundtvig's idea on education especially the way the teacher conduct their class, their roles in classroom, and their belief about teacher-student relationship.

Grundtvig's educational philosophy is also practiced by teachers whom I met during school visits. In Rødding Højskole, a teacher teaching politics conducted an interactive class. He did not use any textbook although he provided a piece of paper with the information about the theme of the class written on it. After a brief introduction by the teacher, a whole-class discussion began. The teacher facilitated the discussion rather than leading it or giving a lecture. In addition, the teacher asked questions to us, the Erasmus students and said he wanted to learn different perspectives from us. It can be said that his teaching approaches reflect educational idea of Grundtvig.

During a visit to Vojens Gymnastik- & Idrætsefterskole, one of the Erasmus students asked a teacher if it is not hard work to stay at the school to take care of students three times a week. The teacher answered that she is happy to work here and she also learn every day from her students. Her values as a teacher can be understood in relation to Grundtvig's educational philosophy.

In Fællesskolen Favrdaal-Fjelstrup, an English teacher explained that he focuses on speaking skills rather than writing skills or grammar because English should be a mean of communication. He also said that his students' study not merely for the exams but for their lives. In fact, his students have a high level of speaking skill. He can be understood as a teacher who practices Grundtvig's idea on education.

## Conclusion

Educational philosophy of Grundtvig: education for life is embedded in how teachers in Denmark show up in class. Teachers in Denmark emphasize on cultural practices, facilitate a class, and value in mutual respect, according to the research. Educational philosophy of Grundtvig can be seen in teaching approaches of teachers in schools which I visited. Further research on this research question is needed since the number of teachers who were interviewed and observed is limited and the other educational idea such as Bildung may have influence on educators in Denmark as well as educational philosophy of Grundtvig.

# EFTERSKOLE: ANOTHER WAY OF LIVING AND LEARNING

## Entering the idea of Efterskole

Efterskole is a Danish school system, and education concept only found in this country. This system emerged in 1849 with the aim of teaching to be participative citizens in society. The students who come to an Efterskole are those who want to have a closer decision about their future or better preparation for their later studies. The students of these schools are between the ages of 14 and 17 and they can choose to spend a year or two at most. Each Efterskole chooses its own profile and area in which it will focus its teaching, in addition to the compulsory subjects. This school focuses on academic skills, traditional Danish gymnastics and electives (music, sports and practical subjects).

The participation of the students in the cultural debate is also considered an important part of the personal development of the individual. Its main objective is to teach for life. According to the teachers who work at this type of schools, their differentiating element with others is the close relationship and follow-up that they give students in all areas of their lives, not only in mathematics, history, physics... as it would happen in a traditional model.

Each Efterskole is an independent institution, but they all have a common educational purpose: they concern both the educational and personal development of the students.

## Organization and planning

Attending the Efterskole is like living as a family, students live at school and learn to participate in community. The only employees the school has are the teachers and a chef and there are no cleaning or grooming staff. Students are responsible for all homework; they clean their room, their clothes, the classrooms, the school and wash their dishes. According to the teachers, it is their little details that transform the students in an extraordinary way.

All this helps the students and the teachers to strengthen social and emotional relationships between them, building a family which to learn and live together. The students get to know each other, and they grow in the classroom and outside the classroom.

## ABSTRACT

Can you imagine studying and living in the same place? Efterskole is the place to make this happen. The place where you have different possibilities to study, and where you can choose among the subjects you would like to do. Studying in an Efterskole for a temporary period can be the right choice for those who need a change in their life and another concept of learning (14-16 years). We are talking about a unique system that only exists in Denmark. The schools have a great reputation among the people and quite a few of the schools have a waiting list.

In this article we tell you: what this system consists of, how they are organized, their philosophy, what are their objectives... In addition, we provide testimonies from the students and teachers whom we had the opportunity to meet, when we visited one of these schools.

## RÉSUMÉ

Pouvez-vous vous imaginer étudier et vivre au même endroit ? Efterskole est l'endroit idéal pour y parvenir. C'est l'endroit où vous avez différentes possibilités d'étudier et où vous pouvez choisir parmi les matières que vous souhaitez faire. Étudier dans une Efterskole pour une période temporaire peut être le bon choix pour ceux qui ont besoin d'un changement dans leur vie et d'un autre concept d'apprentissage (14-16 ans)...

Il s'agit d'un système unique qui n'existe qu'au Danemark. Les écoles ont une grande réputation auprès de la population et un certain nombre d'entre elles ont une liste d'attente.

Dans cet article, nous vous expliquons en quoi consiste ce système, comment elles sont organisées, leur philosophie, quels sont leurs objectifs... En outre, nous fournissons les témoignages des élèves et des enseignants que nous avons eu l'occasion de rencontrer, lors de la visite d'une de ces écoles.



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In terms of sustainability of the school, the government pays the educational part and the parents the maintenance expenses, in addition to offering scholarships for those with less resources. The academic contents that children learn delimit them in relation to what the government establishes. Academic content is much easier to manage because the school handles only one grade level. It usually offers a variety of study lines focused on specific topics, such as general sports, cooking, theater, music, dance, etc.

### Special subjects

This school offers the same compulsory subjects and final examinations as state schools. Many schools focus on special subjects such as sport, music or outdoor life and other schools offer different kinds of special education.

As a result, many students at an Efterskole share interests with their fellow students and as well as with the teachers. All this promotes a powerful sense of togetherness and shared values at the Efterskole.

The students specialised in different subjects offered by the school with very specialised skills. An Efterskole that focuses on sports can appoint a former top athlete, or one that specialises in music can appoint a professional player to be a music teacher.

### Teacher-student relationship

The teachers are responsible for teaching and supervising outside hours. The teachers and students are together since they wake up until they go to bed. On the weekends, they have the possibility to choose to go home or to stay. They get to know each other in a non-formal way. It is a close relationship because the teacher acts like a tutor outside the classroom.

The help and accompaniment that is provided both among students and with teachers is one of the bases of this relationship.

In our visit, we observe that teachers help the students help them strengthen their weaknesses, reinforce their strengths and accompany them in this learning in a more specialized way. When we were there, a teacher told us: "The way you teach is as important as what you teach, and what you teach must be interesting and relevant for life, has to prepare you for life. Students must take responsibility for their own learning; they have to learn for their sake not for the teacher's sake."

To conclude, they consider that a year at Efterskole is the same as 7 years in another school. They expand their horizons, they help each other in a different way, they gain in experience and in knowledge and they share different lives learning from each other. It is a sense of community and responsibility that make them mature and get ready to choose about their future.

### What differentiates the students who leave there?

Firstly, the dropout rate for their students is very low compared to students who did not attend an Efterskole. They come out with clearer ideas of what they want to dedicate their next years to, their future, what they like, and what they are good or bad. They come out knowing themselves better and with a lot of motivation to continue studying. In addition to a big maturity and responsibility for the future life that they will live and to know how to face it as citizens who are part of a society.

From what we have seen, this has a big importance both for the students and for the entire society. With their clear ideas they began to be and to feel useful in a society in which many students do not find their role. They feel part of something, in this case of the society, since they leave the Efterskole.

### Closing thoughts

There is something that comes to my mind... we are two students from Spain and we visit an Efterskole in our period in Denmark. It was such an impact to us that it was an example of a school that we don't have in our country. When we were there, we realised that the students were living in another little world inside those walls. But we had the opportunity to talk with some of the students that were studying and living in this place, and one of them told us his story that makes us sensitive and to understand the concept of this school.

*"My family is my brother and my father. Because my mother died some years ago. I am a football player and my father used to be one. I want to follow my father steps and become a professional football player. I used to see my relatives once a month, because I prefer to be apart and focus on learning and training football. To be honest, the situation of my mom makes me stronger. Now, I see things different and in a mature way. Here, I am becoming a man and learning about life, in this place, with my family: the teachers and students that are part of this school and of this experience"*

While we were writing this article a lot of things come to our heads... like an explosion of emotions and feelings that change our minds. We think that the most important aspect is the social and cultural environment where you study and learn. The emotional aspect is the first step for starting to know yourself. Living this experience can make you more open-minded and mature.

Based on our experience, we realize a connection between the world and the students that attend this type of schools. In this place learning is a modification, construction of an inner order and the result is the adaptation to changed conditions. After spending time there and talking to teachers, we cannot stop mention a phrase that one of them said to us: "we try to make citizens of the world, citizens that have honesty, gratefulness and courage, compassion and that have been humble and have great sense of justice."

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# ENSEIGNEMENT FLEXIBLE : ET SI LES CLASSES FLEXIBLES NE SERVAIENT PAS QU'A « FAIRE JOLI » ?



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## La classe flexible

Une classe est considérée comme étant flexible si elle met en œuvre un enseignement flexible, un environnement flexible et un enseignant flexible.

## L'enseignement flexible

C'est un enseignement qui propose de repenser la place de l'élève en le rendant acteur de ses apprentissages. Cela, en plaçant l'enfant au centre de ceux-ci et en accroissant sa liberté grâce à la transformation de l'espace. Cela, permettant une approche plus individualisée et plus respectueuse de ses besoins et de son rythme d'apprentissage.

## L'environnement flexible

C'est un espace dans lequel le mobilier, les assises, l'aménagement de l'espace et les règles associées sont repensés afin d'offrir une plus grande liberté de mouvement et plus de bien-être aux élèves. Il leur permet de bouger et de trouver la position qui leur apportera le plus de confort et de concentration.



## L'enseignant flexible

Il a la capacité de faire confiance à l'élève comme responsable de ses apprentissages, quels que soient son âge et ses capacités. Son rôle est d'accompagner les élèves sans en vouloir le contrôle absolu. Il recherche l'autonomie et il a la volonté de replacer l'élève au cœur de ses apprentissages. Pour ce faire, il s'éloigne de la posture de contrôle ou de sur-étayage et adopte une posture d'accompagnement et de lâcher-prise, lui permettant de répondre au mieux aux besoins de chaque enfant.

## Les 3 approches principales

Il s'agit de repenser : la place et le rôle de l'enseignant, la place et le rôle de l'élève, l'espace et le temps.

## Les principes

Les élèves n'ont plus une seule place fixe, ils peuvent changer de place. Ils varient les positions de travail. Le local est composé de différents espaces d'apprentissage. L'enseignant n'a plus de bureau ou le partage avec ses élèves. Le matériel est riche, rangé par matière ou par centres, en libre accès et mis en commun.

## Philosophie ou pédagogie ?

L'enseignement flexible n'est pas encore reconnu comme étant une pédagogie à part entière. Il est qualifié de philosophie à l'heure actuelle. En effet, par le biais de l'enseignement flexible, plusieurs valeurs sont prônées telles que la différenciation, la bienveillance, et le respect des besoins et du rythme de chaque enfant.

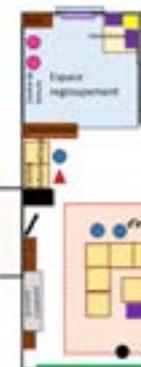
## Les avantages

Les études des neurosciences mettent en avant les bienfaits de cet enseignement. Il permet, entre autres, de contrôler la sédentarité, et d'améliorer la posture, le développement sensori-moteur et le tonus musculaire. Il promeut le travail collaboratif et en équipe. Il améliore la concentration, la motivation, l'implication, l'autonomie et le rendement des élèves mais aussi l'ambiance de travail et la relation enseignant/élèves. De plus, il donne l'occasion à l'enseignant de s'adapter à toutes les personnalités d'élèves.

## Du collectif et des sous-groupes

L'enseignant choisira un moment collectif pour : une activité plus magistrale, pour donner les consignes des activités en sous-groupe ou tout simplement pour avoir du plaisir à former le groupe-classe (histoire, chant, etc...).

Il peut aussi former des groupes multi-âges, de niveaux, de besoins, d'entraide, correspondants à  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$  ou  $\frac{1}{3}$  de la classe. Il organisera alors à l'avance le travail de chaque groupe. Par exemple dans le cas où la classe est divisée en 4 groupes : un groupe est en apprentissage avec l'enseignant, un autre groupe est en atelier de manipulation afin de favoriser l'autonomie, le 3ème groupe est en plan de travail individuel et doit faire preuve d'une autonomie totale, et le dernier groupe est en centres d'autonomie.



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#### ABSTRACT

As a young student who recently graduated as a primary school teacher, I wanted to learn more about teaching, in Belgium and elsewhere. Needing to get away from it all, both geographically and pedagogically, I decided to devote a year to this international training in comparative pedagogy. I then chose as my personal project: "Flexible teaching and other alternative pedagogies, in Belgium and elsewhere". I had the opportunity to learn about this subject throughout the year. This is why I would like to share with you in this article some of my discoveries about flexible classes, a subject that is certainly in vogue, but still so little known.

#### RÉSUMÉ

En tant que jeune étudiante récemment diplômée en tant qu'enseignante en primaire, je voulais en savoir plus sur l'enseignement, en Belgique et ailleurs. Ayant besoin de m'éloigner de tout cela, tant géographiquement que pédagogiquement, j'ai décidé de consacrer une année à cette formation internationale en pédagogie comparée. J'ai ensuite choisi comme projet personnel : "Enseignement flexible et autres pédagogies alternatives, en Belgique et ailleurs". J'ai eu l'occasion de m'informer sur ce sujet tout au long de l'année. C'est pourquoi je voudrais partager avec vous dans cet article certaines de mes découvertes sur les classes flexibles, un sujet certes en vogue, mais encore si peu connu.

#### Mais comment devenir autonome ?

C'est un apprentissage à part entière qui demande du temps, de la réflexion et de l'anticipation. L'enseignant est là pour guider l'enfant étape par étape (autonomie planifiée, guidée puis totale/pleine) dans les activités proposées afin de le rendre de plus en plus autonome. Ce travail vers l'autonomie permettra à l'enseignant de se rendre indisponible pour un groupe afin d'être davantage disponible pour un autre. Pour y arriver, il est important de travailler en parallèle la gestion des espaces, l'indisponibilité de l'enseignant, le lâcher-prise, et le bruit.

#### Les espaces d'apprentissage

Dans une classe flexible on retrouve un espace regroupement pour la classe entière, un espace de travail en demi-classe, un espace de remédiation ou de travail en groupe restreint avec l'enseignant, des îlots pour les travaux de groupe, et enfin des centres, appelés aussi « coins », (centres de lecture, d'écoute, d'informatique, de mathématiques, d'éveil, la bibliothèque, etc...).

#### Les assises

Elles peuvent être calmantes ou stimulantes. Les assises calmantes offrent une position stable ou un mouvement qui calme le système nerveux. Elles permettent une posture centrée sur soi, une oscillation, un balancement, une rotation douce, une faible amplitude de mouvement, un retour au calme et une attention soutenue à la tâche.

Tandis que les assises stimulantes



offrent, elles, un mouvement qui éveille le système nerveux. Elles permettent une dépense d'un surplus d'énergie, de sautiller, de bouger, une grande amplitude de mouvement, et une activation du tonus qui stimule la motricité, l'éveil et l'attention.

#### En Belgique et ailleurs

En Belgique, on commence à entendre parler de classes flexibles et à voir des enseignants qui mettent en place leur propre classe flexible.

Au Canada, c'est une pratique déjà courante depuis quelques années mais assez récente tout de même.

Dans les pays nordiques, on observe des écoles qui ont de nombreux points communs avec l'enseignement flexible.

Ailleurs, cependant, l'enseignement flexible reste encore inconnu pour de nombreux pays.

#### Avant de se lancer

Il est nécessaire de se renseigner et de se sentir prêt car il existe déjà des dérives qui peuvent avoir un effet négatif sur les enfants. Alors, si vous souhaitez faire le grand saut dans l'enseignement flexible, votre décision doit être réfléchie et aboutie. Soyez renseignés, convaincus et motivés avant de vous lancer, car il en va du bien-être et de la réussite de vos élèves.



Within the Comenius Association there is a rich tradition in organising lots of international weeks, staff weeks, projects, Council of Europe meetings and other meetings.

Due to the uncertain current situation on Covid-19 and the pandemic we cannot publish dates here. Please refer to our website for the most current dates:

[www.associationcomenius.org](http://www.associationcomenius.org)

We are looking forward to be able to meet each other very soon. In the meantime... #staysafe

# Announcements and upcoming events



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University College of Teacher  
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Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark

[www.phst.at](http://www.phst.at)

## Belgium

Arteveldehogeschool

[www.arteveldehs.be](http://www.arteveldehs.be)

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[www.henam.be](http://www.henam.be)

Haute École Libre Mosane  
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[www.helmo.be](http://www.helmo.be)

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[www.ph-gmuend.de](http://www.ph-gmuend.de)

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[www.avkf.hu](http://www.avkf.hu)

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[www.spd.dcu.ie](http://www.spd.dcu.ie)

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- School of Education

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