

**DEVELOPING  
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES  
THROUGH ART**



## Developing intercultural competences through art - META Methodological Report Div.2.2 (Short version)

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Authors: Professor Umberto Margiotta, Associate Professor Giovanna Del Gobbo  
Graphic Design by Thoralf Werner, Samira Löschmann | Pfefferwerk Stadtkultur gGmbH  
Edited by Fondazione Nazionale Carlo Collodi  
English Proofreading by Dr. Gilda Esposito, PhD, University of Florence

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## Foreword

The main objective of META (Minorities Groups Education Through Art) project is to find ways to minimize and eliminate the barriers that cause inequity in education systems as well as by art-integrated learning reducing disparities in learning outcomes that might affect learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The META project also aims to provide an in-depth knowledge and develop an innovative and collaborative teaching and learning methodology for European teachers, which will contribute to social cohesion and European citizenship. Through an art-learning approach, the young learners will gain essential skills as concentration, confidence, teamwork, cognitive ability, critical thinking, verbal skills, etc. Art-learning approach also encourages motivation and it has been proved that the use of arts in the classroom is closely related to students' academic achievement, social and emotional development, civic engagement and equitable opportunities.

The document pretends to underline and to explicit consistency between analysis of the European Framework, literature on Art-based Education, lessons learned through case studies (see META case study report available on the META web site) and expectations by different actors involved in the project, Finally the document is propaedeutic to develop a "META competences framework".

In the latter (Doc. 2.1) a methodological road map of the Project as a set of five interrelated processes is presented:

**Conceptualising** disparities in learning affecting students (*What to assess*);  
**Eliciting** learning experiences trough Arts proposed by partners (*How to elicit*);  
**Judging** the significance of links between learning experiences trough Arts and developing competences in the target groups (in terms of social inclusion & cultural awareness) in an European Framework (*How to judge*),  
**Validating** the formative relevance of the **learning experience** (*How to improve*),  
**Monitoring and Coaching** the personalization of each learning experiences of pupils focusing on exploitation of their own existing talents).

The starting point is the conceptualisation of what is to be assessed; i.e. in our specific vision, in which way learning trough Arts can be developed with pupils of pre-primary and primary school through activities of formal Learning and setting specific teaching environments.

Therefore, this methodology can represent a means by which teachers engage students in learning that is meaningful to them. It also provides a forum where teachers can actively grapple with the complexities of their own learning processes through Arts.

## STEP ONE

### Conceptualising disparities in learning affecting students (What to assess)

#### 1. THE TARGET OF META PROJECT: MINORITIES VS DISPARITIES

The term „minority“ has been used to identify people who tend to be located „at the lowest end of the spectrum of power and advantage“. (Hopps, 1983, 77; Nelda Meir et alii, 2010) A combination of racism, poverty and disadvantage sets suggests that the term minority has come to be used to refer to people other than members of communities that are genuinely embedded in a given society.

Traditional social work emphasizes values of individual dignity and uniqueness, self-determination and resource accessibility. Individual rights and freedom are considered most important. Minority values are more likely to stress collective orientations, including emphasis on family obligations and the dependence of family members on one another or to the ethnic group, etc.. People and pupils that are in condition of special needs education (SNE) should also be considered as minorities. UNESCO (1994) defines SNE (Special Needs Education) within a framework of inclusive education as educational intervention and support designed to address special educational needs. The term has come into use as a replacement for the term 'special education'.

Migration is a sensitive topic that can be perceived as having a negative connotation. Migratory movements have always been a feature of global society – mainly due to economic reasons with citizens looking for better life and work conditions – while more recently, a new type of emigration, resulting from conflicts and wars, has been evident. However, it appears that people in recent years do not always view people with different cultural backgrounds as a source of enrichment for their society, or for their education systems. Instead, this difference is seen as a challenging situation. According to the Institute of Policy Studies in Education (London Metropolitan University), **“migrant education is the most important issue facing European education over the next decade”**<sup>1</sup>. Migrant children form a large percentage of the EU population and are (as children belonging to minority groups) disproportionately overrepresented among early school leavers (ESL).

They have a number of specific education needs that are not currently met through our mainstream education policy.

In many OECD countries, immigrant students have more restricted access to quality education, leave school earlier and have lower academic achievement than their native peers.

That makes improving the education of immigrant students a policy priority.

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1 META case study report not casually outlines the following questions: A) Access to education: Do immigrant pupils have the same opportunities to access quality education as their native peers? What policies can ensure access to quality education for immigrant pupils, especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds? B) Participation Do immigrant pupils participate (enroll and complete) as much as their native peers? What are the effective re-integration programs for early school leavers, preventive interventions for potential early school leavers, and introductory programs for newly arrived immigrant pupils to encourage better integration into school? Learning outcomes Do immigrant pupils perform as well as their native peers?

## STEP TWO

### Eliciting learning experiences through Arts (How to elicit)

#### 1. Basic points regarding art-based education

According to the META report on Case Studies, the following statements are pertinent to Art-based Education:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
  - Article 26  
Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
  - Article 27  
Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child:
  - Article 29  
The education of the child shall be directed to ... (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential...
  - Article 31  
State parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.'
- Road Map for Arts Education – results of the first UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon (2006)
- Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development on Arts Education – results of the second UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education in Seoul (2010)
- Report of the Working Group on Developing Synergies with Education, especially Arts Education – European Agenda for Culture (2010)
- Report on Policies and Good Practices in the Public Arts and in Cultural Institutions to Promote Better Access to and Wider Participation in Culture – Working Group within the Open Coordination Method of the EU Council of Ministers (2012)
- The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration OECD (2003)
- Education at a Glance 2015 OECD INDICATORS
- Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report of 2006
- Fundamental Rights Report 2016, OSCE
- Sustainable Development Goals 2015

## 2. The Potential of Education through Arts

We can summarize the principles that illustrate the potential of Art-based Education, as follows:

**1. Arts Expand Expressive Competences and Provide a Range of Learning Styles to Children.** Integrating the arts as a forum for expression gives students, whose learning styles tend toward the visual, kinesthetic, spatial, or auditory styles, more freedom to communicate their understandings. Thus, when a teacher encourages students to work with ideas through the arts, he/she more fully taps into their varied learning styles and his/her practice incorporates student-specific pedagogy.

**2. Arts Enable Freedom of Expression for Second Language Learners.** In considering the arts as languages of expression, teachers offer bilingual and limited mother tongue students more freedom to work with ideas and express their understandings without having to depend solely on the mother tongue language. For example, the first grader who cannot yet describe in words the motions of the sun and the earth, but who can demonstrate his/her understanding in drawing or movement, is given an opportunity to participate in learning rather than be hampered by the limitations of a specific language.

**3. Arts Open Venues for Inclusive Education and Reach Out to Exceptional Learners.** The arts enable children with differing abilities to participate in learning. The arts provide important opportunities for students in communicating and expressing their understandings of content matter and their own reflections concerning their learning. The arts provide an alternative space for those children unable to communicate through traditional methods of speaking or writing and can give children with differing abilities the opportunity to share the playing field as other students in the classroom.

**4. Arts Provide a Stage for Building Self-Esteem.** Over and over again, teachers who integrate the arts in learning remark on the positive effect the activities have on children's self-esteem. Learning becomes more enjoyable, even magical, as students share their works and ideas. Increased use of the arts can raise the self-esteem of struggling students, thereby making them more successful. Teachers also remark arts have positive effects on their students' achievements.

**5. Arts Encourage Collaboration and Intergroup Harmony.** Working together on art projects can lead to a marked increase in productive teamwork. The Arts also offer children with differing abilities another venue to not only work with ideas but to cooperate with others in the class. The arts allow for greater educational equity, as more students have opportunities to work with and share knowledge. The arts offer opportunities for individuals to work cooperatively with each other, thereby furthering intercultural, interethnic, and intergroup understanding and harmony.

**6. Arts Empower Students and Teachers.** Arts are empowering. When sharing art projects with each other, students gain a sense of themselves and their peers as unique individuals with interesting ideas and skills. They also begin to respect and admire others' efforts as they communicate imaginative and original work through the arts. Such experiences potentially enable students to gain confidence as self-directed learners supported in taking responsibility for their own educational growth. The discipline and dedication required in creating artworks provide students with skills for working independently and interdependently to accomplish tasks as well as tackle complex ideas.

**7. Arts Deepen Teachers' Awareness of Children's Competences and Provide Alternative Methods of Formative Evaluation**

**8. Arts Provide Authentic Cultural Voices and Add Complexity to Teaching and Learning.** The arts broaden the tools available to students as they study and seek to understand cultures different from their own. Using the artwork of a culture as a core element of a curriculum introduces students to the voices, images, feelings, and ideas of people in a way that lends authenticity. It broadens a study while at the same time introducing students to a wider range of experiences documented by individuals through means other than "objective" reporting. Since arts lead to self-expression, by including the arts in, say, the history curriculum, they bring life to people and events studied; art based didactic of history offers dramatic documentation of the struggles, achievements, celebrations, and complexities of living together in our diverse global community.

**9. Art enables the transmission of cultural values among the new generations that can otherwise be lost in a globalised world.** Since works of art give form to fundamental beliefs and feelings, they serve as conduits for culture; they are, in effect, culture carriers. Works of art are significant players in the evolution of culture since they contribute both to cultural continuity and, through innovations in forms and techniques, to cultural change. Acquiring the skills of impression and expression associated with being art-educated enables the students to move beyond an often trite and banal pop-consumer culture to the appreciation of works of art that are among the highest forms of human achievement. These are the „masterpieces“ that have been produced across history and cultures. If art provides with opportunities to be involved both intellectually and emotionally, the more substantial the stimulus the more profound will be the response. This is why it is essential to be exposed to the „best“ the world has to offer. The sentence „garbage in, garbage out“ applies not only to computers, it also refers to the way human behavior evolves. In addition, learning to understand and appreciate the best the world has to offer will acquaint students with significant creators, some of whom may share their ethnicity, which impacts positively upon feelings of self-worth.

## STEP THREE

### Judging the significance of links between learning experiences through Arts and competences target (social inclusion & cultural awareness) in European Framework (How to judge)

The Key Competences of META Project are 1) categories of life where competencies are needed 2) the competencies themselves, and 3) behaviorally-based definitions for each competency.

META case study report classifies the main objectives of the analyzed case studies by the following seven topics:

1. The support of Inclusion/ integration and accessibility/ equality for minorities
2. The promotion of cultural diversity and the counteraction of discrimination and exclusion
3. The strengthening of the personality development/competences
4. The use of ART AS A TOOL, not only to produce holistic learning processes, but also as a GENERATIVE MEDIUM to transfer knowledge, evaluation and hybridization of values and visions of different cultures.
5. The Qualification (preparation and training) of TEACHERS and ART PRACTITIONERS
6. The initiation / introduction of Changes in school life
7. Support / Employment / Training / Involvement for and of young artists

We propose to declinate in specific vision of META Project the competences as following:

#### SOCIAL INCLUSION

The long-term development of societies, politically and economically, depends to a great extent on the knowledge, skills, values and competences acquired by people at an early age. Educational and working opportunities for the young people are also fundamental to enhance social cohesion, by discouraging people from engaging in illegal activities, reducing political and social conflict and increasing trust in others and in institutions.

“Social inclusion, demography and migration” is one of the seven key challenges of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS). The set of indicators<sup>2</sup> measuring progress in social inclusion theme in education are: early leavers from education and training (operational indicators) and low reading literacy performance of pupils (explanatory indicators); individuals' level of computer skills; individuals' level of internet skills.

Art is a powerful tool for inclusion that can be managed by teaching to offer a contribution to achieving good performance in the aforementioned indicators. In

2 <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators/social-inclusion>

this framework, the META project develops seven categories and their related competencies are: 1) Sensitivity to Change • Organizational Development • Communication • Critical Interventions. 2) Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Perspective • Cultural Competences • Negotiation and Facilitation. 3) Continuous Learning • Complex Group Dynamics • Judgment • Council Perspectives - Creating a Competency Model for Diversity and Inclusion. 4) Strategic External Relations • Social Responsibility / Regulatory. 5) Integrity • Ethics • Resilience • Influence • Empathy • Communication 6) Leadership • Diversity & Inclusion • Pragmatism • Savoir-Faire 7) Talent Management / Work and Life Balance • Compliance •

## CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EXPRESSION

People often develop creative forms of expression to make contact with others in a non-verbal way of communicating or to reflect on experiences. Formal learning environments offer a key opportunity to develop cultural content and contexts during school and can enable pupils to use creative expression based on their own initiative. All forms of creativity and media can be used to develop cultural awareness and expression and to increase cultural awareness. The former can be used to prepare the ground for effective intercultural learning. If pupils participate and make experience of different cultural traditions, types of behavior in general or specific contexts, learning steps can be made to enable them to become aware of differences and similarities. This can facilitate the development of cultural awareness and an appreciation of new contexts with potential strategies to deal with those. It can also highlight how to deal with ambiguity or 'mixed messages' in new situations. Cultural Awareness and Expression can be defined as the 'appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.'

The META project highlights how the experience of art learning in formal contexts helps to develop cultural awareness.

Consequently, META can develop consistency of learning objectives and correlated indicators as shown below also with some suggestion to assess intercultural skills and know-how and emotional and social learning.

**A. Communication and learning** involve the performance of tasks, which are not solely language tasks even though they involve language activities and make demands upon the individual's communicative competence. To the extent that these tasks are neither routine nor automatic, they require the use of strategies in communicating and learning. Carrying out these tasks involves expressive strategies of self. They necessitate the processing (through reception, production, interaction or mediation) of oral or mediated forms of cultural expression. The overall approach of META methodology is action-oriented. It is centered on the relationship between, on the one hand, the agents' use of strategies linked to their competences and how they perceive or imagine the situation to be and on the other, on the other the task or tasks to be accomplished in a specific context under particular conditions. Thus someone who has to move a wardrobe

(task) may try to push it, take it to pieces so as to carry it more easily and then reassemble it, call on outside worker or give up and convince him or herself that it can wait until tomorrow, etc. (all strategies). Depending on the strategy adopted, the performance (or avoidance, postponement or redefinition) of the task may or may not involve an explicit expressive or artistic activity. Similarly, a learner at school who has to understand and translate a behavior from a different culture or language (task) may look to see if a translation already exists, ask another learner to show what he or she has done, try to work out some kind of meaning on the basis of the few words or structures he or she knows, think of a good excuse for not handing this exercise, etc. (all possible strategies). For all the cases envisaged there will necessarily be processing of cognitive, social and emotional activity and beliefs (translation/mediation, verbal negotiation with a classmate, etc.). The relationship between strategies, task and text depends on the nature of the task. This may be primarily embodied language-related, i.e. it may require largely embodiment language activities and the strategies applied relate primarily to these embodiment activities (i.e.. reading and commenting on a behavior, completing a 'fill in the gaps'-type exercise, giving a narration, taking notes during a presentation).

**B. Ordinary language of pupils:** This has developed in a more organic way and the relation between the categories of form and meaning varies somewhat from one language to another, though within fairly narrow limits imposed by the actual nature of reality.

**C. Knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken or a behavior is used.** This is one aspect of knowledge of the world. It is, however, of sufficient importance to the learner to deserve special attention, especially since unlike many other aspects of knowledge it is likely to lie outside the learner's previous experience and may well be distorted by stereotypes. The features distinctively characteristic of a particular European society and its culture may relate, for example, to:

1. Everyday living, e.g.: • food and drink, meal times, table manners; • public holidays; • working hours and practices; • leisure activities (hobbies, sports, reading habits, media).
2. Living conditions, e.g.: • living standards (with regional, class and ethnic variations); • housing conditions; • welfare arrangements.
3. Interpersonal relations (including relations of power and solidarity) e.g. with respect to: • class structure of society and relations between classes; • relations between sexes (gender, intimacy); • family structures and relations; • relations between generations; • relations in work situations; • relations between public and police, officials, etc.
4. Values, beliefs and attitudes in relation to such factors as: • social class; • occupational groups (academic, management, public service, skilled and

manual workforces); • wealth (income and inherited); • regional cultures; • security; • institutions; • tradition and social change; • history, especially iconic historical personages and events; • minorities (ethnic, religious); • national identity; • states, peoples; • politics; • arts (music, visual arts, literature, drama, popular music and song); • religion; • humor.

5. Body language and expression: knowledge of the conventions governing such behavior form part of the user/learner's socio-cultural competence.
6. Social conventions, e.g. with regard to giving and receiving hospitality, such as: • punctuality; • presents; • dress; • refreshments, drinks, meals; • behavioral and conversational conventions and taboos; • length of stay; • leave-taking.
7. Ritual behavior in such areas as: • religious observances and rites; • birth, marriage, death; • audience and spectator behavior at public performances and ceremonies; • celebrations, festivals, dances, discos, etc.

**D. Intercultural awareness.** Knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the 'world of origin' and the 'world of the target community' produce an intercultural awareness. It is, of course, important to note that intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. It is also enriched by awareness of a wider range of cultures than those carried by the learner's first and second language. This wider awareness helps to place both in context. In addition to objective knowledge, intercultural awareness covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes.

**E. Practical skills and know-how.** They may include:

- Social skills: the ability to act in accordance with the various types of convention above and to perform the expected routines, in so far as it is considered appropriate for outsiders and particularly foreigners to do so.
- Living skills: the ability to carry out effectively the routine actions required for daily life (bathing, dressing, walking, cooking, eating, etc.); maintenance and repair of household equipment, etc.
- Vocational and professional skills: the ability to perform specialized actions (mental and physical) required to carry out the duties of (self-) employment.
- Leisure skills: the ability to carry out effectively the actions required for leisure activities, e.g.:
- Arts (painting, sculpture, playing musical instruments, etc.);
- Crafts (knitting, embroidery, weaving, basketry, carpentry, etc.);
- Sports (team games, athletics, jogging, climbing, swimming, etc.);
- Hobbies (photography, gardening, etc.).

**F. Intercultural skills and know-how.** These include:

- the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation;
- cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;

To assess these objectives comes under the lens what practical skills and know-how the learner will need/be required to have in order to communicate effectively in an area of concern.

Users of the Framework may wish to consider:

- what prior sociocultural experience and knowledge the learner is assumed/required to have;
- what new experience and knowledge of social life in his/her community as well as in the target community the learner will need to acquire in order to meet the requirements of L2 communication;
- what awareness of the relation between home and target cultures the learner will need so as to develop an appropriate intercultural competence.
- the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
- the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships.

**G. Emotional, social Learning.** The communicative activity of users/learners is affected not only by their knowledge, understanding and skills, but also by selfhood factors connected with their individual personalities, characterized by the attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality types which contribute to their personal identity. These include:

- attitudes, such as the user/learner's degree of: • openness towards, and interest in, new experiences, other persons, ideas, peoples, societies and cultures; • willingness to relativize one's own cultural viewpoint and cultural value-system; • willingness and ability to distance oneself from conventional attitudes to cultural difference.
- motivations: • intrinsic/extrinsic; • instrumental/integrative; • communicative drive, the human need to communicate.
- values, e.g. ethical and moral.
- beliefs, e.g. religious, ideological, philosophical.
- cognitive and learning styles, e.g.: • convergent/divergent; • holistic/analytic/synthetic.
- personality factors, e.g.: • loquacity/taciturnity; • enterprise/timidity; • optimism/pessimism; • introversion/extroversion; • proactivity/reactivity;

To assess these objective it's useful to consider:

- what cultural intermediary roles and functions the learner will need/be equipped/be required to fulfil;
- what features of the home and target culture the learner will need/be enabled/required to distinguish;

- what provision is expected to be made for the learner to experience the target culture;
- what opportunities the learner will have of acting as a cultural intermediary.

#### **H. The learner's intrapersonal/interpersonal competences:**

- intropunitive/extrapunitive/impunitive personality (guilt);
- (freedom from) fear or embarrassment;
- rigidity/flexibility;
- open-mindedness/closed-mindedness;
- spontaneity/self-monitoring;
- meticulousness/carelessness;
- memorizing ability;
- industry/laziness;
- ambition/(lack of) ambition;
- (lack of) self-awareness;
- (lack of) self-reliance;
- (lack of) self-confidence;
- (lack of) self-esteem.

**I. Study skills.** These include: • ability to make effective use of the learning opportunities created by teaching situations, e.g.: • to maintain attention to the presented information; • to grasp the intention of the task set; • to co-operate effectively in pair and group work; • to make rapid and frequent active use of the language learnt; • ability to use available materials for independent learning.

**J. Multimodality of expression.** Multimodality is a relatively new analytical framework created to analyze complex, multimodal discourses that draw upon or consist of various visual and textual modes. It has recently been brought together with disability studies in the social sciences. This was an inevitable and natural outcome given the crucial role artistic expression and technology alike can play in healing and creating access to worlds that are otherwise unavailable. Further, as linguistics and communication studies came to embrace the fact that people, especially those with certain disabilities, draw upon various modes other than and beyond just language to communicate, it became clear that multimodal forms of expression require multimodal analytical approaches. This latter approach, which is key to outline the specific vision of META, has recently been developed into what came to be known as the dynamic approach towards Education through Arts. That any form of expression, from painting to poetry, self-empowers through enabling expression of emotions and, in consequence, healing one's damaged self is an adage in the literature on disability and artistic expression. The benefits of investing in art stem, also, from the possibility of approaching violence as a multidimensional problem. We must consider violence from the perspective of human beings, and their right to express themselves as a means of changing behavior patterns. People think about the role of art in reducing violence, but do not place enough emphasis on how to achieve this.

The reconstruction of a country's social fabric requires the promotion of social creativity and individual expression skills, self-esteem building, as well as fostering people's capacity to transform their surroundings. Arts inspire taking action across the various parts of our society and enables bottom-up thinking. It can create the vision of an integrated society, building community's capacity to use its own historical and socio-cultural perspectives. Art enables this.

## STEP FOUR

### Validating the formative relevance of that (How to improve)

Today classrooms require that educators and teachers possess competencies for teaching all students. Robust instructional strategies and culturally sensitive curricula are critical, but more important is a teacher who is sensitive and responsive to the unique differences of each student. Recognizing the need to strengthen specific competencies to reach and teach all students requires an understanding of new ideas and a willingness to view instruction through varied cultural lenses.

Culturally competent teaching and learning process requires:

**1. To facilitate critical reflection.** A critical analysis of one's own cultural assumptions is foundational to culturally-responsive teaching and learning. Critical reflection on tightly held cultural assumptions is necessary to dislodge misconceptions and stereotypes. Culturally-responsive teaching engages students in self-awareness activities that lead to reflection on cultural assumptions. For example, in situations where beliefs about learning vary diametrically, there may be serious misunderstandings. When one student believes his learning is unrelated to timely arrival to class and another student views punctuality as a sign of respect, or when one student asks many questions and another quietly listens, each may struggle with respect or acceptance of the others. While all may be learning, each may view the others as lazy, disruptive, or disrespectful. Diverse instructional groupings allow students to learn about individual differences and to reflect on their own assumptions and beliefs.

**2. To demand respect for others.** Every student possesses a unique cultural background. Experiences based on various traditions, norms, and values inform ways of knowing and learning. Learning communities with many ways of knowing and learning benefit everyone. When there is little diversity, the overwhelming presence of "whiteness" may be intimidating "non white" students, second language learners and may serve to silence their voices. Culturally responsive methods such as inter-cultural communication stimulate respect for the needs of all learners and allow every voice to be heard.

**3. To involve accommodating individual learners.** Respect for the learner is a critical component of effective teaching. In addition to pedagogical and subject matter knowledge, competent instructors relate well to their students and possess dispositions such as compassion, fairness, integrity and respect for diversity. Teaching that is respectful and learner focused will naturally involve individual accommodations.

**4. To learn about students.** A good teachers not only learn from, but learn about their students. Learning about the cultures and languages of individual students provides a foundation for implementing effective accommodations that facilitate learning. Learning about students involves listening to them, interacting with them, and modeling for them. Effective accommodations for diverse students may include extra time on exams to accommodate the additional load on mental processing, exams in another room where students are able to write, read aloud, then revise their answers to test questions, or time to verbally elaborate on their written responses with the teacher.

**5. To use intercultural communication skills.** Culturally competent teachers are willing to learn from their students; they recognize the potential of intercultural communication as a means for enhancing the learning of the entire learning community. Effective communication with others who are linguistically and culturally different includes the use of techniques like active listening, elaboration, paraphrasing, and restatement.

Active listening is a process where both the sender and receiver are fully engaged, the listener is focused and attentive, and distractions are minimized. Active listening strategies are especially important when participants speak different languages. Intercultural communication strategies such as active listening inform learning and facilitate critical reflection.

**6. To implement focused activities and intentionally structured environments.** Perspective-taking behavior requires an understanding of norms, values, and traditions that have informed the other's worldview and learning behaviors. Ranking the value of ideas such as tradition, religion, independence, education, work, health, respect, honesty, food, etc. and a review of personal rankings with other class members may lead to meaningful conversations. Such activities may encourage students to engage in critical reflection on deeply held assumptions related to values and beliefs. Intentional groupings of students with others from different racial groups have been shown to have a positive impact on students—especially autochthon students.

The modern learners must be able to understand the cultural diversity of 21st century world and to act effectively in cultural areas. Intercultural competence development process provides an opportunity for them to receive knowledge, to form attitudes, and to acquire skills. Intercultural competence development process requires the appropriate methodological recommendations based on the principles of intercultural education and on the application of training methods and tools.

These key points can be enucleated in six key methodological fundamentals for development of intercultural competence could be (Bednarz, 2010):

1. *Focus on experiential and reflective learning settings and processes.*
2. *Conceive the development of intercultural competence as a continuous process.*
3. *Rethink learning spaces.*
4. *Adopt a strategic approach to intercultural learning.*
5. *Embed learning processes in real work and daily life.*
6. *Take into account the ethical dimension of intercultural competence.*

On a methodological level some elements are characterizing for development of intercultural competence<sup>3</sup>:

- Cultural behaviour could be considered only in relation to the cultural context in which it appears.
- Learners must be aware of their one cultural norm, values, behaviors, assumptions, and characteristics, and seeking to promote them in the context of the world cultural heritage.
- Correlation between learning, teaching and assessment of learning results is highly recommended: it would help to improve the results of learning and teaching.
- Development of intercultural competences could be realized in formal, informal and non-formal learning.
- Holistic multidimensional approach to learning gives the keywords for intercultural competence development: competence based learning, significant learning, meaningful learning, cooperative and peer learning, problem based learning, experiential learning, transformative learning, accommodative learning, and reflexive learning.
- The selection of any method and tool for development of intercultural competence may be the decision of learner in accordance with his objectives and experience.
- Make better use of different methods and tools rather than to attach to one or to decide that some are the best.
- Teachers must take an active role in transforming educational institutions and their students' educational experiences.
- Students must be active participators in teaching activities and carry out the active learning by themselves.
- Formation of new attitudes is a gradual and slow process: knowledge of peculiarities of this process would be an advantage.

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<sup>3</sup> See the Pyramid and Process models of intercultural competence (Deardorf, 2006; 2009; 2011) and Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993; 2013). Some theories such as Experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), Consolidation theory of learning (Müller & Pilzacker, 1900; Hebb, 1949; McGaugh, 2000; Lieberman, 2012) or approaches to learning, such as Problem based learning (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980, Barrows, 1996), Reflective learning (Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1983; Moon, 2004), Student-centered learning (Brandes & Ginis, 1986; Attard et al., 2010) or Active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Prince, 2004; Felder & Brent, 2009), could be effectively applied when developing intercultural competence.

- Balance between Self and Other is necessary: if the balance goes to Self there is the risk of ethnocentrism, if it goes to Other there is the risk to lose one's own cultural identity.

Focus on the learners taking into account their personal characteristics is needed as well. Some learners can learn better from experience, others - from observation. The learners have learning style preferences. These preferences could be determined by learners' cultural background as well. The educators must use effective pedagogical strategy, which relate to different learning styles when developing intercultural competence.

## STEP FIVE

### Monitoring and Coaching the personalization of pupils' learning experiences (Following their talent exploitation)

#### 1. META Methodology promotes personalized learning

Personalized learning<sup>4</sup> begins with the learner and means that the student drives his own learning. To transform a classroom into a personalized learning environment it is necessary to preview, to plan and to include students' voice and students' choice. Student voice is difficult to hear in a traditional classroom where the teacher provides direct instruction and curriculum that is either provided for the teacher, adapted by the teacher, or designed by the teacher. A personalized learning environment is when the students' learning experiences -what they learn, and how, when, and where they learn it- are tailored to their individual developmental needs, skills, and interests. Although where, how, and when they learn might vary according to their needs, students also develop deep connections to each other and their teachers and other adults. So the arts, with their cultural, structural and specific attributes, are the generative medium to create and develop a personalized learning environment.

Art students choose how they learn something and, possibly, what they learn. Such recognition of students promotes the kind of social interaction fundamental to the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1962). The community of learners contributes to the formation of knowledge. According to constructivist theory, all knowledge is built on prior knowledge and no knowledge is independent of the meaning ascribed to it by the learner or community of learners. Students who are given choices take more risks and take on larger challenges than standard curricula might suggest. Students who believe in their own work are motivated and engaged. Bandura's (1982) theory of social learning and self-efficacy notes that one's sense of self influences one's choices, effort, and persistence.

Emotions, also, stimulate body awareness, creativity, and a sense of self. Emotions drive attention, create meaning, and have their own memory pathways. The artistic process engages many faculties but most significantly emotions and decision-making. Artists frequently use feelings to determine what to do next. Emotions can help inform quality, value-based decisions and recall memories. The systems of emotion and cognition are virtually inseparable.

In a choice-based art classroom, students, teachers, and resources interact in

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<sup>4</sup> Personalized learning vision draws from Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences Theory. Rather than labeling children based on IQ measures, Gardner's multiple intelligence theory recognizes students have intelligence profiles consisting of linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and existential strengths and weaknesses. Although often misconstrued as a need for teachers to tailor learning to each student's unique profile, the multiple intelligences theory emphasizes the need to create diverse learning experiences accessible to a variety of intelligence profiles. While the notion of customizing education to learners' needs has been integral in a variety of educational models over the past century, Victor García Hoz coined the term „personalization“ in the 1970s.

multiple ways for teaching and learning. The various modes of instruction include:

- **Teacher Roles.** Teaching comes in many forms: direct and indirect (through visuals and references), whole-group demonstrations and discussions, small groups of students who choose a particular exploration, and one-to-one teacher to student interaction. This is possible because student independence is encouraged. The teacher's roles include demonstrating, modeling, facilitating, coaching, providing content, and altering that content as a result of observations made in class.
- **Student Cognitive Divergence.** To interpret the nature of objects or events one needs to be able to depict a variety of images, but these are not merely to be copied or imitated. How to depict phenomena so that their basic characteristics will be conveyed is the challenge? Examples of the skills required to meet this objective include abilities to utilize: principles of linear or atmospheric perspective to produce illusions of varying aspects of size, volume and space; „gesture“ drawing or painting to convey a sense of movement or action and pushing, pulling and pinching clay to shape surfaces that are concave and convex. Interpretative skills always come into play because it is not clear how to actually produce or reproduce the objects and events that are stimuli for expression. When looking at a painting or sculpture of a man or woman, for instance, it is not a response to a real person; the person is not actually present. It is always the artist's representation and interpretation of the person: a „sign“ for the object; i.e., shapes and colors that add up to an image that represents a nose or hand.
- **Art production.** Art education contributes to the development of a very important area of literacy by cultivating abilities to utilize a non-verbal language of expression and communication. It is a language that permeates contemporary life, but while many are manipulated by it, all too few are empowered to utilize it or respond to it critically. Acquiring the skills of art production should contribute in no small measure to correcting this inequity.
- **Art Resources.** The resources of the world of art are available to students who find connections to their work in reproductions, books, Web sites, and multi-media materials. An evolving, open-system curriculum fosters an organic learning process. Faced with high standards of learning and broad responsibilities, children can use art to process what they see, know, and learn. By arranging classroom as studios and effectively organizing the space, time, and materials, teachers create an environment that enables students to create compelling artwork that expresses their individuality. Just as artists embrace playfulness, unpredictability, and the drive to create personal meaning, a META-based classroom capitalizes on these attributes and helps students to use artistic suggestions to learn. As a result, students' investment, teachers' enthusiasm, and expressive images emerge.

For this concept of Education through ARTS, Teachers, Educators and Mediators have at their disposal a number of strategies for sharing information and can assume a variety of roles, including teacher, instructor, role model, observer, and coach. As an observer, the teacher can monitor students' behavior, pinpoint problems, plan for future demonstrations, and highlight the amazing discoveries that emerge in the course of a day in the classroom. The observant teacher, freed from micro-management of the class, can facilitate happenings in the art room. By observing student progress, the teacher can also plan for appropriate future content. In this model, a key role for the teacher is as coach and encourager of each student's independent work. Peer tutoring and collaborative learning should happen organically, organized by the students. Students who work with a particular medium or line of thought over time gain an expertise that they can share with their classmates, thereby becoming student experts. In addition, student-initiated work that emerges in a holistic manner can ensure that the multiple intelligences of students have the opportunity to find expression.

Assessment should be ongoing and continuous with students showing evidence of learning in their daily activities. Multiple, formative assessments inform teaching, resulting in materials and instructions that are closely aligned with student needs. Students are continually involved in assessment activities and are given clear and timely feedback about their progress.

Rubrics that are negotiated between students and teachers establish the criteria for work throughout the year. Criteria should be generalized to fit all centers and affirm all levels of ability.

- Rubrics become class standards for overall performance and provide a basis for student achievement.
- Surveys, questionnaires, and group discussions can help identify student understandings in various content areas.
- Helping students to recognize their own „zone of proximal development,“ where their knowledge lies and where they can reach, is an important role for the teacher (Vygotsky, 1978). Students are given frequent opportunities to self-assess their progress in various ways.
- Teachers train students to perform self-assessment through introduction and modeling of various assessment tools, such as journals, artist statements, sharing sessions, and presentations.
- Students use information gained in self-assessments to build confidence and measure their progress. Teachers use information gained in self-assessments to redirect individualized and group instruction and to develop new curricula.
- Assessment is often collaborative, between students and/or student(s) and teacher. Collaborative assessment may take the form of peer teaching, sharing of work, single or group exhibits, discussions and conferences with the teacher.
- Teachers create manageable methods for documenting student progress utilizing checklists, observations and dialogues, journals, and other self-assessment materials.
- Written evaluations reflect multiple assessments over a period of time. Evalua-

tions document student understandings and abilities. In addition to skills, work habits should be acknowledged, including time management, persistence, risk-taking, and focus.

- Teachers should advocate for fair evaluation practices in their school or district, so that student progress can be articulated relative to set standards of the art program and not confined to single letter grades.

In a constructivist setting, in the META methodology, assessment is continuous and constant. Students demonstrate evidence of understandings through the context of their daily work (Assessment of students' achievements is collaborative: student to self, student to peers, student to teacher, and teacher to student). In particular, frequent formative assessments increase the learning of low-achieving students. Self-assessment is essential to student confidence and, ultimately, success in learning. For students to take an active role in their learning, they need to be aware of their status. Teaching students how to self-assess is a vital role of the teacher. Helping them to recognize their current abilities, clarify goals, and identify strategies is the responsibility of the teacher include „self-knowledge“ as one of six critical components of understanding. Knowing when to provide feedback is critical in the choice-based classroom. Several researchers recommend that teachers advocate for more representative systems for reporting student achievement and reflecting a range of understandings. Students should be assessed against set standards, never against one another. Negative impacts result from objective measures of knowledge. Evaluations must reflect multiple assessment measures and information, not just scores. This needs a change in public attitude toward grading practices to include formative assessment summaries and to create a climate of success in learning.

## 2. META Methodology promotes the empowerment of talent

All children are gifted. Talent is not a gift. Arts are a powerful, generative media to expand learning processes. They support the motivation to learn, guide and empower the personalization of learning outcomes.

There is surprisingly little published research on global talent development issues and literature that defines the scope and sets the boundaries of the concept (Cohn et al., 2005; Younger and Cleemann, 2010; Garavan et al., 2009; Cook, 2010). However, it is acknowledged that talent development through Arts represents an important component of global talent. It is here suggested that in order to understand the scope of talent development through arts, the following questions should be posed: What is talent for the purposes of META? Does talent development focus on technical or generic competencies or both? What are the learning needs that are the primary focus of talent development, are they organisational or individual or a combination of them? Does talent development occur in an accelerated or normal way? What are the embodied patterns and processes that contribute to the architecture of talent development in each person's own evolution?

Answers to these questions should help to bring some coherence to the scope of the concept. A definition of talent development is as follows: *Talent development focuses on the planning, selection and implementation of development strategies for the entire competences pool, to ensure that the student may identify, personalize and expand his/her strategic objectives of life.*

Our knowledge base concerning talent development is currently weak. However, the existing evidence suggests that organizations are designing unique talent development processes. It is also clear that many definitions or descriptions of talent development focus on exclusive models and emphasize leadership talent development. A reading of the talent literature suggests that, at an individual level, talent is something exemplary that certain people possess. A similar notion is proposed by Ready et al. (2010). The authors articulate the characteristics of individuals with high potentials as follows: they consistently deliver strong results; they quickly master new types of expertise and they recognize systemic vision and systematic confrontation with innovation.. They also achieve excellence, a relentless focus on learning, an enterprising spirit and a capacity to make careful assessments of risk.

But can talent be viewed as referring only to a limited pool of societal members who possess unique managerial and leadership competencies? The embodied cognition paradigm and theory of structural cognitive modifiability strongly refuse this statement. Iles et al. (2010) have highlighted the lack of consensus on talents, that may fall within the scope of a talent development process. According with their problematization, four possible scenarios for META learning's experiences are possible:

- an inclusive approach that focuses on developing each student as a potential thinking agent;
- an inclusive approach that emphasizes the development of capabilities in the global society;
- an exclusive approach that focuses on developing specific elite individuals
- an exclusive approach that focuses on key positions, roles and develops talent to fulfill these roles.

The empirical evidences suggest a mixture of approaches in organizations and in schools. However, there are increasing evidences that high potential talent must be proficient in human, social and working relations in diverse working contexts (Dierdorff & Morgeson, 2007). As a consequence, in national and international guidelines of policies education there is an increased focus, on transversal competencies and soft skills. But is it enough? Unlike artistic or aesthetic competence, generic competencies provide more significant development challenges. They tend to be holistic, to overlap, and interweave (Capaldo et al., 2006), and they are intrinsically related to the kind of person that one is. They are clearly related to issues such as self-confidence and self-esteem of the learner.

Toward developing important transformations of personal lives and organizational practices, there is a need to create new forms of activities, which are not yet there. They are literally learned as they are being created. There is no competent teacher or trainer. Standard learning theories have little to offer if one wants to understand these processes. Gregory Bateson's (1972) theory of learning is one of the few approaches helpful for tackling this challenge. Bateson distinguished between three levels of learning. Learning I refers to conditioning, acquisition of the responses deemed correct in the given context—for instance, the learning of correct answers in a classroom. Bateson points out that with Learning I, also Learning II is going on: people acquire the deep-seated rules and patterns of behavior characteristic to the context itself. Thus, in classrooms, students learn the 'hidden curriculum' of what it means to be a student: how to please the teachers, how to pass exams, how to belong to groups, etc. Sometimes the context bombards participants with contradictory demands: Learning II creates a double bind. Such pressures can lead to Learning III where a person or a group begins to radically question the sense and meaning of the context and to construct a wider alternative context. Learning III is essentially a collective endeavor. Bateson's conceptualization of Learning III was a provocative proposal, not an elaborated theory. The theory of expansive learning develops Bateson's idea into a systematic framework. Learning III is seen as a set of learning activity, which has its own typical actions and tools. The object of expansive learning activity is the entire activity system in which the learners are engaged. Expansive learning activities through art produces new cultural patterns of activity. Expansive learning through arts at work produces new forms of work activity.

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