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Erasmus+ project KA122-VET ’’Internationalization Students' and Teachers' Task Force’’

Euneos course : how to make your school more digital - Utrecht – Holland
Teacher: Elena Marangione 29 May - 4 June 2022



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The training course took place in Utrecht, NL.

We shared ideas about the use of technology in our school and discussed the need or role of digitalization, its impact on teaching and learning and how to best make changes and work for a better approach to it.

We all agreed that the main reason to use digital technology is to improve and enhance learning creating a better connection with students.

Main reasons to deal with digitalization are:

- to equip students with required **digital skills** for their future social and vocational life
- to **improve students learning**, understanding and retention
- to **motivate and engage** students in learning activities
- to **monitor** students and manage organizational processes in school and class.





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We talked about what is **fundamental** and what is **spectacular** in our use of digitalization in education, talking about online gradebook and its multiple uses, blended learning like flipped classroom and more innovative tools and resources, that can boost learning. Digital learning is connected to putting things into practice, as it is very social, shared and interactive, and teachers need to develop this competence in their job as their success is not their own but needs to go beyond their lesson and produce and exchange positive outcomes of their work.





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The next question we went on to consider now was:

What do we mean by **Digital Turn**?

And what's the digital turn for our school?

All teachers should be concerned with what is necessary for their school, faculty and students and share what has been done so far to work on what still needs to be done. We all considered the following:

Shift to 1:1 computing model, use of personal digital devices (smartphone, tablet, laptop)

Online and mobile learning platforms, tools

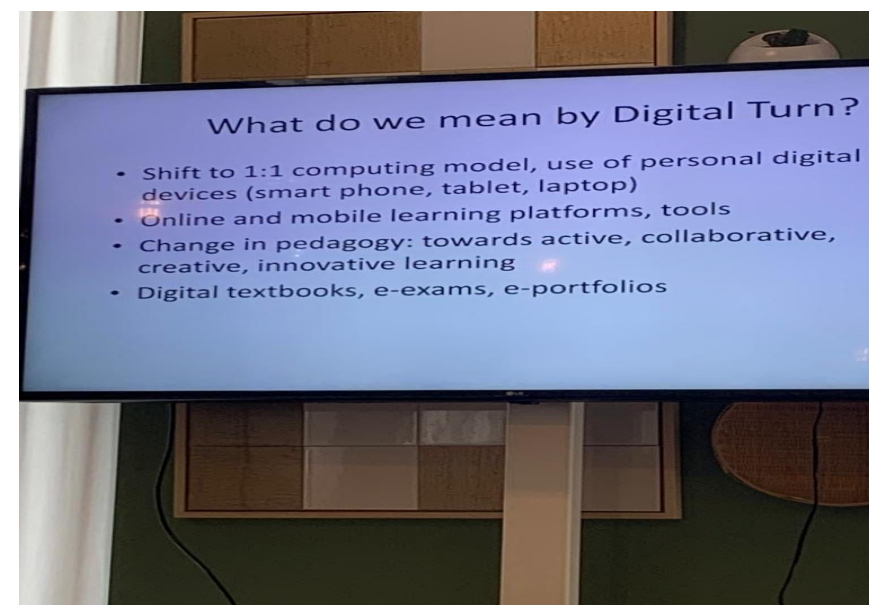
Change in pedagogy: towards active, collaborative, creative, innovative learning.

Digital textbooks, e-exams, e-portfolios

Learning analytics, big data, AI recommenders

Changes in physical learning environment

Redefining the digital competence





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We then moved on to a work group, filling a chart with all that needs to be included while designing a Digital Model. Here is an idea on some of the topics that we discussed and worked on to jot down a hypothetical shared plan of a Digital Policy Model.

Issue/Opportunity Definition	1:1 digital devices
Beneficiaries	All students
Stakeholders	School, parents, municipality, investors
Context	How and who will maintain the devices? What software to buy? How to change the physical environment? The division of responsibilities?
Processes and partners	School, parents, IT department, school administration. Coordination within the school (training for teachers, informational leaflets) and with outside stakeholders (legal agreements).
Solutions and approaches	In line with national policy and local governments documents
Investments	Municipality and investors funds; parent association; alumni association
Risk	Students health issues, lack of investors, not enough funds, reluctance of the teachers and parents, the costs of software
Timing	1-2 years depending on the situation





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We learned about the **EU Digital Education Action Plan**, (2021-27), “a renewed European Union policy initiative that sets out a common vision of high quality, inclusive and accessible digital education in Europe, and aims to support the adaptation of the education and training systems of Member states to the digital age”.

The Digital Education Plan sets out two strategic priorities:

- fostering development of a high performing digital education ecosystem
- enhancing digital skills and competences for the digital transformation.





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To support these priorities, the commission will also establish a **European Digital Hub**, strengthening cooperation and exchange in digital education at the EU level.

We then moved on to consider more specifically what the Digital Turn for our school could be, keeping in mind:

Pedagogical innovation (*Why do we do it*)

Digital innovation (What changes are needed in technology, infrastructure, learning environment?)

Change management (*How to implement it on the whole school level, how to scale it up?*) as every school needs to find its own focus.





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We shared some innovative **pedagogical practices** – eTwinning, co-teaching, student-led learning activities, inquiry based learning etc – and talked about examples of lessons.

We considered 5 scenarios for digital classrooms

Flipped classroom: learning in advance of the lesson from short videos and other resources, making sense and applying new knowledge during the lesson

Inquiry-based learning: learning like scientists do, by questioning, exploring, explaining, (in)validating



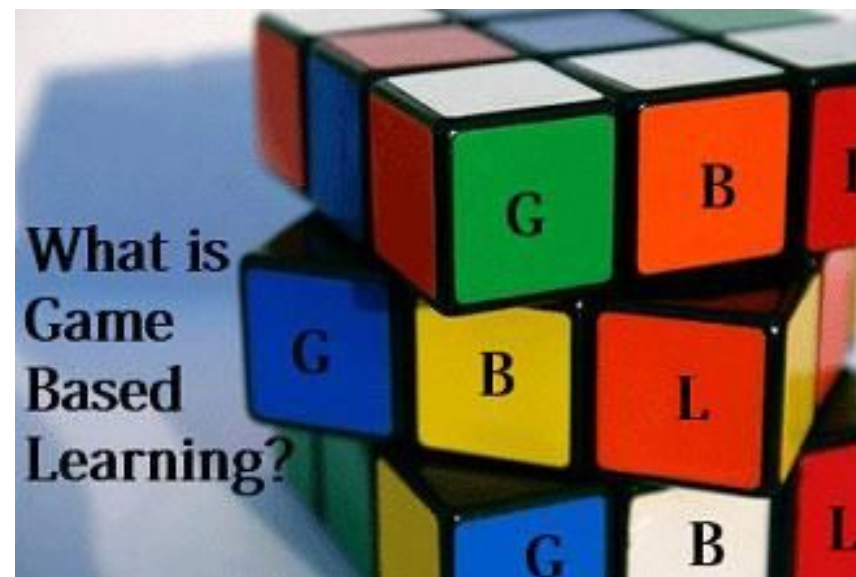


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Project-based learning: collaborative creation of digital artifacts **Problem-based learning:** solving, then designing problems (tasks) **Game-based learning:** learning from playing and designing games

Conclusion: that the new Pedagogy for a Digital Age must be interactive, collaborative, active, project-based, engage students and empower them to become self-directed thinkers, creative learners, keeping in mind that the purpose is ***not to fill in the jar but to fire up the lamp. (Luke 8:16).***





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We're therefore going from reproductive to innovative learning (anticipation, participation) changing people's mind with education and creating knowledge.

A good image of this comes from **3 Metaphors of learning** by Paavola & Hakkarainen:

MONOLOGICAL – learning as acquisition of knowledge (knowledge delivered)

DIALOGICAL – learning as participation in community of practice (learning as a social way)

TRIALOGICAL - collaborative knowledge, creation resulting with shareable digital artifacts .

Another very useful tools **SELFIE**, a free, easy to use, customizable tool created by the European Commission, to help schools assess where they stand with learning in the digital age.

<https://ec.europa.eu/education/schools-go-digital>

It's a self-reflection on effective learning by fostering the use of innovative Educational Technology. It's a school based assessment for schools digital maturity, for teachers digital competence and for work-based learning. It highlights the Institution digital status and needs.



SELFIE tool for schools

supporting learning in the digital age



SELFIE_EU





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Another interesting tip is the use of **digital ambassadors**, very popular in Estonia, at University level but also in schools. This refers to students, particularly knowledgeable in the digital area, selected for their ability and expertise. Their role is to support teachers in technologies, organize workshops, updating them with new ideas besides taking care of equipment maintenance in their school.

I consider it to be an asset connected to the idea of Digital, a way to have students collaborate in the learning process with something that is so deeply part of their life, giving a greater sense to its use.

What makes a good Unibuddy ambassador?





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I'm absolutely glad I was given the chance to open up to all the ideas, instruments and resources mentioned during this course in order to be part of a greater community that focuses on the development of a high performing digital education for an unavoidable update, a greater competence and a high quality learning content.

I have realized that Digital tools and platforms are becoming ever more integral to our personal and working lives. Digital learning increases access to education and knowledge while empowering students with a mindset and capabilities that set them up for success in their present and future. By giving students more control over their own education, what they are studying, and how they are studying it, they will also have more accountability over their progress. As for us teachers, we need to create a better atmosphere and a more stimulating environment and sharing with our colleagues. It's necessary to try and be ready to open up to the change and keep up with the TURN that is happening before us more and more and this will be the first step forward.

