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PATHS TO INCLUSION AND ACCEPTANCE – DEVELOPING A MULTIDIMENSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT MODULE IN THE WIN PROJECT

This article is the presentation of a didactic module of the online learning platform created to support the use of a digital story writing application, which was developed by the Erasmus+ K2 project Writing for Inclusion (WIN). The paper explores the EU educational policy for a plurilingual and pluricultural Europe, where the ideas of care and inclusion play an important role. The focus is on how the authors designed the Module 'Didactics applied to Writing for Inclusion' for the learning platform. In the course of the material development the authors applied a multidimensional approach to teaching story writing and sensitising for care and inclusion in the primary classroom.

Keywords: *inclusion; stories; primary; plurilingual; pluricultural; project; EU.*

Introduction. The Erasmus+K2 project Writing for Inclusion (WIN) set the goal to develop care and inclusion in primary education. The practice of inclusion in European education has become an issue of growing significance. The internal mobility of the population within the European Union and the recent influxes of immigrants from overseas have produced increasingly multicultural and multilingual societies within the member states. The foundation of a functioning plurilingual and pluricultural society is tolerance and the mutual acceptance of each other. The idea of social protection and inclusion was declared as one of the three main targets of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan in 2021. In addition to the inclusion of learners with disabilities, learning difficulties and social background, schools need to provide for children who arrive from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds, making the job of inclusion incredibly complex.

Schools have a pivotal role in responding to the needs a diverse society creates and in forming the attitude of the future generations

through developing their cultural awareness and competences. In addition, the recent arrival of war refugees from Ukraine poses a new challenge for schools all over Europe: most of the refugees are mothers with their children, who need to be accommodated in the schools of various European host countries. This latest development has again underlined the need for schools that are professionally prepared for such tasks.

The goal of the project WIN is to contribute to the work of schools in the field of developing an inclusive community within the society. WIN focuses on different types of care, such as self-care, care for others and care for the world and approaches diversity through literacy and digital skills. It aims at training pre- and in-service teachers with the help of a learning platform and a digital story-telling application.

Literature review. Europe is a colourful and multilingual continent that values linguistic and cultural diversity. This plurilingual entity consists of states with rich cultural and linguistic heritages. The member states need to ensure equal rights to their citizens in terms of opportunities, fair working conditions and social protection and inclusion, as specified in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan (2021). Social and linguistic inclusion constitutes one possible form of care for the citizens and the project WIN wishes to foster exactly these principles through its work in primary education. WIN also recognises the diversity of needs in European schools.

The recognition of a plurilingual Europe entails promoting plurilingual education in Europe (Council of Europe, 2007), which is adapted to its plurilingual citizens. The relationship between languages and cultures according to the CEFR (2001) is an active one, as “an individual person’s experience of language in its cultural contexts expands” (p.13) and the individual person’s languages interrelate and interact with each other. It is also recognised that language learning plays an important educational role in building tolerance within plurilingual societies. This is all the more necessary, since intolerance and racism is often expressed through contempt for other languages (Council of Europe, 2007). Thus, plurilingual education is an essential component on the route to democratic citizenship in Europe (2016). The inclusive approach manifested itself when the Council of Europe promptly responded to the unexpected arrival of war refugees from Ukraine with publishing teaching

materials and organising in-service training events on how to support their linguistic integration (Council of Europe, 2022).

The concept of intercultural learning (Byram, 1997) has long been emphasized by experts and has special significance in a multicultural environment, such as Europe. The intercultural dimension (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002) is essential in avoiding stereotyping of other cultures and can serve as the basis for respect for members of other cultures. According to the authors such respect can lead to a democratic social interaction. In her recent summary of the concept of culture in foreign language teaching Kramsch (2014) emphasized the intercultural dimension in language teaching in our global age.

This approach is reflected in the priorities set by the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 projects. The scheme emphasises the positive effects the projects may have on: “increased competence in foreign languages, increased level of digital competence, a greater understanding and responsiveness to all kinds of diversity, e.g. social, ethnic, linguistic, gender and cultural diversity as well as diverse abilities; an improved levels of skills for employability and new business creation; more active participation in society; and more positive attitude towards the European project and the EU values” (European Commission, Erasmus+). The expected outcomes of WIN are in harmony with the values listed above and are to be realised with the help of digital stories. The antecedent of WIN included research cooperation between the members of the team in the field of using stories and songs in primary and early childhood language teaching (Trentinné Benkő, Medina-Casanovas, Canals-Botines and Árva, 2021, Canals-Botines and Medina-Casanova, 2020).

Aim of the study. The aim of the present study is to introduce our teacher training module of the online learning platform of WIN to a wider professional audience and raise awareness of its training potentials. WIN, which startin in 2020, is a joint project between four European universities: University of Vic, Spain; University of Firenze, Italy; Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary; Poltava VG Korolenko University, Ukraine; and one primary school in each city where the university is located. WIN responded to the need for inclusive care policies and is based on the belief that inclusiveness will prompt more understanding. The main goal of the project is to raise primary pupils’ awareness of diversity, change their perceptions

with the help of the teaching resources and the digital story telling application. In order to achieve this goal, pre- and in-service teacher training sessions are planned for teachers. An additional goal of the project is to create a bond between the participating teacher training colleges and primary schools.

The online learning platform for teachers, which was created by the project team members, contains a training course for teachers interested in using and creating stories in for inclusion. Currently the following modules of the learning platform are complete: Module 1 (Care in Education), Module 2 (Story elements), Module 3 (Narrative Structures), Module 4 (Animated resources) and Module 5 (Didactics applied to writing for inclusion: samples and lesson plans). Module 6 (Assessing the inclusiveness of the stories: principles and tools) is still under construction. Participants will be able to showcase the stories created by their pupils. Practising and pre-service teachers will be welcome to sign up and complete the course and by sharing their pupils' stories they can also become contributors to it.

Course design. Module 5 of the platform provides methodology support to teachers who wish to apply the animated resources for digital story creation. The module comprises nine lessons covering 15-20 lessons. However, instead of fixed lesson plans, each unit provides a wide range of activities suitable for different learners of different interests and age groups in primary education. The units aim to introduce a number of areas to the learners: how the goal of WIN is care, what the European Union is, eTwinning, which is a platform for cooperation between schools, and the steps in creating stories and concepts of diversity and creativity (see Figure 1). Although the material was created in English, and is suitable for being integrated into language teaching, it is planned for education in general.

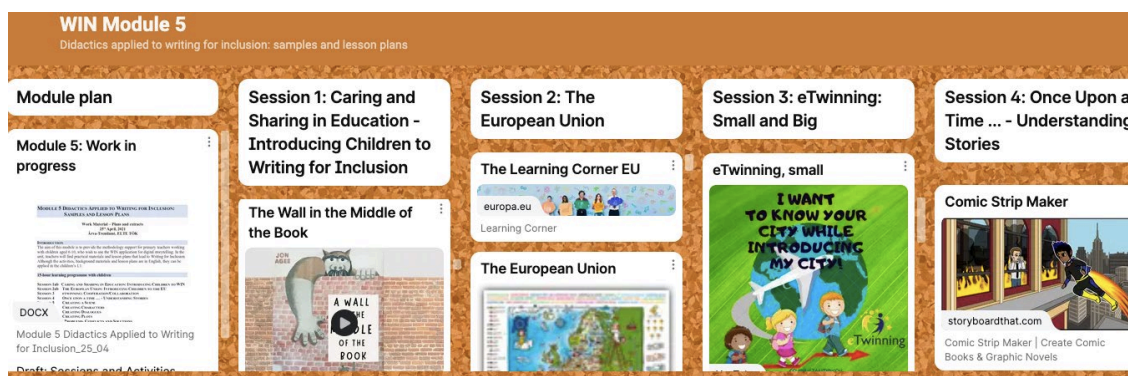


Figure 1 Planning process of Module 5

The structure of the module was planned in a way that the teachers can first focus on the overall goal of care in education and then establish the context for story creation. Since this is a European project, the authors considered it to be important to provide opportunities to introduce the institution of the European Union and eTwinning as a platform that connects schools in its various countries with learning cooperation. Creating stories is presented through the steps of creating a setting, characters, dialogues and plots. The concepts of diversity and creativity are devoted a joint unit at the end of the module (see Figure 2).

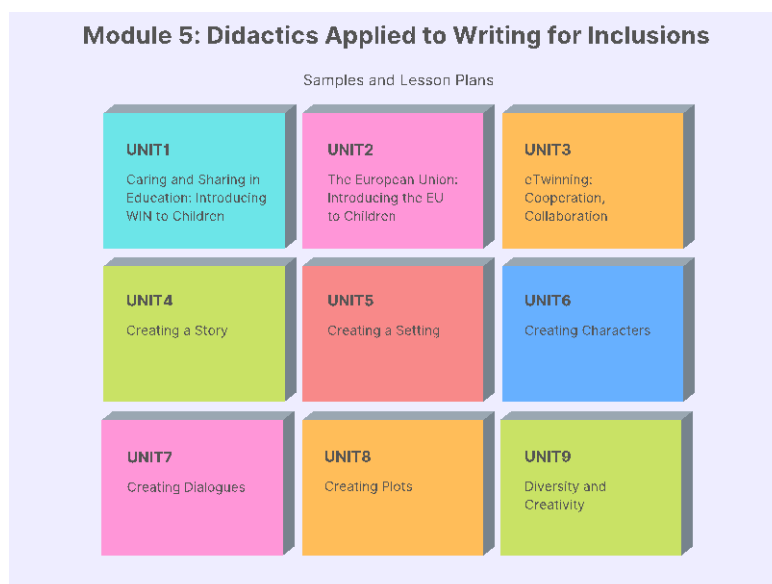


Figure 2: Content of Module 5

The module is designed in a way that it can be used both online and offline. Compiling the material during the time of Covid restrictions and online education gave us a new perspective, which encouraged us to include more online elements to the course. While selecting the materials, it was a priority that the activities in the lesson plans cover a wide range of media, genres, work modes and skills so that they appeal to teachers working in different contexts. Thanks to having already taught online for more than a year we had a better overview of online learning applications that could be used for our purposes and thus were able to integrate a wide range of digital tools, as well. This Covid-related online perspective proved to become an advantage since the goal of the module is to prepare students to use a digital storytelling application.

The next step in the process was a training session designed for the primary school teachers who participate in the WIN project. However, due to the pandemic situation, the event was delayed first in the summer, then in the autumn of 2021. The teaching material was used by the teachers in the autumn of 2021 and the feedback received from them was positive.

Presenting the materia. The goal of Module 5 is to provide teaching material for those primary professionals who wish to engage their pupils in the digital story creating application for the purpose of sensitising them in the fields of care and inclusion. First of all, the activities in Module 5 wish to prepare pupils for the act of creating stories through increasing their awareness in terms of differences. These concern differences in terms of physical abilities, learning difficulties, social, linguistic, cultural, religious and gender differences. Once these issues have been addressed, processed and discussed in the classroom the learners will be more ready to implement ideas in the creative process of storytelling. Second, the technicalities of storytelling are outlined through the activities.

The topic of each unit is approached through a variety of materials, tasks and work modes, which makes it possible for the teachers to choose for the needs and interests of their own learners. As an example, let us present Unit 1: Caring and sharing in Education: Introducing children to WIN. The Unit approaches the topic through the themes of being different and finding similarities and through the media of children’s literature in books and videos, and finally, some popular, inspirational youtube video clips (see Figure 3).

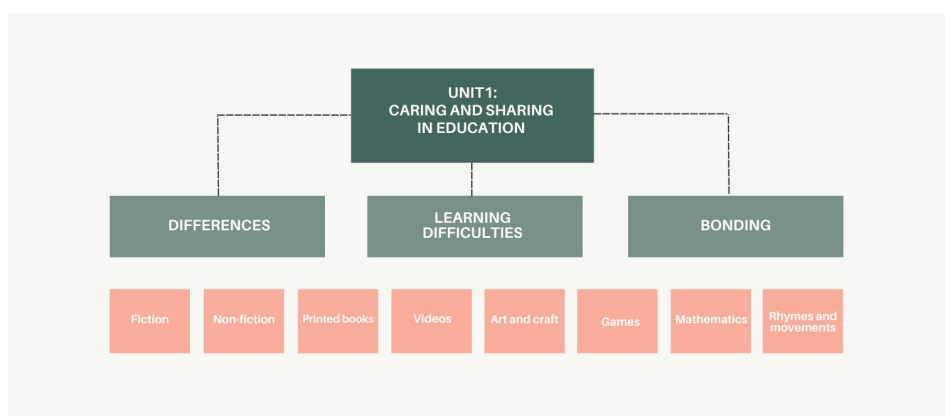


Figure 3: Multidimensional character of the units

In Lesson 1, Unit 1 various picture books about being different from others are offered for reading and discussion. *Elmer, The Patchwork Elephant* by David McKee is in the focus of the sample lesson, which processes a story with the learners. The lesson contains activities engaging various skills and competencies. For instance, in the pre-reading/viewing phase the main focus is on visual art activities. (see Figure 4) . Other stories, such as *The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson and Alex Schaffler, *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell, *I like me* by Nany Carlson and *The Wall in the Middle of the Book* by Jon Agee are recommended for similar lessons. These books were chosen not only for their relevance to the topic, but also because they are available on Youtube.

Reading/viewing: *Elmer, The Patchwork Elephant*

Pre-reading or viewing: Ask your pupils the following questions and set them these tasks:

What is your favourite colour / animal / cartoon character?

Describe and draw a picture of an elephant.

Make a collection of markers of different colours. How many colours can you name?

Draw and colour a patchwork of differently coloured squares.

Cut out the elephant: his name is Elmer.

Guess the following: How old is he? What are his hobbies? Is he happy?

Walk like elephants!

Figure 4 Pre-reading/viewing activities in Lesson 1, Unit 1

Lesson 2 deals with learning difficulties, which affect an increasing number of children. The topic is approached through the case of dyslexia presented in a short, animated video. Here the pre-viewing activity involves making class surveys and wall charts with graphs about the hair and eye colours, hobbies and favourite school subjects of the students. While in Lesson 2 fiction was used, here the learning material is presented in the form of a non-fiction video. The further topics suggested for classroom work are ADHD and autism.

Finally, Lesson 3 embraces the theme of care for each other through the example of people who must travel at Christmas but can

find a way to connect and celebrate together. The video demonstrates how people can bond in spite of coming different cultural backgrounds. The activities planned for this lesson help to bring the topic to a conclusion.

Conclusion and perspectives. Working on this module was a source great inspiration for the authors because it involved a great deal of creativity and the topic of inclusion in education was appealing. The current world events have unfortunately reinforced the relevance of this topic.

Children all over the world need competent primary teachers who know how to deal with and embrace linguistic and cultural differences, diversity and who are able to support inclusion. For them, this module and the whole of the WIN project will be an invaluable source of information. Holding direct, in-person training courses for teachers and producing guides for parents would also be desirable. The learning materials in Module 5 could also be extended in order to provide teachers with even more materials to use in their classrooms.

It is sincerely hoped that it will be possible to organise the module-related training workshop for the participating colleagues. Unfortunately, due to the war situation in Ukraine this event had to be delayed one more time. The training event in Budapest has the potential to serve as a source of further inspiration. According to the event schedule, the participants were also going to visit the Story Museum and a folk-tale themed playground in Budapest. The members of the WIN team are eagerly waiting for the time when there is peace in each participant's country and will be able to work on new projects that support the development of care and inclusion in primary education.

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ШЛЯХИ ІНКЛЮЗІЇ ТА ПРИЙНЯТТЯ – РОЗРОБКА БАГАТОВИМІРНОГО МОДУЛЯ РОЗВИТКУ ВЧИТЕЛЯ В ПРОЄКТІ WIN

У статті йдеться про практику інклюзивної освіти в європейському вимірі, яка набуває все більшого значення. Сьогодні внутрішня мобільність населення в межах Європейського Союзу та недавній приплив іммігрантів з-за кордону призвели до того, що в країнах-членах все більше формуються багатокультурні та багатомовні суспільства.

Авторки констатують, що Європа є барвистим і багатомовним континентом, який цінує мовне та культурне розмаїття. Це багатомовне утворення складається з держав із багатою культурною та мовною спадщиною. Держави-члени мають забезпечити рівні права своїм громадянам щодо можливостей, справедливих умов праці, соціального захисту та інклюзії, як зазначено в Плані дій Європейського рівня соціальних прав (2021). Схарактеризовано проєкт «WIN» як один із таких, що враховує різноманітність як тенденцію європейських шкіл.

Метою цього дослідження є впровадження модуля підготовки викладачів платформи онлайн-навчання. Проєкт «WIN», який стартував у 2020 році, є спільним проєктом чотирьох європейських університетів: Університету Вік (Іспанія),

Університету Флоренції (Італія), Університету Елте (Угорщина) та Полтавського національного педагогічного університету імені В. Г. Короленка (Україна); та по одній початковій школі з кожної країни, де розташований університет. «WIN» є відповіддю на потребу в поглибленні інклюзивного догляду та ґрунтується на переконанні, що інклюзивність сприятиме більшому порозумінню.

Основний пріоритет проєкту – підвищити обізнаність учнів початкової школи про різноманітність культур, змінити їх уявлення за допомогою навчальних ресурсів та програми цифрової розповіді. Для досягнення цієї мети для вчителів планується проведення навчальних занять перед використанням цифрового доробку.

Автор підкреслює, що додатковою метою проєкту є налагодження зв'язку між вищими педагогічними установами та початковими школами.

Ключові слова: педагогічна освіта; література; дизлексія; початкова школа; дошкільний заклад.

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ZNACZENIE PODSTAWY PROGRAMOWEJ W PRACY NAUCZYCIELA SZKOŁY POCZĄTKOWEJ W SYSTEMIE OŚWIATY – PERSPEKTYWA NARODOWA I EUROPEJSKA

Od 1999 roku stosuje się w Polsce podstawę programową, która zastąpiła obowiązujące wcześniej minima programowe. Ta istotna zmiana w organizacji systemu oświaty oraz planowaniu kształcenia była wprowadzona w okresie starań naszego kraju o przyjęcie do wspólnoty europejskiej. Ten i wiele innych warunków zostało spełnionych, co spowodowało przyjęcie Polski do Unii Europejskiej w maju 2004 roku.

W latach 1999-2017 nastąpiło sześciokrotne wydanie przez ministerstwo edukacji podstawy programowej a ta ostatnia pochodzi z 2017r. (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej, 2017).

Podstawa programowa to jednolity wykaz treści kształcenia, założonych celów oraz przewidywanych efektów na danym etapie edukacyjnym. Każdy etap kształcenia ma swoją odrębną, dopuszczoną