

INNOVATIONS IN ARTS AND PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION

УДК 373.3.043.2-056.2/.3:[37.018.43:004](4)

DOI: 10.33989/2226-4051.2022.25.256670

Mireia Canals-Botines, Spain

ORCID ID: 0000-0003-4481-4447

Núria Medina-Casanovas, Spain

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8002-4453

PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON WRITING FOR INCLUSION: EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE WORK BETWEEN PRIMARY SCHOOLS WITH ETWINNING AND DIGITAL STORIES

The article deals with European Cooperative Work between Primary Schools with eTwinning and Digital Stories. The author characterizes The Key Action 2 Erasmus project 'Writing for Inclusion' (WIN) is to focus on rising awareness, changing perceptions and providing resources to implement inclusion through the concept of Care in Education.

The main purpose of this project is to empathize with the feelings and emotions felt by those kids entering the group for the first time or those others being different from the standardized group. Opening their minds and broadening pupils' boundaries may be a solid tool to create a more inclusive and fair society to all.

The article includes detailed description of background and goals of the project, it names all the project partners, project target groups, specific aims.

Keywords: *Writing; Inclusion; European Cooperative Work; Primary Schools; Digital Stories.*

Background & Main goals. attempt to stimulate students' willingness to work creatively and collaboratively (Waters

The Key Action 2 Erasmus project "Writing for Inclusion" (WIN) focuses on rising awareness, changing perceptions and providing resources to implement inclusion through the concept of Care in Education. At this point, the project's conceptualization of Care needs to be explained. It is understood as an epistemic category

that epitomizes the yearning of the individual to be "accompanied" in the performance of experiences. In contemporary educational research, the concept of Care is shaped by three lines of interpretation and operation: Self-care; Care for others; and Care for the world. These three different perspectives are not just a theoretical framework of an educational model, but rather they represent a real "operative model" that is usually applied in the care professions: teaching, specialized educators, social workers, among others as an umbrella term that encompasses every practice of inclusion (Canals-Botines and Raluy Alonso, 2022).

Indeed, the main purpose of this project was for primary pupils to empathize with the feelings and emotions felt by those kids entering the group for the first time or those others being different from the standardized group. Opening their minds and broadening pupils' boundaries may be a solid tool to create a more inclusive and fair society to all.

As for the project background, a needs analysis was carried out to examine the beliefs and perceptions of university teachers, pre-service and in-service teachers regarding inclusiveness and care in education in the participating countries. The findings from the online survey suggested that diversity was seen as an asset, but language teachers struggled to facilitate integration. As for the main reasons, many educators expressed their willingness to be trained in diversity and, more particularly, to use new technologies and resources to implement the principles of "Care in Education".

In order to mainstream inclusive practices and tackle the effective use of digital storytelling to foster Care in childhood education, a four-country consortium was created. It is composed of four universities: University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC) from Spain, Università di Firenze from Italy (UNIFI), Eötvös-Loránd University (ELTE) from Hungary, and Poltava V.G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University (PNPU) from Ukraine; and four schools: Les Pinediques, from Spain, Istituto Comprensivo Le Cure, from Italy, Erzsébetvárosi Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola és Szakgimnázium, from Hungary and Poltava Comprehensive school of I-III degree # 18, from Ukraine.

Project target groups, Specific Aims and Outputs. Regarding the Project target groups, they are in-service teachers, young language learners, and more marginally pre-service teachers:

- School Teachers: In-service teachers play a crucial role in this initiative because they need to be trained to gain deeper understanding of “care” and also, they need to be given resources and support to implement the project in their classrooms.

- Pupils: Children are undoubtedly the main target of our project and all the project outcomes are meant to finally converge in helping them develop positive attitudes towards inclusion in the class.

- Universities & Pre-service teachers: Pre-service teachers are involved within the framework of the university modules since two students from the four universities will carry out their practicum in a project partner school to observe the development of the activities.

WIN is focused on seven outcomes during the project and upon its completion:

- An open-access learning platform. It gathers practices and transfers experiences among the participating universities and schools in the areas of Inclusion and Care.

- Online modules. Their main goal is to reappraise the teachers’ attitude towards diversity and to sensitize them to the teaching styles suitable for spreading our view of "Care" and Inclusion.

- Learning-focused animations. They are a bank of digital resources that children can use to develop their stories on inclusion in peer-to-peer scenarios.

- A school toolkit. It is developed to aid participants (teachers and students) through all the steps that are to be followed to create a digital story.

- A training activity. It combines e-learning modules (20h) that different partners can choose according to their teaching needs, and synchronic face-to-face sessions following a blended methodology (20h).

- A multiplier event. Its main aim is to disseminate the project outcomes and reach out to the local community.

- eTwinning and Digital tales. School students will elaborate inclusive stories that are to be shared in an eTwinning project among partner schools.

Where are we so far?

Due to the war in Ukraine, the Consortium decided to extend the project for six months and delay the training activity in Budapest and the multiplier event in Vic as much as possible. Meanwhile, pupils from the school partners have created drawings and digital books for their peers in Poltava School. Also, they have sung a common song that has been edited and compounded in a unique YouTube channel for private sharing. WIN is also grown up as a real European family helping colleagues abroad in any need the Consortium can help in. The schools in Budapest, Florence, Taradell and Poltava have been organizing activities since the beginning of the project. This understanding has overcome all possible outer disruptions until today. The eTwinning, the digital stories and the videos with songs and drawings are proof of it.

eTwinning

Introduction. The European Project Writing for Inclusion (WIN) formed by the 4 Universities, the 4 schools of the 4 European countries already mentioned in previous sections, started in September 2020, sharing the children's work done in the project through an eTwinning platform. The platform let them communicate, collaborate, develop the project, and feel part of the European learning community.

The eTwinning Project **We all Win** is thought to be the meeting point of the schools participating in the WIN (Writing for INclusion) KA02 Erasmus+ Project led by the University of Vic. "Writing for Inclusion" focuses on raising awareness, changing perceptions, and providing resources to implement inclusion through the concept of care in education.

About the Project. The WIN project is designed to tackle the effective use of digital storytelling to foster

care in childhood education. The pupils forming part of the project come from very diverse cultural, economic, and social backgrounds and this diversity is an asset for the children's involvement. Children will fully participate by exchanging their animations with all the school partners and they will thus become familiarized with cultural and social diversity in the other countries. The Universities cannot take part in the eTwinning, only the schools

can. The eTwinning rules establish that the teacher only forms part of the eTwinning if he/she forms part of the school. If/When the teacher leaves the school, the platform stays at the school and this teacher no longer forms part of the eTwinning. To start using the platform, two schools must start to construct the platform and then invite the others.

From September 2020 to June 2021 the eTwinning platform helped to create bounds among the participating schools. All the activities included in this eTwinning project are thought to allow pupils and teachers in the different schools to get to know each other, to get familiarized with cultural and geographical aspects of the other countries. Sharing all these aspects will lead us to see similarities that bring us together and differences that enrich each other. It will be the meeting point of the schools as the basis for a better understanding.

Aims. The first set of aims are shared with the Erasmus+ WIN Project:

- To share knowledge and best practices.
- To broaden teachers' understanding of inclusive educational policies across Europe.
- To develop more inclusive attitudes towards diversity through creativity in digital storytelling and the use of technology as part of the emerging literacy process.
- To help pupils develop positive attitudes towards inclusion in the class.

The following are the specific aims of the eTwinning project:

- To learn about other countries and cultures and infer their own.
- To create a better cultural understanding.
- To create a European identity.
- To develop oral and written skills in English.
- To improve students ICT skills.

Work Process

OCTOBER 2020: Logo contest. The four schools asked each of their pupils to create a logo. All the schools made an exhibition out of which each school chose the 5 best pictures. When they had the best five, they created a paddle with the 20 best pictures from the 4 schools. The children voted for the 4 best ones and out of them the one with the highest punctuation was the winner.

<https://padlet.com/europeanproject/win>



The winner became the logo for both the Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects.

NOVEMBER 2020: Who is Who activity with personal introductions using avatars, pictures, or videos.

They created a Children's padlet, called *Let's know each other*, in which they made a short description of themselves and talked about their hobbies. They also added their pictures and put them together with the text all scrambled up on the same wall. The task was to guess "*Who is Who?*" and try to match the picture to the description. The same was done in another padlet with the teacher's pictures and descriptions.

It was an interesting and challenging way to know each other.

DECEMBER 2020: How does each country celebrate Christmas? Activity to

find similarities and differences between the participants.

<https://read.bookcreator.com/5orw9GETTWVeoBZniFpAuMnVVn2/Japsq9cNTIOSzDSIC2O4UA>

A. JANUARY-FEBRUARY: Guided tour through the schools.

B. MARCH-APRIL: Cities, regions, and countries multimedia presentations.

C. MAY-JUNE: Let's talk about food sharing recipes!!

D. ALL YEAR ROUND: Did you know that we celebrate... ? Activity to share a specific tradition that only one of the countries has. It was done on the specific date of each celebration.

Expected Results. A non-tangible result is a wider cultural understanding, improved ICT skills and better English. A tangible result is the digital collection of traditions of the four participating

countries. A more European outlook to our school and enrich our pupils' minds.

Digital Stories. The core of the Erasmus+ WIN Project is writing stories by the school children to create awareness among students of what inclusion means. One of the aims of the project is to develop inclusive attitudes towards diversity through creativity in digital storytelling and the use of technology as part of the emerging literacy process.

When the schools started creating the stories, they made some brainstorming with the children to know what topics they were going to tackle. Out of this brainstorming came key words like *hospitality, citizenship, democracy, difference empathy*.

The schoolteachers shared the activities created by ELTE University in Hungary with the school children. All the activities contained videos and stories showing the different topics, to make children aware of care in education.

Once the children were acquainted with them, they were asked to create their own stories dealing with the different topics, related to their own situations. The children used their own L1, to make writing and expressing themselves better. The schools created several stories: Hungary and Ukraine created 5 stories each school, Italy created 10 stories and Spain 15 stories. Once they had created the stories, they sent them to the respective Universities for them to translate them into English, to be shared with all the school members.

Poltava University in Ukraine created a digital platform to be used by children at school. This platform had a selection of different characters to be used to create the animation of the written stories. The fact of making these stories animated digitally motivated the pupils because they could visualize their written version.

The next step will be joining the animation with the subtitles the Universities will create to match the animation. We are now in this process that will, hopefully be ready by the end of the school year 2021-22.

Videos

This Erasmus+ project had to face the COVID breakout during the year 2020, but we never thought that something even worse would come out: a war in one of the countries of a partner in the project. The war in Ukraine was a shock to all of us, that made us create stronger bundles within the group.

Apart from trying to help out all the partners from the Ukraine, the school teachers and school children of the other member countries decided to make some drawings and sing a song of peace to be sent to Poltava Comprehensive school of I-III degree # 18, from Ukraine to make them feel that we are with them and we have them in our hearts.

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Мірейя Каналз Ботінес, Нурія Медіна Казановас

**ПОПЕРЕДНІ ЗАУВАЖЕННЯ ЩОДО ПИСЬМА В ІНКЛЮЗІЇ:
ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКА РОБОТА В КООПЕРАЦІЇ МІЖ ПОЧАТКОВИМИ ШКОЛАМИ
З eTWINNING ТА ЦИФРОВИМИ ТВОРАМИ**

У статті йдеться про європейську співпрацю між початковими школами з eTwinning та Digital Stories у контексті використання електронного навчання. Автор характеризує К 2 проєкт Erasmus «Письмо в інклюзивній освіті» (WIN), який спрямований на підвищення обізнаності, зміну сприйняття та надання ресурсів для впровадження інклюзії як системи повноцінного догляду та допомоги. Серед партнерів проєкту – Полтавський національний педагогічний університет імені В. К. Короленка та Полтавська загальноосвітня школа I-III ступенів № 18 (нині – Гімназія № 18 Полтавської міської ради).

Основна мета цього проєкту – уможливити співпереживання почуттям та емоціям, які відчують діти, що вперше вступають до групи, або ті, що відрізняються від однолітків. Сприяння повноцінному ментальному їх розвитку та нівеляція перешкод може стати надійним інструментом для створення більш толерантного та справедливого суспільства.

Стаття містить детальний опис передумов та мети проєкту, в ній названі всі партнери проєкту, цільові групи проєкту, конкретні завдання. Останніми є:

- обмін знаннями та передовим досвідом;
- розширення розуміння вчителями інклюзивної освітньої політики Європи;
- розвиток більш інклюзивного ставлення до різноманітності через творчість під час створення цифрового оповідання і використання технологій як складника розвитку грамотності;
- допомога учням у розвитку позитивного ставлення до включення до класу.

Деталізовано конкретні пріоритети проєкту:

- дізнатися про інші країни й культури та зробити висновки про власні;
- створити уявлення про культуру;
- творення європейської ідентичності;
- розвиток усних та письмових навичок з англійської мови;
- удосконалення навичок роботи з цифровими ресурсами.

Одним із результатів проєкту є створення у школі цифрової платформи для дітей. Ця платформа пропонує набір різних персонажів, які будуть використані для створення анімації до написаних історій. Наступний крок – поєднання анімації з субтитрами, які роблять діти, щоб доповнити анімацію. Зараз автори статті працюють над вирішенням саме цього завдання, який, на їхню думку, буде завершено до кінця 2021-2022 навчального року.

Ключові слова: *письмо; інклюзія; Європейська робота в кооперації; початкова школа; електронний ресурс.*

Received 14.03.2022 г.