iLab Manual

Future-proof your classroom – teaching skills 2030

Module 2

Communication in on-campus classes

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Future-proof your classroom – teaching skills 2030

Welcome to the course Teaching2030!

Technology rapidly changes the way we think, live, learn and lead. Education plays an essential role in this transformation process. Teachers and trainers have to be prepared for new challenges and learning environments in order to guide future generations the best way possible. Based on these considerations, the blended-learning course "Future-proof your classroom – teaching skills 2030", Teaching2030 for short, addresses teachers, tutors and trainers in higher education institutions providing them with instructional competencies and skills over eight modules. The course comprises a web-based training course (cBook) and an on-site learning space (iLab) and can be accessed without limitations and is free of charge. It is funded by the Erasmus+ Austrian National Agency under Key Action 2 Strategic Partnerships.

Lucia and Marko will guide you through the cBook and iLab

The didactical concept of the entire blended-learning course follows the principles of **storytelling**. Storytelling is quite common in company training but has so far not been commonly used in educational courses. It is, however, an essential part of Teaching2030. Throughout the modules, Lucia and Marko, two teachers at a higher education institution, will guide you through your learning experiences, helping you deal with the new trends and difficulties you might experience in your future teaching. They will accompany you and share stories about their recent successes with their students and their reservations about giving new approaches a try. They provide each other with teaching advice and support, and, last but not least, they help future educators manage the challenges they may face. They are both a constant presence in the cBook and in the iLab, which are closely interlinked.

The **cBook (computerBook)** is a web-based training environment that contains the eight modules of the course, each of which comprises five chapters organised around key topics. The cBook offers you a diverse range of learning material, like information (texts, hot spots, didactic sequences), interactive exercises (drag and drop, multiple choice, memory, surveys, word clouds), reflection tasks, videos and additional materials and links. Each cBook module contains five major tasks entitled "iLab", indicating that these tasks are better suited for use within the iLab. In addition, the cBook provides reflection tasks, called "iThink", for discussion in the iLab. Nevertheless, you can also work with the cBook as a stand-alone MOOC.

The **iLab (innovationLab**), as part of the blended-learning course, is an on-site, open, self-directed learning space, estimated to require two days per module. It can be organised as a training environment under the supervision of a Teaching2030-developer, or without supervision, as a self-directed learning environment for teachers who would like to widen and strengthen their teaching approaches and skills. The iLab is designed to be used flexibly, as it provides additional exercises, tools, materials and links, but it is recommended that the cBook be completed first in order to build a solid basis for the iLab. Each iLab module offers a guide explaining the didactical approach of the entire course and a glossary containing the central items and terms used by the development team.

Give Teaching2030 a try and have fun!

Your development team:

CREATE 21st century GmbH

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Faculty of Tourism & Hospitality Management

Universidade de Aveiro

Universita degli Studi di Perugia

Universitat de Valencia

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Disclaimer

What to expect

About this module

The content of this module is designed within 5 chapters that are developed to better understand the meaning of communication, the importance of storytelling in teaching, two-sided communication in the teaching process, inspiring discussions in class and importance of intercultural communication & competence. Whether we are experienced teachers or just starting our career, we are always challenged with a same question: how do we teach? – for which we should always pay attention on the development of our skills how we can best teach the course material to our students.

Teaching is a complex process of acquiring new knowledge and new experiences, for which communication contributes to the discovery of unknown during this process by using different tools and approaches. Therefore we identify it with the ocean, because learning leads towards the reveal of new spaces of knowledge to the students. When we teach we should think about how much of the time we talk and how our students participate in the class. Are they only listeners or they are active participants? Is our class teacher-centered or student-centered? How do I know that the students understand my teaching, or how they perceive the concept that I developed for the class? What about their attention, participation in discussions, questioning, arguing or self-reflection? And, what is our role in this process?

Have you asked yourself lately such questions?

The teacher through the material should lead good in-class communication. Therefore teachers require appropriate feedback skills because they are often in situations to coach the students: introduces students how to enhance search for solutions with additional resources, supervise project and problem-based learning or give feedback. It is a challenge for teacher to 'keep up' students' attention in class, and encourage them to think critically.

While in the first module *The role of teachers in 2030* we became aware about the challenges of the teachers to use technology in their classes, and to shift their role from a traditional provider of knowledge to a guide directing classroom communication, we advise you to go through this Module *Communication in on-campus classes* and explore the future challenge of the teacher how to communicate the best in class while teaching and how to apply the communication skills during the teaching. According to Dr. Jawa "teaching is not just simple helping students to learn,

but it is very important to make them to experience our teaching by reinventing it" (online 1). Let's explore what is this module about…

1. Communication is like a large ocean

Being a teacher does not mean just transferring knowledge or providing information to students. Teaching also means establishing good communication with students, and to achieve it in the class is a challenge for all of us. We should develop an effective communication to present the topic to the students, to initiate expression of ideas effectively, and to encourage more active participation during class. Communication is like a large ocean! – an expression that we like to say…. so a teacher has to be crystal clear on how to communicate and for which outcomes.

In this Chapter, we give an overview on the teacher's role of a presenter, coach and moderator and we highlight how these roles influence teaching and learning in 2030. The roles are first of all to propose and insert new topics for class discussion. The purpose is to make students become more participative in their own leaCrning, and thus teach each other by interacting with other students. Secondly, each time a student begins a class discussion, the teacher must review that entry, and if needed, make observations or corrections in a constructive and gentle manner. The moderator is crucial as a mentor and motivator for students who are separated by wide time and cultural distances. A teacher must have outstanding communication skills, solid knowledge of course concepts, theories and empirical evidence, plus an up-to-date awareness of recent developments that can make the subject matter come to life. Class discussion moderators should know the courses they teach well, which can be demonstrated by prior training and experience.

1.1. The teacher as presenter

Being a presenter in the class means to keep students' attention from the beginning. How to start a presentation in our class is just as important as how to finish the class, and it often determines how long the students will be interested. As much as we need an introduction that will be strong enough to "grab" the attention of students, it is of great importance that we find the most appropriate way how to continue doing that through lecturing.. Technology, videos, podcasts change the way we present in front of a group. On the one hand, the attention span of students is shorter, they expect more "entertainment", on the other hand, electronic tools may enrich and reinforce our message. We have to decide which information we deliver digitally and which orally. Developing presentation skills in the classroom is important for improving communication and creating positive learning experiences. Let's find out how is important to communicate with the students and don't use presentations that will be a reason for boring lectures: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdtLELVhEQg

1.2. The teacher as coach

Coaching students is an effective way to bring out the best of them, to develop their skills, and to strengthen their confidence. Placing the student in the centre of the learning process, and enhancing individualized learning, means to focus on the personal development of the student. In doing so we have to know how to communicate in the role of a coach by:

- Giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Asking questions that foster self-reflection
- Reinforcing self-esteem of students
- Changing limiting beliefs of students
- Checking previous knowledge (from online work)

Read the following paper "Teacher, Coach, Cheerleader, and Judge:
Promoting Learning through Learner-Centered Assessment" by Kristin B. Gerdy (https://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1099&context=faculty_scholarship) and visit the following blog https://www.pblworks.org/blog/coaching-your-students-team-pbl to explore more about this role.

1.3. The teacher as moderator

Moderating student groups is essential when focusing on the students' needs and their development. Students' needs are manifold, and we are often confronted with diverse student groups, intercultural settings and different mindsets. Therefore, we have to balance opinions, perceptions and attitudes, but also stimulate critical and reflexive thinking. How to communicate:

- Asking key questions to initiate discussions
- Paraphrasing emotional utterances
- Balancing different opinions
- Deescalating conflict situations
- Moderating group dynamics

As teachers, we are challenged with future oriented approach to teach the students in class. Technology has huge impact, and therefore innovative teaching becomes more acceptable. Its application is important for the future students' learning. Explore more about **innovative teaching** on the following link:

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ab78/635a24c69b4f55b96237a77ccc837154df30.pdf

Activity: Inspiring communication

Let's have a look into following iLab task. Working on it will help you develop your skills as presenter, coach and moderator.

Think of a course you will start in the near future and plan your first class according to the three roles of a presenter, coach and moderator. You may find useful the following:

1. Which topics do I have to demonstrate or show in my role as presenter?
2. Which problems could emerge in understanding these topics and how will I react in my role as a coach?
3. Which group discussions on which topics should I initiate in my role as moderator?

Write a script for this class including suitable communication presented in this chapter, like:

- Which story would I like to tell at the beginning?
- How will I check previous knowledge of students?
- Which questions should I ask to initiate discussion?

iThink: Which roles are appropriate for your class?

Think of a class you will teach in the near future and ask yourself the following questions:

1. If you would not have worked on this chapter, how would you have taught this class?
2. Or: which roles do you think are appropriate in your next class for which outcomes?
3. How would you like to perform the roles in your next class?
4. Which outcome do you want to achieve in each role?
5. What is the difference that makes the difference? (according to: Bateson, Gregory. (1972).*Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. University of Chicago Press.

References:

(online 1) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdZkmbY0HB0).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdtLELVhEQg

https://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1099&context=faculty_scholarship
https://www.pblworks.org/blog/coaching-your-students-team-pbl

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ab78/635a24c69b4f55b96237a77ccc837154df30.pdf

Bateson,G.(1972), *Steps to an Ecology of Mind,* 1972, Ballantine Books, digitized,2008

2. Teaching is telling stories

Who doesn't like stories? Stories are very powerful tool that help understand ourselves better. Teachers very often use stories in class. Why? Stories contribute towards students' better understanding of a taught topic in class. "Story is a vehicle that carries us on our search for reality-or best effort to make sense out of the anarchy of existence" (Robert McKee). This chapter aims to present the meaning of storytelling for teaching, which as a method improves listening skills, encourages creative thinking and problem solving.

Have you asked yourself *what can storytelling offer?* Through stories, students can understand and appreciate other value systems. Different stories can enrich students' ability for better communication and better understanding of cultural diversities. Storytelling helps students consider new ideas because a good storytelling goes beyond facts, students' emotions, it delivers message from different aspects and makes the theory more accepted and relevant to the students.

Let's read the following article:

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/047e/76230ba36631cac18aba361defdcf670e268.pdf,

Find out how storytelling within higher education contributes to the learning experience.

2.1. Storytelling in the classroom

Whether we are preparing our students for their master thesis in a seminar or give them an overview on a chapter of the subject you can tell a story in order to make the seminar or the class more inspiring to the students. Storytelling is an effective way for perceiving the concept complete and it contributes to better recalling of the teaching material. You can use the stories in your role as a coach.

As Daniel Taylor wrote in *The Healing Power of Stories:* "A story does what facts and statistics never can: it inspires and motivates. Expert storytellers translate complex ideas into practical examples laced with strong emotional connections. The audience tunes in because they see themselves woven into the story" - read more:

https://2uzkee3eob510v4rszskfx11-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/20681_CL_Storytelling_Brief_Nov2018.pdf)

2.2. How to create a story

There are many ways to find an appropriate story, but also to create by self. They may come from personal or other peoples' experiences, from fiction, theatre plays or movies as well as from research or certain situations. In that way teaching material can be easily and purposely transformed into an interesting story, by connecting the topic with an anecdote, video clip, or a case study. But you can also write a story by yourself if you take into account of which elements a good story is made of. Storytelling can be used for embedding theoretical concepts in recent situations, and to help students understand and apply theoretical concepts by triggering their emotions. If you would like to find or create an appropriate story, ask yourself **seven simple** questions:

1. What is the message of the story?
2. What is the desired outcome from students' perspective?
3. What is the exposition?
4. Who is the hero students can identify with? And the villain, if there is one (main characters of the story)?
5. What is the climax of the story?
6. How does the story end?
7. Which emotions play an essential role?

Once you know how to answer these questions, you can write the plot. The plot is the sequence of actions in a story, not the story itself. A plot usually follows a defined structure and is necessary for a good story. Even Shakespearean plots follow traditional structures. Often, it is not necessary to write the entire story as long as you have the plot in mind. If you like to find why storytelling matters go on the following blog: https://www.edutopia.org/blog/storytelling-in-the-classroom-matters-matthew-friday.

In a classroom students often share personal experience through storytelling. They share values, feelings, and thoughts. In this way they connect with each other, but also connect to the real world.

Find out more about Storytelling-benefits and tips on the following link: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/storytelling-benefits-tips.

2.3. Why do we tell stories?

Stories demonstrate the significance of a concept, a theory or a theoretical framework in a meaningful and tangible way. They initiate thinking processes and change, because students interpret their implicit meaning. This also means that stories can change the mindsets of students, produce new ideas and demonstrate solutions. Stories do not provoke disagreement by the students, and, most importantly: A good story can evoke emotional change in relation to a subject matter.

Visit the website of Robert McKee: https://mckeestory.com/seminars/story/ and answer the one question that matters most: Students ask themselves: "Why should I care?" Your story and/or your presentation should give a clear answer to that unspoken question!

Activity: Come up with a story of your own!

Think of a course you will start in the near future and apply the method of storytelling. Working on it will help you develop your skills as a storyteller and story creator. Find at least two stories that you would like to tell and that answer the question of what matters most. We have briefly discussed where you can find appropriate stories.

Come up with a story of your own by answering the seven simple questions introduced in this Chapter. Your story does not need to be long and complicated. On the contrary, keep it short and in plain language, and make sure the message is clear.

Do not interpret or analyse your story – the students will interpret its implicit meaning. And what matters most:

- Use visuals in your presentation (refer to: Module 6 Chapter 4)
- Show that you are personally involved by giving an example.
- Continue the story with a video clip or a case study.
- If you use power point: one idea / argument per slide

Recommended book: Carmine Gallo (2010): *The presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs.* NY: McGraw Hill.

iThink - How well is received your story?

Next time, when you are presenting in front of a class and telling a story, pay attention to students' reactions and see if your story has been successful or not and why. Observe if

1. students understand / don't understand (body language!)
2. students are interested / not interested (facial expressions)
3. students want to ask questions in the middle of the story (they should not, the story should be clear)
4. students express emotions related to what is presented
5. students want to contribute with their own experiences

If you are satisfied with the results – congratulations! You are on a good way to become a storyteller. If not, try to work out why the story has not worked – be as precise as possible to be able to retell your story in a more efficient way.

References

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/047e/76230ba36631cac18aba361defdcf670e268.pdf

https://2uzkee3eob510v4rszskfx11-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/20681_CL_Storytelling_Brief_Nov2018.pdf

https://www.edutopia.org/blog/storytelling-in-the-classroom-matters-matthew-friday.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/storytelling-benefits-tips

https://mckeestory.com/seminars/story/

3. Two-sided communication

Good in-class communication plays an important role for successful teaching and it is lead by the teacher through the material. In order for the students to achieve good learning results, the teacher needs to provide excellent coaching, taking into account that two-sided communication also highlights students' perspectives on a topic. Therefore a teacher requires excellent feedback skills (giving feedback, evaluating, instructing students to give peer feedback) and plays the role of a coach: introduces students how to enhance search for solutions with additional resources, supervise project and problem-based learning and gives feedback. The teacher should also encourage students to start communication by motivating them to talk and directs them towards designated topic through "communicative vocabulary" as: go on; for sure; very interesting….but what about….; what do you mean … And, let's see what coaching means in two-sided communication.

3.1. The role of a coach

Two-sided communication in class is important because it leads towards fruitful outcome which is a result of teacher's skillful coaching students through class activities like giving feedback, evaluating, instructing students to give peer feedback, or problem-based learning. It sounds complex, but it's not that complicated, and we already learned what it means to be teacher as a coach in Chapter 1.

Have you asked yourself *what do you do like good coaches do?* Because you should be a person who helps students develop their own understanding of things, encouraging them to believe in their personal capabilities. Therefore, we as good coaches should:

- encourage students by strengthening their self-esteem
- give advice and constructive feedback
- help students overcome limiting beliefs for better results
- ask questions to encourage critical self-reflection
- keep the students "on track" through permanent guidance.

But, when we coach our students we should dismiss the "know-it-all-attitude" in favour of guiding and encouraging them. Changing this attitude requires a different language and communication

style. This is where two-sided communication plays an important role: fostering students' self-development and self-esteem means to ask questions and to give feedback to stimulate development and to change limiting beliefs rather than to tell students how things work. Go to the following blog https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/01/two-way-learning and find hoe to create a classroom culture of reciprocity.

Coaching is an essential element in innovative teaching approaches like inverted classrooms, project-based learning, as well as field and team work because these approaches are based on mutual exchange between students and teachers, and the effective communication skills.

3.2. Effective communication skills

Coaching is essential because of the change in information transfer. Nowadays, information is available 24/7 and the teacher's main task is to provide expertise and guidance. Their main task is to turn information into knowledge that is meaningful to students. Students are all different, and so are their views and opinions. Which role would fit best for this process if not the one as a coach?

Coaching instead of "teaching" means to acknowledge two-sided communication that goes along with non-directive teaching formats. For this, teachers should be equipped with the following communication skills:

1. **establishing communication groups or comGroups** (which is short for a communication group in class (definition: Nestoroska/Petrovska for this project). Establishing a strong comGroup is the basis for effective communication between students and teachers, both in the physical classroom and online. Therefore, it makes sense to use a coaching approach instead of a "sage on the stage" (Alison King, 1993) approach.

2. **coaching in inverted classrooms** is essential when flipping or inverting the classroom. Technological resources like MOOCs, OER, videos or CBTs allow students to prepare for lectures in advance. Innovative learning methods always involve individual learning. When applying inverted classroom models you need to take into account that face-to-face teaching has to focus on mutual exchange between students and teachers. If we combine all communication skills we can say that the inverted classroom seems to be an

ideal place for empowering students through feedback processes. With students working on tasks in class, the teacher's role is the one of a coach, guiding students in their learning process.

3. **giving constructive feedback** to students is critical for teachers as feedback has a major impact on students' learning. We all need constructive feedback to improve our performance. In my own experience as a teacher, receiving feedback from students, from administration and colleagues has enabled me to identify areas of improvement. The question is *what does feedback mean for our students?* It is the moment in the learning process when students get the most personalised instruction possible. Giving feedback is very important, and its quality depends on *how* teachers perform it. Have a look at the following article on good feedback practice:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283664430_Feedback_on_feedback_practice_perceptions_of_students_and_academics

Good feedback becomes crucial only when the teacher establishes trustful relationships with students. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) present a framework of seven principles of good feedback practice. And, if you click on this video, you will find out as well why teachers need real feedback!

https://www.ted.com/talks/bill_gates_teachers_need_real_feedback?language=en#t-605242

4. **empowering students through peer instruction** since teaching is about the student, not the lecturer who is in front The two-sided coaching approach allows students to develop fully their potential.. Students teach each other at the same level and the teacher is the coach who is a guide by the side.

Eric Mazur, a Harvard professor of physics developed peer instruction in the 1990ties as a student-centered approach of teaching and learning. He set up concept tests which students had to discuss with their peers in class: Watch him explain the model in the video on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9orbxoRofI

3.3. Coaching in the inverted classroom

If we combine all communication skills we can say that the inverted classroom seems to be an ideal place for empowering students through feedback processes. With students working on tasks in class, the teacher's role is the one of a coach, guiding students in their learning process. Watch the video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdKzSq_t8k8),and then answer the questions:

- What is the difference between traditional and flipped/inverted teaching?
- What are the four benefits of the flipped classroom?
- How often do you practice this model in your class?
- Is the application of this model possible in your class?

Activity: Invert your classroom

Consider the possibility to invert your classroom for the next topic, for which the following steps may be useful:

1. Inform the students about the method and highlight the benefits for them as individuals and as class.
2. Tell students the importance of good communication and peer feedback.
3. Select a topic from the course and recommend the online learning sources like MOOCs, OER, videos or CBTs (link to Maribor chapter 3) for the self-study period.
4. Identify the main issues of the topic and give students a specific task for this self-study period to make sure they use the online sources provided.
5. Moderate students' feedback, discussion, argumentation and give advice class next time.

Create an evaluation matrix for the class and add information about the student's involvement, information transfer, contribution to coaching in inverted classroom. You can share your experience about using a flipped classroom.

iThink: What is your idea?

How to encourage our students to use different resources that will help them to learn in a better way? Read the following article:

17

http://www.ideaedu.org/Resources-Events/Teaching-Learning-Resources/Encouraged-students-to-use-multiple-resources-eg-Internet-library-holdings-outside-experts-to-improve-understanding#886421-assessing-this-teaching-method

and then visit the following blogs:

https://www.ideaedu.org/Resources-Events/IDEA-Blog/PostId/51/teaching-students-to-give-useful-qualitative-feedback

https://www.moovly.com/blog/is-the-flipped-classroom-approach-the-future-of-education%3F

What is your opinion about the use of multiple resources for active and successful students' learning as a way to leave traditional lecturing behind?

References

https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/01/two-way-learning

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283664430_Feedback_on_feedback_practice_perceptions_of_students_and_academics

https://www.ted.com/talks/bill_gates_teachers_need_real_feedback?language=en#t-605242

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9orbxoRofI

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdKzSq_t8k8

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https://www.ideaedu.org/Resources-Events/IDEA-Blog/PostId/51/teaching-students-to-give-useful-qualitative-feedback

https://www.moovly.com/blog/is-the-flipped-classroom-approach-the-future-of-education%3F

4. Inspiring discussions in class

There are many ways to initiate classroom discussion. However, what is very important is that the focus of the in-class discussion is student learning. In-class discussion leads toward exchange of ideas between teacher and students and also among students themselves. Leading classroom discussion as sustained exchange between and among teachers and their students is characterized by high quality and high quantities of student talk. Teachers must ensure that discussions are built upon and revolve around both students' contributions and the content at hand. When the discussion is on, it is the teacher's role to ask students questions in order to initiate their process of brainstorming.

Story

Marko: I was very worried and disappointed as I noticed my students in class were bored with my lectures. I noticed many of them pay more attention to their cell phones instead of listening to me and following my presentation. I suddenly stopped and asked them to search online the topic I lectured. They looked surprised, as I have never before asked such an activity in class. But, I told them I was serious and encouraged them to do so.

First, I suggested they do this task individually and then compare the research results with their peers. Then I asked them to present what they have found online. I noticed as students pour with interesting data, more and more they were encouraged to actively take participation by offering even more online data about the topic. This made me happy. What is more, this in-class experience gave me an inspiring idea of how I can actually BLEND my classic way of teaching with novel technology.

4.1. Motivation for discussions

Engaging students in class discussions perfectly goes along with the teacher's role as a personal guide, which we discussed in Module 1, Chapter 2. Especially in the role of a moderator the

teacher can stimulate discussion by triggering students' interests, opinions and arguments. Do you remember this role from Chapter 1?

Firstly let's see why it is crucial to engage your students in productive discussions:

- Discussions enhance students' abilities to listen carefully and to think critically.
- Students become more confident in taking intellectual risks.
- They will be able to critically understand a topic and distinguish facts from opinions.
- They will learn how to ask relevant questions.

Teachers thus need to know how to ask relevant questions when leading discussions. In this Chapter we will also have a look at critical thinking and the Socratic method of questioning and reasoning. Discussion can help students to:

- better understand course goals and objectives
- be active participants
- develop their position and "think like a scientist".
- be confident to oppose different opinions and hold to their own attitudes' and opinions..
- be self critique and respect other's opinions.
- be able to reach collective conclusion about a topic.

4.2. Critical thinking

Critical or reflective thinking originally derives from Socrates's teaching method of asking questions. The aim of this approach is to analyse questions in an objective and reflective way in order to put forward well-crafted and persuasive arguments. Nowadays critical thinking is an important and vital topic, enjoying a renaissance as a result of the widespread use of social media and the dissemination of fake news. It is very important for the students to think critically. This means students are able to distinguish facts from assumptions, put forward logical arguments in discussions, question common beliefs, and are attentive towards egocentrism.

According to Michael Scriven and Richard Paul (1987), "critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection,

reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action"
(https://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766).

If you like to find more on how to enhance critical thinking through class discussion we recommend you download the guide for using discussion-based pedagogy at https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/enhancing-critical-thinking-through-class-discussion-guide-using-discussion-based-pedagogy.

If you like to provoke effective discussion and get students to think critically, the Socratic method is the right method! Why?

It's based on asking questions for developing a collaborative and productive discussion in order to improve students' reasoning, analytical and critical thinking. Critical thinking is very powerful teaching tactic in Socratic teach   by focusing on giving students questions, instead of answers.

Definition

> **Socratic method**
>
> (*http://www.thefreeadictionary.com/Socratic+method):*.
>
> The Socratic Method is defined as "a pedagogical technique in which a teacher does not give instruction directly, but instead asks a series of questions with the result that the student comes either to a desired knowledge by answering the questions or to a deeper awareness of the limits of knowledge."

It is a very effective tool for discussion but you need to be careful how to use it and why, because by Socratic questioning teacher should: asks questions that are more meaningful to the given topic , and phrase the questions clearly and specifically.

When applying Socratic Method in class, the teacher should consider the six types of Socratic questions and design them carefully because they are for leading discussion. Just for remind, the questions are intended for clarification, assumption, reasons and evidence, viewpoints and perspectives, implications and consequences, and about the question.

iThink: Socratic method in classroom

Below is a link to an interesting blog about the Socratic Method in the classroom. It is useful to read because it clearly explains the two important aspects of this method…. just click on the following link: https://k12teacherstaffdevelopment.com/tlb/the-socratic-method-in-the-classroom

…… or if you like to read more you can go to:

https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/classroom-resources/should-educators-use-the-socratic-method-of-teaching/

Think how you could implement this method in your teaching. Then, for your next class, prepare questions that will help students to think critically and discuss.

4.3. Moderating discussions in class

Through in-class discussion teachers lead slowly but surely students to develop and evaluate their ideas. They also influence students thinking process to explore, evaluate and finally synthesize their own and others ideas. In this way students understand and learn simultaneously.

When teacher introduces a topic in the class, he/she should carry in mind that teaching is not only about content, but it is also about presenting the "main idea", which will be a subject of discussion. The teacher needs to be well prepared to facilitate the discussion because it helps students to better "absorb" the topic. After watching the suggested video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N99Mg5LfFfM you can answer yourself the following questions:

- What is your strategy for class discussion?
- How do you establish the learning goal?
- Do you start with a reflection?
- Do you ask students about their opinion?
- Do you practise guiding questions?
- Do you work on students' thoughts?
- How do you encourage students' speaking and listening to each other?

Although teachers often do not have undergone any facilitation skills training that are necessary for leading a successful discussion, they should know how to keep a discussion on track. Therefore, we recommend further reading about how to guide discussions:

https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/civil-discourse-in-the-classroom/chapter-3-talk-it-over/moderating-a

It is the teacher who should establish rules for productive in-class discussion. They are more likely to contribute in a productive way within this "safe" environment.

Activity: Critical reflection

Think of your last class and take some time to reflect about it. Ask yourself if you are satisfied with your class and if there is room for improvement:

- assess students' understanding and progress.
- check the lesson plan again: to which degree did you meet the learning objectives?
- how did class discussions go?
- how did students respond to the tasks set in class? Did they engage in discussions?
- evaluate the class regarding what can be improved.

One of the most useful way to improve your teaching in class is to reflect yourself how you lecture. It helps us to determine what is positive in our teaching and where there is still room for improvement. Take a look at the following blog and think about the importance of reflective teaching: http://www.richmondshare.com.br/what-is-reflective-teaching-and-why-is-it-important/

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5. Intercultural communication and competence

In the last chapter of Module 2 – Communication in on-campus classes, we explore the core aspects and topics of successful intercultural teaching in a global multicultural classroom. The stories, ideas, reflections, tips and links take you –the teacher trainee on a refreshing journey.

Technological innovations in communication, travelling and transport, music and sport – they all contribute to the significance of intercultural communication in the modern world. Culture influences people's beliefs, values and behaviors. It defines the way we perceive the world. Different cultures influence our different ways of interaction with others.
You may find more about cultural intelligence here:

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/cultural-intelligence.htm

5.1. Culture and communication

The ways of accomplishing successful communication depends significantly on the communicative culture to which the speakers belong. When speakers come from different cultural background, the communication represents their cultural norms and values. Wierzbitcka (1985) stresses the fact that different cultures have different speech acts, as she points out her critical approach towards the dichotomy directness/indirectness. That is why, the systematic study of the cultural phenomena in general and especially of the specific cultural conventions of the speaker's encounters becomes an inseparable part of the modern educational system.

There exist over 300 definitions of culture. The most widely accepted definition in intercultural communication is the one provided by Geert Hofstede*.* He defines culture as "software of the mind" (1997, p. 4), referring to the mental programming of thoughts and feelings. Alexander Thomas, a German researcher who developed the cultural standards approach, describes culture as an orientation system that is valid for a specific group, organisation, society or nation (2005², p. 22).

In diversity of cultures and traditions, students can find themselves in a situation of a cultural shock, or cultural misunderstanding. Our role as teachers is to be able to be aware of other cultures in the global classroom. In a monocultural class the teacher needs to be open-minded, embracing cultural values and norms. However, when teaching in a global classroom, the

teacher should to be aware of the fact that culture influences students' communication, behaviour, and values. This brings us to the term intercultural competence that emerged to refer to effective communication across cultures. According to Spitzberg, "competent communication is interaction that is perceived as effective in fulfilling certain rewarding objectives in a way that is also appropriate to the context in which interaction occurs" (1988, p. 67-105).

5.2. Intercultural communication

The field of intercultural communication is a rapidly developing field which has been enriched with its methodological and theoretical insights by discourse analysis, contrastive pragmatics, and areas of sociolinguistics, such as ethnography of communication. As the literature on intercultural communication is vast, we had to be restrictive to a discussion of a limited number of topics. Discourse analysis, a branch of linguistics deals with language in context beyond the level of the sentence. There is potentially a close interrelation between discourse and conversation analysis and pragmatics, which concerns itself with language in use, in particular with communicative function and the role of speech acts. Ethnography of communication, which is seen as an approach to sociolinguistics, considers the function of language choices in interaction and by examining social processes through language use. Contrastive pragmatics has paid a great deal of attention to culture specific 'ways of speaking'.

Teachers should be able to perceive other cultures in class. This brings us to the term intercultural competence that emerged to refer to effective communication across cultures. Communication, personality, language and culture form the four dimensions of intercultural competence in teaching.

That is why it is of great importance for a teacher to have intercultural sensitivity and knowledge. You can be a successful teacher in a global classroom if you develop cultural awareness through observation. Keep on listen to and question students; be flexible and tolerate ambiguity. Be prepared with essential phrases to manage situations. Cultural misunderstanding may occur in class as a result of not being aware of 'false friends". Show rules of politeness and learn the cultural norms and standards.

Exercise

Scroll through the following website and learn more on language barriers and intercultural communication.

http://olm-consulting.com/case-study-language-barriers-in-cross-cultural-communication/

Case Study: "Language Barriers in Cross-Cultural Communication"

Read more:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJqBhLgSNQY

5.3. Teaching in intercultural classes

For a successful intercultural communication there is a need to learn the other's language, but also its various functions, such as   language as   a medium of human communication, language as a means for creation of new concepts, etc.. Learning a language   understands learning about the culture, while being aware of one's own. That is why in a global intercultural classroom it is of great significance that students become aware of cultural differences. The process of teaching intercultural communication becomes important for the students as they have to be well prepared how to deal with cultural misunderstandings and cultural shock. They have to be well-educated in order to deal with individualism or indirectness; they have to acquire skills and knowledge to overcome situations of unexpectedness or directness. For instance, in the English language speakers do not use direct questions or direct requests. Students have to be aware of these facts, as such forms of language have impact on learning and the teaching process. It is more than obvious that cultural misunderstandings will be constantly present but with a qualitative intercultural teaching they can be avoid.

Story

 Marko: You know what Lucia I met Alek couple of weeks ago in our cafeteria… We haven't seen each other for a long time and we talked … among other things, Alek noticed that he should find a way how to increase students' communication, thinking, and reasoning. It's not that he was not happy with his teaching, but he wanted to give a fresh touch to his lectures. I immediately asked him if he knew the novel project Teaching 2030. He denied. I told him that

the cBook became 'my reliable friend' when I prepare for my teaching classes. I told him I use it constantly, especially the tasks and the resources.

Lucia: What was his reaction?

Marko: He told me he would love to learn more about it. I suggested he should use especially Chapter 4 for his lecture about inspiring discussions in class as well as the additional information, which can be found in the iLab manual.

Lucia: Yes, you are right. Actually, I also find it very useful. Let me tell you, when I was teaching in my intercultural class, playing the cBook video on diverse interpretation of non-verbal communication helped a lot. Especially students enjoyed learning from the Friends' characters. Then I even referred to iLab to enrich my knowledge with other resources.

The teacher will be challenged to teach in a global classroom. What goals should he/she have while teaching intercultural classes? Observing and constant listening, refraining from interpretation; always carrying in mind to pay close attention to body language and gestures that carry different meanings. The eye contact and physical distance also play important role in bringing judgements in the global classroom. Students need to be trained to be aware of cultural differences, and they should deal with them in a constructive way.

iThink: How would you react in the following situations?

Imagine the following situations with colleagues or in class. Are these situations based on a different understanding of cultural norms or is this an expression of someone's character? How will you decide this?

1. **Dress code:** Your new colleague from …. has a habit of dressing very casually. You do not find this behaviour very appropriate in a professional environment.

2. **Time:** Students from …are often quite late for individual appointments in your office. You're not happy about this as you're on a tight schedule.

3. **Hierarchy:** A student from Ireland often addresses you quite informally. You think this student is crossing a limit according to your position as a teacher.

Activity: Critical incidents

The **Critical Incidents Technique (CIT)** is an interview technique originally developed by John C. Flanagan in 1954 as a qualitative research tool for the Aviation Psychology Program to differentiate between effective and non-effective work behaviour (link 1). It is widely used for system design and organisational change. The CIT follows a certain structure. You ask for

- "the cause, description and outcome of a critical incident;
- feelings of a person and his/her perceptions for this situation;
- actions taken during the incident;
- changes (if any) in their future behaviour

Interview a colleague on a critical incident he or she encountered with a student from a foreign culture and ask the following questions:

1. What kind of behaviour was irritating/weird to you (feelings)?
2. What do you suppose is the reason for this student's behaviour?
3. How did you react in this situation?
4. How could you react in future?

The way we use language in order to request, ask, apologise, complain and criticise in different cultures may be different and thus may cause problems in communication.

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Glossary

Ocean of communication. This term refers to the teaching as complex process of acquiring new knowledge and new experiences. Communication contributes to the discovery of unknown during the teaching process by using different tools and approaches, which in this context is identified with the ocean, because learning leads towards the reveal of new spaces of knowledge to the students.

Storytelling: didactical method that uses everyday examples and experiences to provide different perspectives to understand the topic. Storytelling can be used in different situations. I This approach encourages both, teachers and students to share and interpret experiences that enrich the learning process.

Inverted classroom model (ICM). It is an innovative learning method where individual learning precedes the in-class learning. It is based on "inverting" the basic activities of the "classical teaching". Its goal is to transform the passive learning to accelerated learning

Critical thinking: a process of analysis, evaluation and interpretation of information, or an issue in order to form a judgment. Students are encouraged to think critically in order to distinguish opinions from facts.

Intercultural communication. This term refers to the exchange of cultural experiences, their interpretation or sublimation. The process of practicing such communication is closely related to the level of knowledge, experiences and practices that students should achieve in the learning process. The future challenge of the teacher is to establish good intercultural communication   in class and to understand students' cultures in different situations particularly having in mind

intercultural awareness, perception of different cultures, good communication skills and tolerance.