How to foster Intercultural Competence in education through the use of ICTs

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INTRODUCTION

Overview
- Explores how students can become more interculturally competent through the use of ICTs in the classroom.
- Demonstrate that student’s lack of intercultural competence is nowadays a problem in FL lessons.
- Intervention based on FL classes.

Goals and research questions:
- My project’s goal is to design activities to enhance IC in those students who did not participate in any European project or attended any CLIL lesson.
- My aim is to improve their competence taking advantage of new technologies and 2.0 tools.
- Is IC a relevant goal in English classes?
- How can IC be introduced in FL teaching?
- In what ways are ICTs suitable to promote IC?
- What elements are essential for a pedagogic intervention to promote IC through ICTs?
- How can ICTs contribute improving IC?

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Department of English
- One coordinator and four teachers.
- Meetings in the department every Monday. Length: 2h.

Projects in the Department of English
- CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)
- European Portfolio projects
- Comenius

ICTs in the classroom
- Well-equipped classes: projector, white-board and cubbyholes.
- Students own a laptop.
- Digital books in FL classes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Catalan Curriculum
- Communicative and audio-visual competence
- Digital treatment of the information competence
- Artistic and cultural competence

Intercultural competence
- IC as the capacity to understand how intercultural action takes place, how social identities are part of all interaction. (Bélisle, Garden, Harrap, Rollin, Witte)
- All the definitions agree on the difference between cultures although they can share certain values and beliefs.
- Why important in education? IC involves reflecting on one’s own culture and own identity, recognising patterns and attitudes.

IC teaching methodology
- Area (2010)

ICTs fostering IC and ICC
- Optimization of the quality of education.
- Motivate students (Leiva, 2012).
- Promote knowledge and make ICC easier.
- Benefit active participation.

BUT
- ICTs can be time-consuming for both teachers and students and can offer problems of reliability.

Resources and tools
- Many different virtual platforms such as Moodle,
- Web 2.0: EsFlow, ProjectBritain, EverythingESL.
- Tools: mailing, discussion lists, forums, chats, messenger, social networks.

Digiculture
- New and recent term.
- It entails both culture and digital traits (ICTs).
- Leiva (2010) mentions that the term digiculture has pedagogic meaning when working cooperation and cultural interaction through ICTs.

INNOVATION PROPOSAL

Main aspects:
- 2nd ESO students
- Year-long programme combined with course-book classes (19 lessons)
- Not an elective course
- Two different frameworks (Area and Byram’s)

Assessment:
- Formative assessment
- Assessment ensures students achieve the goals of the proposal.
- Feedback provided.
- Self- and peer-assessment.

Task and activity types:
- 1st and 2nd term: WebQuests, Powerpoints, Treasure Hunts, Videos, Glogster, Debates, Research, ...
- 3rd term: Ice-breaking activities, Debates, Research, Chat, Blog and / or forums.

CONCLUSIONS

Answers to the initial questions:
1) IC is a relevant goal in English classes.
2) IC can be introduced in FL teaching by planning a proposal.
3) ICTs are suitable to promote IC. There are hundreds of online resources.
4) There are essential pedagogic elements to promote IC. Both competences and ICTs are key issues.
5) ICTs contribute improving IC. ICTs move us closer to other people from all over the world.

- The project helped me understanding what IC is and what it entails, how IC can be developed in FL classrooms and what being interculturally competent means.

Strengths:
- Innovative,
- Realistic and
- Feasible.

Weaknesses:
- The proposal has not been proven.
- Enough ICT devices in schools?
- Troubleshooting.
- Teachers afraid of using new technologies.

REFERENCES


Decree 143/2007, Generalitat de Catalunya. "Desplegament del Currículum a l’Educació Secundària Obligatòria (ESO)".


Leiva Chinchon, Juan Jose. De la Interculturalidad a la Digiculturalidad: El uso de las TIC en el Desarrollo de competencias de interculturalidad. 2012, 132-144.