

Learning to Learn

Center for Evolutionary Learning (CEL) will contribute to the design of the educational interventions geared towards the development of competencies related to the management of socially responsible interactions with firms and of internal processes in civic society organizations. It will enhance the LC methodology through the "evolutionary learning" approach for personal empowerment and fulfilment. It will also give a specific contribution to the delivery of the educational interventions

"Learning to learn requires to tackle and remove the inner barriers to changing the way we think, we feel, we belong, and consequently, we act"

and the overall NoProS LC experimentation that will leverage innovative pedagogical approaches based on introspective and meditative practices. Finally, CEL will contribute to the dissemination of the results to the different targeted audiences.

The premise underlying the development of this foundational Learning Cycle is that the development of learning competencies requires much more than raising awareness at the cognitive level on personal biases in the way one approaches the learning challenge, as it is usually done. Learning to learn requires to tackle and remove the inner barriers to changing the way we think, we feel, we belong, and consequently, we act. To do so, it is necessary to consider innovative approaches to self-discovery and change that can help individuals reach higher consciousness levels about one's own

qualities, and tap into deep reservoirs of energies to enact these inner evolutionary processes. The suggested approach is based on introspection and meditation techniques, which act on the personal values, on emotional traits and on cognitive dispositions, which form individual and collective identities and biases.

The shift in personal values and psychological traits, and the consequent enhanced development of emotional and cognitive capacities is thus assumed to be the result of an awakening process, which unveils inner qualities and empowers them towards action for the greater good of an enlarged sense of "self", which includes the organization and, even more importantly, the social and natural environment in which it is embedded.

From this individual awakening and development process derives then collective evolutionary dynamics launched by novel initiatives and actions aimed at improving internal processes through variation, selection, replication and retention processes of novel ideas. More importantly, some of these evolutionary processes ignited by "enlightened" individuals (that is, individuals that have developed a broader sense of Self and higher consciousness levels about their own and the collective sense of purpose) will be aimed to the greater and common good of the organization and of its stakeholders. In turn, these types of organizational initiatives and routines are likely to produce sustainable and responsible development models of business and society interaction, at the core of the profound societal transformation, which most non-profit institutions and organizations aim for.



Coordination meeting in Tallinn



Analysing the LC's methodology at Tallinn

The second coordination meeting of the NoPros project was held in Tallinn, the Estonian capital, hosted by the partner AEAE Andras. The sessions took place on 31st May and 1st June, several issues had been discussed and several decisions had been made.

After succinctly review the project and dealing with the issues of overall coordination it was discussed the NoProS Quality Plan, which was validated by the partners.

Also, the dissemination strategy was discussed in conjunction with the exploitation of project results, and was decided to form a Dissemination Committee.

The partnership also decided to create an e-Learning Circle sharing platform to share and communicate contents and experiences happening in existing Learning Circles.

The development of curricula has been thoroughly examined, based on the following cognitive/operational path: Definition of Key Competence à Identification

of LC goals à Identification of Non-profit sector themes to be included in the LC (Guidelines Elaboration by the part of the LC lead partner) à Collection of materials by the part of the LC partners à Organisation of the materials in a Curriculum by the LC lead partner.

The didactic model of Learning Circles was deeply discussed



The dialogue was steady at the meeting of Tallinn

and a clarification of the LC organizer and LC facilitator roles has been made. The partnership agreed to add to the methodology some activities that the facilitator may undertake for starting up each Learning Circle group.

The testing of the LC was also discussed by the partners and was admitted to hold a meeting in the Netherlands for training of LC. Facilitators. The partner CEL will host this meeting.

At the meeting in Tallinn was also decided to relocate the third coordination meeting of the project. Instead of being in Athens as scheduled it will be in Lisbon on 27th, 28th and 29th September 2010, hosted by the partner CENJOR.

Competences, LC and working groups

	Key competence to attain	Learning Circle Curricula	NoProS Partners
0	Learning to learn	Learning Capabilities	P10_CEL* P4_ANDRAS P1_TAMAT
1	Cultural awareness and expression	The European Theatre in an historical perspective	P2_SoDeSpe* P4_ANDRAS
2	Communication: Mother tongue and foreign language	Cultural Heritage for Multi-lingual Communities	P1_TAMAT P3_ANCE P5_CENJOR P8_ASC* P9_LPSK* P-Silent_SEED (intercultural approach)
3	Digital competence	Creative communication and cooperation	P1_TAMAT P2_SoDeSpe P5_CENJOR P6_NM&M* P-Silent_SEED (e-LC)
4	Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship	The Value of Social Enterprise	P7_DCR P8_ASC* P9_LPSK P10_CEL* P-Silent_SEED
5	Mathematical and basic competencies on scientific and technological field	Sustainability and Cooperation	P1_TAMAT P3_ANCE P7_DCR* P-Silent_SEED (fund raising)

* In red the leader or co-leader partner of each working group of LC

Greece and lifelong learning development

In February 2010 the Greek Government, through the Minister of Education, Anna Diamantopoulou, opened a public deliberation process with the aim to get the public's views towards a new national lifelong learning (LLL) strategy. The results of this deliberation process will be presented in the following months and will guide the development of the new legislation for the development of LLL in Greece.

Today, the situation in Greece regarding participation in LLL is, unfortunately, far from reaching national and EU targets. More specifically:

- Greece ranks 27th out of 33 countries in adult participation in education and training (EU27 average is 9,5%, Greece's percentage is only 2,9%).

- In relation to participation in Vocational Education and Training (VET) Greece is in the 4th place before last, and especially in relation to the percentage of workers in continuous vocational education, Greece is in the last place.

- Regarding the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) linked to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), Greece again ranks last.

Learning Circles methodology

The Learning Circle is seen as a democratic and emancipatory method and arena for learning, particularly among adults (Sturla Bjerkeraker). The Learning Circle is a flexible and "casual" (unexpected) learning methodology for improving own knowledge and competences thanks to the connection between human capital and social capital. People may learn from each other better than in a conventional (top-down) way. Small gatherings of people who come together to share their ideals, goals, practices and experiences. They encourage inquiry, debate and action. Learning Circles give participants the opportunity to make up their own mind and make their own decisions. They are also a way to make new friends.

Learning Circles are conducted in open neutral environments where participants can create dialogue and exchange ideas on any topic.

LC aims

Not to learn a lot of facts or for everyone to reach agreement. Rather, provides each person with the chance to increase his/her understanding of the issues covered and the tools and confidence to act on their beliefs.

What kinds of outcomes?

- To research information.
- To identify ways of finding things out so that participants don't have to take other people's word for something without checking it out.

- To give participants the information, tools and confidence to be an active participant.

Why using LC methodology?

- Exploring our own personal goals with the goals of others.
- Enabling people to continue lifelong learning as an important strategy in relation to ageing.
- ... discussion!

What happens during LCs?

Participants' cycle of experience (psycho-social Gestalt):

- To single out the steps describing each participants experience within the LC;
- To single out the steps describing the group behavior during the LC implementation;
- Problem solving thanks to the insight phenomenon.

Participating and experiencing an LC promotes the use of several experience levels besides the cognitive-verbal one: the imaginary one; the emotional one; the sensory one; the corporal one.

A cooking class, for example, will rely more on smell, touch and taste than a social responsibility class. Overall, though, visual reinforcement is a particularly important learning tool.

Problem solving and insight

Insight (Gestalt): An insight is the derivation of a rule which links cause with effect for problem solving.

Differences between classroom and adult learning

	Traditional classroom learning	Adult, non - formal learning
Learner's role	Follow instructions Often passive reception of information Little responsibility for learning process	Offer ideas based on experience Interdependent Active participation Responsible for learning process
Motivation for learning	External: Society (family, religion, tradition etc) Learner does not see immediate benefit	From within oneself Learner sees immediate application
Content	Largely teacher - controlled Learner has little choice	Centred on life or workplace problems/issues expressed by the learner
Method/focus	Gain facts, information	Sharing and building on knowledge and experience

The learning process is described in new terms. No trials and errors, but resettling of the problem space: a conceptual restructuring of the available elements and thus a step forward towards the solution.

Each LC is composed of:

- What the LC is discussing about?
- How the topics are dealt with? Role games, simulations, open discussions, brain storming, etc.
- Debriefing for fixing up the experience and knowledge.

Theatre in education and training projects

as key competencies generator, cultural awareness and expression

Theater is not just an artistic expression but also a method and a pedagogic tool of man education.

From Stanislavski to Grotowski, from Barba to Brook, the different "methods" experimented in the field of actors training gave the bases to create, not only a new human science as that of theatrical anthropology, but also a real theatrical discipline as pedagogic experience.

As stated by J. Grotowski, one of the most influential masters of the twentieth century, in theater, you work "on the ways to extend the sphere of active culture. What is the privilege of a few can also become patrimony of others. I'm not talking about a mass production of works of art, but about a sort of personal creative experience, which has considerable influence on the private life of the individual or on his life with others".

From this point of view, therefore, the theatrical techniques do not relate solely to the achievement of an aesthetically degree linked to the job of the actor, but realize an educational path intended to reflect a core of "human resources" basic for the training, the learning, the self-learning, the analysis of social key competencies. The work that the performer takes upon itself during the theatrical training can in fact recreate a human performance similar to life but in conditions of observability and under exceptional attention as in a laboratory experiment.



The theatrical action is a sort of laboratory of humanity: what is experimented is not a separate process, but a human process accomplished through the human being.

Learning through such an approach means open oneself at emotional and cognitive level, compare with oneself, with one's own abilities, wishes and awareness.

It is true that theatre generates a stress condition (performance), but it also creates a state of control that is positive orientation and release of energy, expression and body language.

For its strong anthropological and intersubjective matrix, theatre represents furthermore a privileged observatory able to testify the social experience of a community and the different identities that compose this community.

Right from this point of view, theatre can configure itself as cultural awareness and expression but as an innovative pedagogical "method" that overcomes the obstacles and the distances of a conventional educational approach based on a transmission of knowledge in which the learner is subject to a passive reception of notions



Photographs of la società dello spettacolo's production "The perfect crime"

Lifelong Learning in Lithuania

The Strategy for Assuring Lifelong Learning was approved in 2008. The purpose of this Strategy is to define both development directions and implementation measures of lifelong learning in the fields of vocational and adult education. The document describes guidelines for development of comprehensive, coherent and efficient lifelong learning system in correspondence with the national priorities and individual needs that creates opportunities to acquire, upgrade or change qualification and competences for better employment, integration into the society and improving quality of life.

The National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (approved in 2003) establish that the mission of education is to “create conditions enabling lifelong learning, which encompasses continuous satisfaction of cognitive needs, seeking to acquire new competences and qualifications that are necessary for the professional career and meaningful life”.

The policy of lifelong learning is supported by several national legal acts: The Law on Education (1991, new edition 2003), the Law on VET (1997, new edition 2007), the Law on Nonformal Education (1998), The Law on Higher Education (2000), The Law on Support for Employment (2006)

Responsible bodies for implementation of the policy

- Ministry of Education and Science
- The Ministry of Social Security and Labour

Key facts

- Based on the statistical data, in 2007, 46 % of population aged 25-64 has attained qualification at post secondary (both tertiary and non-tertiary) level.
- According to the data of Lithuanian Department of Statistics,

in 2006 the activities of nonformal education in Lithuania involved about 55 percent of Lithuania’s population. In 2003, this number reached merely 28 percent.

- The programme of Lithuanian Virtual University for 2007-2012 was approved in 2007 for promotion of e-learning and the development of e-learning infrastructure. The Programme aims to further develop Lithuanian Distance Learning Network (LieDM) and to create information technology based and integrated e-learning space, providing lifelong learning possibilities.
- Currently LieDM unites 77 institutions: universities, colleges, adult education centres and VET institutions. The network provides 10 master level programmes and more than 1070 distance learning courses in various areas.
- The Description of Procedure for Recognition of Prior Learning Achievements was approved in 2008 to facilitate recognition of non-formal learning as well as work experience for persons enrolled in formal VET. Prior leaning encompasses learning according to formal and non-formal programmes as well as experience gained individually or work experience.
- The main way for adults to legitimate non-formal VET and informal learning achievements or work experience is the equivalency examination. Persons with at least one year's work experience and who are over 18 can apply VET institutions for the recognition of competence acquired outside formal education. The procedure starts with the identification of non-formal or informal learning achievements through the analysis of certificates on non-formal education and other related documents provided by individual.

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Into the 5th Circle

From non-profit sector to individual acquisition of maths and science basic principles

In this brief paper, we will look at the details of one of NoProS Learning Circles, namely LC 5 "Cooperation & Sustainable Resource Control" and on its modular articulation. This is a good way to familiarize with the basic terms and concepts relating to Learning Circles and, more importantly, to understand how a LC focused on a Non-profit sector topic can constitute a vehicle to promote key competences.

As its title suggests, Control LC 5 is deeply concerned with non profit sector prototypical issues, being related both with macro and micro tools used by non-profit bodies to achieve the goals of their mission (i.e. Financial management tools of cooperation as Fundraising and Budget planning) and with models of sustainable living. These themes converge in the two modules of the Learning Circle Curriculum, which are divided in several sub-modules, that is:

"All the participants will put their competence at disposal of the other member of group towards the accomplishment of common practical goals: the elaboration of a budget plan, planning energetic sustainability of an organisation, etc."

Module 1: Financial Management of Cooperation

- 1.1. Budget Planning
- 1.2. Fundraising for Cooperation project

Module 2: Sustainable living

- 2.1. Sustainable household
- 2.2. Sustainable life of an organisation

Far from going into a deeply theoretical point of view the LC modules approach their themes within the realm of a practical

perspective facilitated by the use of ICT and other devices, such as specific free on line software and formulas.

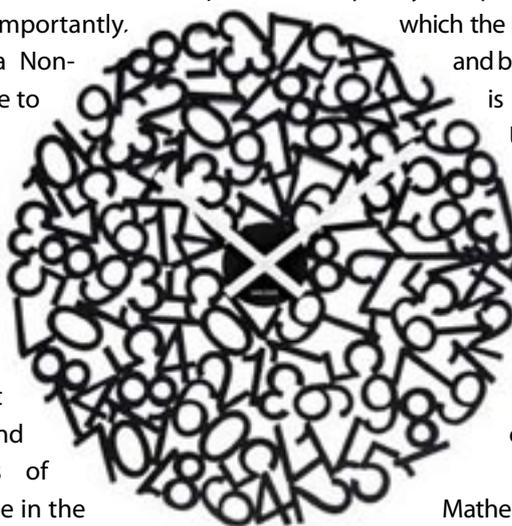
It is expressly this practical perspective that provides the way in which the key competence mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology¹ is promoted among the participants of the LC, thanks to each individual's contribution. Apart from discussing and exchanging opinions about the LC topics, all the participants will put their competence at disposal of the other member of group towards the accomplishment of common practical goals: the elaboration of a budget plan, planning energetic sustainability of an organisation etc.

Mathematical competence acquisition process thus will happen within a learning by doing cognitive framework; for instance, triggered by the application of micro-tasks aimed at achieving those operational goals like planning the budget for a cooperation project's activities or determining how big the footprint of an NGO office is.

These micro-tasks involve, for instance, the four operations calculations, percentages, basic physics formulas and, what is more important, they relate to the acquisition of a general awareness on one of the most important issues faced by the notion of "development" as well as "understanding of the changes caused by human activity and the responsibility of each individual as a citizen".

Tamat

1 - Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations, with the emphasis being placed on process, activity and knowledge. Basic competences in science and technology refer to the mastery, use and application of knowledge and methodologies, which explain the natural world. These involve an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and the responsibility of each individual as a citizen.



Language, culture and critical awareness

Language and thought are inseparable. Both are elements of the self and the cause and effect of the cultural identity. The individual mentality is closely linked to the use of the mother tongue, expression of a particular culture and the primary mean of socialization: in the family, at school, in the various social circles and through the media.

We think in the mother tongue and through it we communicate with the other sons of the same monolingual culture.

But life in the world often faces the self with other languages. Foreign languages, strangers, associated with other forms of thinking and other identities. A confrontation that is not only linguistic, but also cultural and can degenerate into a social conflict.

The learning and the continued use of foreign languages should be think and treated as a process of acculturation with an impact on the self and their social relation. People involved in such situations need to acquire critical awareness of the complexity of this dialectic.

Situations that are particularly sensitive in communities that besides multilingual and multicultural are also multiethnic. Or when a community with some internal homogeneity is



in a minority position in a context dominated by another language, another culture, another ethnic group.

One of the objectives of the LC 2 of the NoProS project is to create instruments that facilitate the educational action for the comprehension that the world is the coexistence of diverse cultures and that the real contribution of each culture lie in the difference established with the others.

CENJOR



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