

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS IN VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

Robert O'Dowd

Universidad de León,
Spain

robert.odowd@unileon.es

@robodowd



- What country are you in right now?
- Do you teach at university level or pre-university level? Or how would you describe your professional role?
- Have you ever done a Virtual Exchange before?



MY PLAN FOR TODAY

- Terminology: What are Virtual Exchange and Blended Mobility?
- What do students learn from Virtual Exchange?
- What do we understand by Global Citizenship? What does Virtual Exchange for Global Citizenship look like?
- Online collaboration in global contexts: What are the challenges for students and for teachers?





A QUICK REVIEW OF DEFINITIONS

What is the difference between **Virtual Exchange** and **Virtual Mobility**?

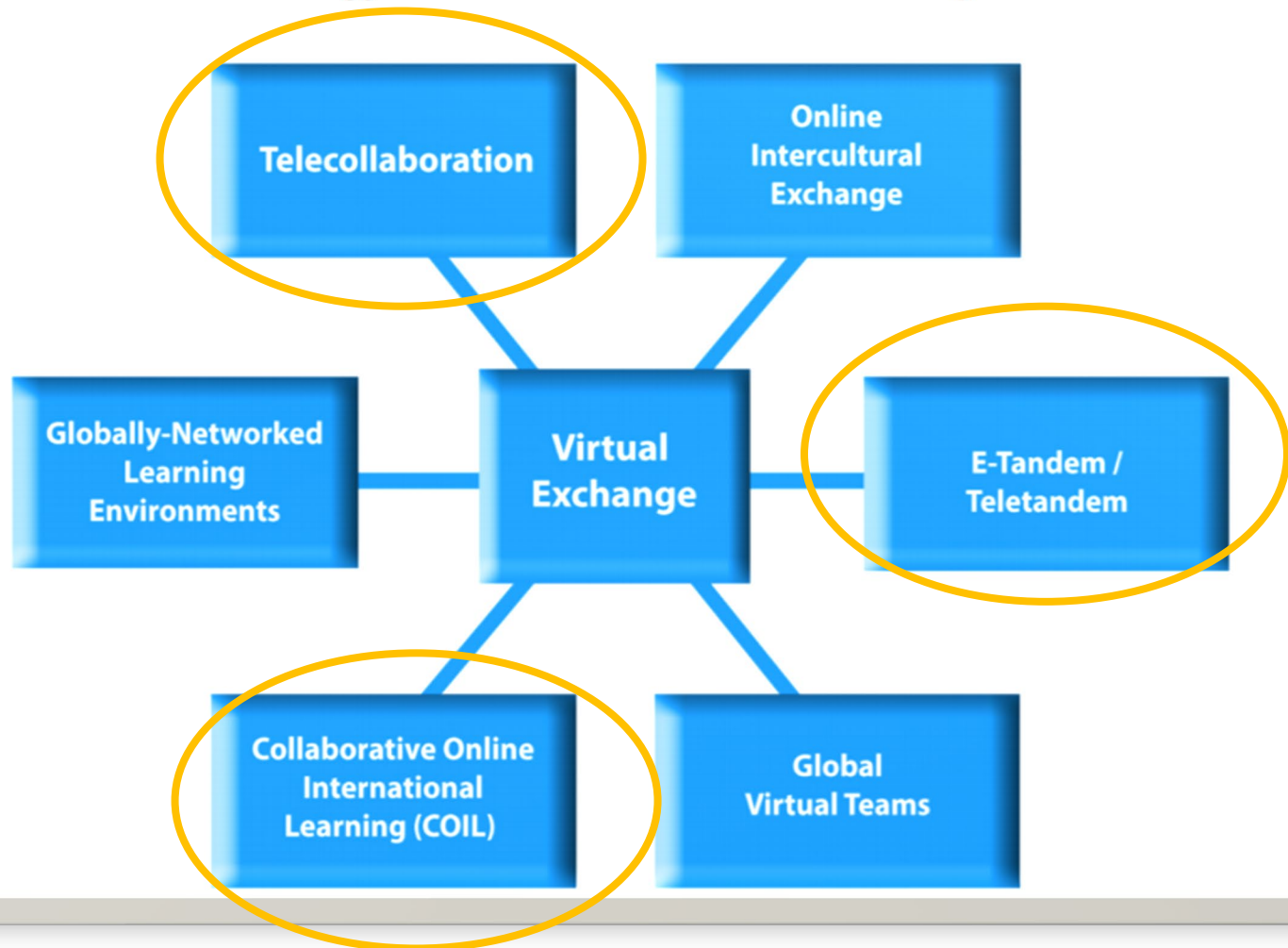
What do you understand by the term **Blended Mobility**? And have you ever heard of a **BIP**?



WHAT IS VIRTUAL EXCHANGE?

- A term to describe the many different ways that...
- learners are engaged in sustained online intercultural interaction and collaboration...
- ...with partners from other cultural contexts or geographical locations....
- ...as an integrated part of course work....
- ...and under the guidance of educators (O'Dowd, 2023).

An overview of terminology used to refer to virtual exchange initiatives



O'Dowd, R. (2018). From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: state-of-the-art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward.

Journal of Virtual Exchange, 1, 1-23.

Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2018.jve.1>

WHAT MAKES ‘VIRTUAL EXCHANGE’ DIFFERENT TO ‘VIRTUAL MOBILITY’?

Rajagopal et al. (2020):
“...learners enrolled as students in one higher educational institute have the opportunity to follow a course at another higher educational institute in the online mode”.



Bringing the student perspective to the debate on mobility, virtual exchange & blended learning

Joint position paper by the European Students' Union and the Erasmus Student Network

WARINESS OF HOW VIRTUAL MOBILITY WILL BE USED AT EUROPEAN AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Although quite popular in most policy documents, 'virtual mobility' is an ambiguous and oxymoronic term. A mobility experience is by definition physical and not virtual; if no physical movement has taken place, there is no need to call it "mobility" at all.

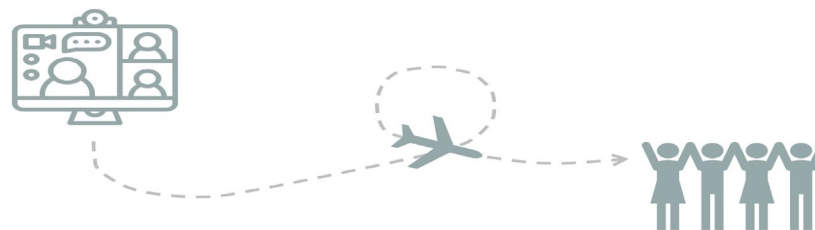
Virtual learning and thus virtual exchanges cannot substitute face-to-face interaction and physical mobility that imply cultural immersion and first-hand experience of the everyday life of the host culture,

Therefore, when counting participants in international mobility, participants in virtual activities should not be counted as "mobile students" but as another category, and funding for these activities should not be taken from the budgets for student mobility.

The new Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027)



WHAT IS 'BLENDED MOBILITY'?



Blended mobility can be defined as **the strategic combination of both physical mobility and structured online collaboration.**

WHAT ARE BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES (BIPs)?

In addition, any student may participate in blended intensive programmes. In these cases, physical mobility must last between 5 days and 30 days and be combined with a compulsory virtual component facilitating collaborative online learning exchange and teamwork. A blended mobility for studies must award a minimum of 3 ECTS credits.

“Innovation in Foreign Language Teaching” An example of a Blended Intensive Programme



3 ECTS credits –
Students from Spain, Germany, Ireland, Finland, Italy and Lithuania.

WHAT DO
STUDENTS
LEARN FROM
VIRTUAL
EXCHANGE?

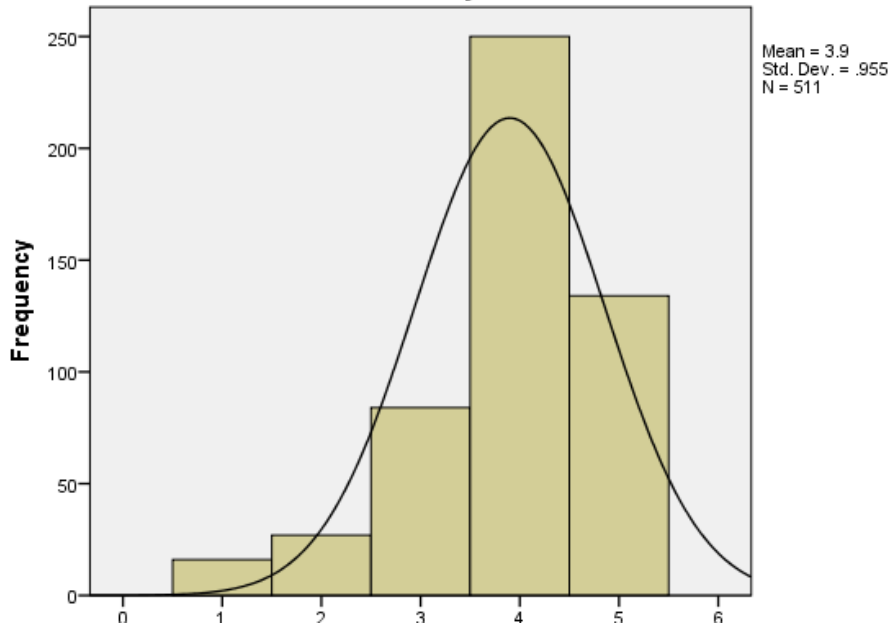


WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT VIRTUAL EXCHANGE? RECENT LARGE-SCALE IMPACT REPORTS:

Year	Title of Report	Organisation / Project
2017	SUNY COIL Stevens Initiative Assessment	SUNY COIL
2018	Evaluating Global Digital Education: Student Outcomes Framework	Global Cities Inc.
2019	Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Impact Report 2018	Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange
2020	Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Impact Report 2019	Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange
2019	Evaluating the Impact of Virtual Exchange on Initial Teacher Education: A European Policy Experiment	The EVALUATE Group
2020	The Impact of Virtual Exchange on Student Learning in Higher Education	EVOLVE: Evidence-Validated Online Learning through Virtual Exchange
2019-23	Virtual Exchange Impact and Learning Reports 2019-23	Stevens Initiative
2024	Virtual Innovation and Support Networks	VALIANT project

VIRTUAL EXCHANGE IS A VERY POPULAR LEARNING ACTIVITY AMONG STUDENTS

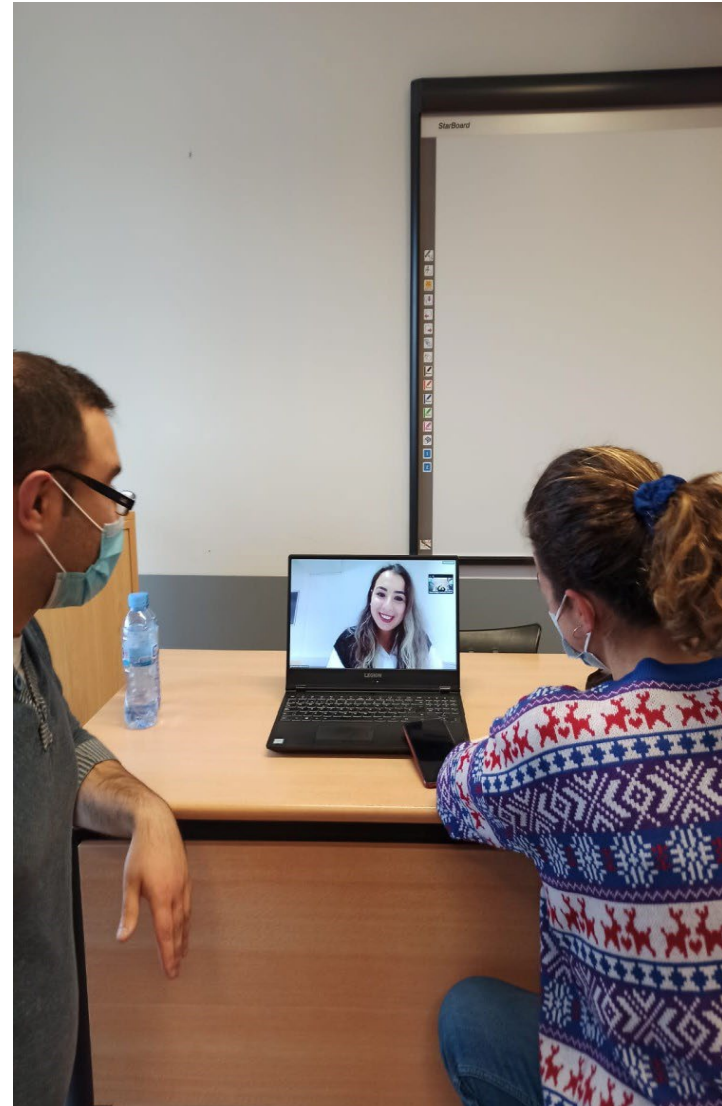
I would recommend other student-teachers to do telecollaboration in their courses if they have the chance.



The EVALUATE Group (2019). *Evaluating the impact of virtual exchange on initial teacher education: A European policy experiment*. Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2019.29.9782490057337>

VIRTUAL EXCHANGE CAN BE A 'SAFE SPACE' FOR LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

- Students reflecting on their VALIANT Virtual Exchange (2023):
- “It's been a great experience that has made me more confident about interacting with people from abroad.”
- “I can say that it helps me to practise the speaking skill. I have social phobia and I get nervous when talking to a group. The project helps me to overcome it.”
- “It enhanced my confidence. Because I was really embarrassed to speak in front of so many people but this exchange help me to get over my social anxiety.”



VIRTUAL EXCHANGE FACILITATES CULTURE LEARNING



What do students learn in virtual exchange? A qualitative content analysis of learning outcomes across multiple exchanges

Robert O'Dowd

Universidad de León, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, León, 24071, Spain

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ABSTRACT

Virtual exchange refers to the engagement of groups of learners in online intercultural interaction and collaboration with partners from other cultural contexts or geographical locations as an integrated part of course work and under the guidance of educators and/or expert facilitators. This study presents a qualitative content analysis of reported learning outcomes by students of English in a Spanish university following their participation in one of thirteen online intercultural exchanges. Based on the analysis of 345 learner portfolios, several key themes were identified which provide insight into the type of learning which virtual exchange can contribute to second language classrooms. These included how virtual exchange contributed to overcoming students' stereotypes, gaining confidence as communicators in their second language (L2) and reconceptualizing English as a tool for communication rather than as an abstract academic activity. A comparison of two models of virtual exchange within the dataset also revealed how task design can influence the outcomes of this activity.

Students who engage in Virtual Exchange report developing different forms of cultural knowledge during their exchanges:

- Personalised perspectives on topics and social issues in the partner countries – e.g. immigration, religion, gender roles etc.
- Growing awareness of cultural diversity and becoming aware of their partners' multiple identities and **the need to avoid regarding cultures as monolithic.**

“I have drawn clear conclusions, and that is that you should not trust stereotypes that you have about countries that you do not know. I have realized that what you think of a country ...can be very wrong.”



OTHER STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

- **Language development was regularly linked to pushing learners out of their ‘comfort zone’:** “This virtual exchange enhances my communication skills. When we have a discussion about our project, I need to push my English communication skills to have a great discussion with my partners.”
- **Developing confidence in language use:** “I’ve learned to overcome my fear of not being understood by the people from different countries. I tried to formulate my utterances as clearly as possible, and it worked. At first I was scared, but then not really. Our communication was great!”
- **Transversal skills:** “The fact of working with people from other countries *prepares us for the future problems* that we may have. That is to say, we learnt *how to face problems of timing or agreement*. I have also learnt that we have to understand and respect other people’s thoughts.”



The Impact of Virtual Exchange on Student Learning in Higher Education

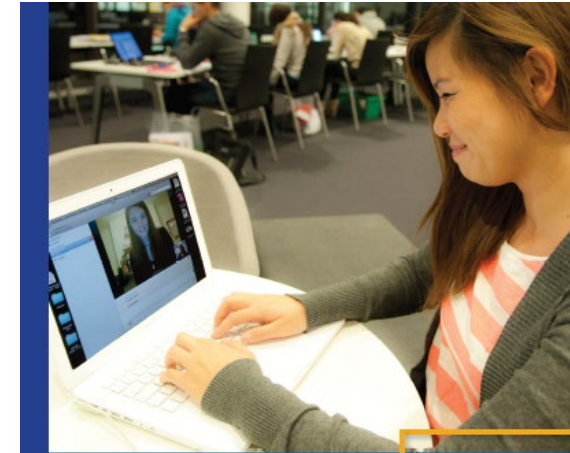
EVOLVE Project Report

December 2020

EVOLVE Project Team

IMPACT OF VIRTUAL EXCHANGE ON TEACHERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Networking opportunities:** “We’ve set up an official cooperation agreement between our two institutions. And I’m taking my class to X [the country of the VE partner] in May so they will meet each other face to face... I disseminated this project in our institution and now there are other colleagues who are interested in collaborating with the [COUNTRY X]. ...I couldn’t have imagined this three years ago.”
- **Intercultural development:** “...[VE] means putting yourself in the position of the other, giving in at times, being more open and more aware of how other institutions work. So this collaborative work has been very enriching for me because it helped me to see other points of view and other ways of working. And it also enriched the subject, adding dimensions that weren’t there before.”
- **Professional Development:** “It motivated me to personalise my courses more. As I saw that the students responded and participated so much with their partners, this pushed me to create more interactive activities for the rest of my courses and teaching as well. Until now I had done more traditional methods.”



Executive Summary – The Key Findings
from the EVALUATE European Policy
Experiment Project on the Impact
of Virtual Exchange on Initial
Teacher Education.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

YOUR THOUGHTS SO FAR

Have you any questions or comments about what has been mentioned so far?

If you have done a Virtual Exchange with your students – what other benefits and learning outcomes have you observed?



VIRTUAL
EXCHANGE
FOR GLOBAL
CITIZENSHIP
– AN
EMERGING
APPROACH

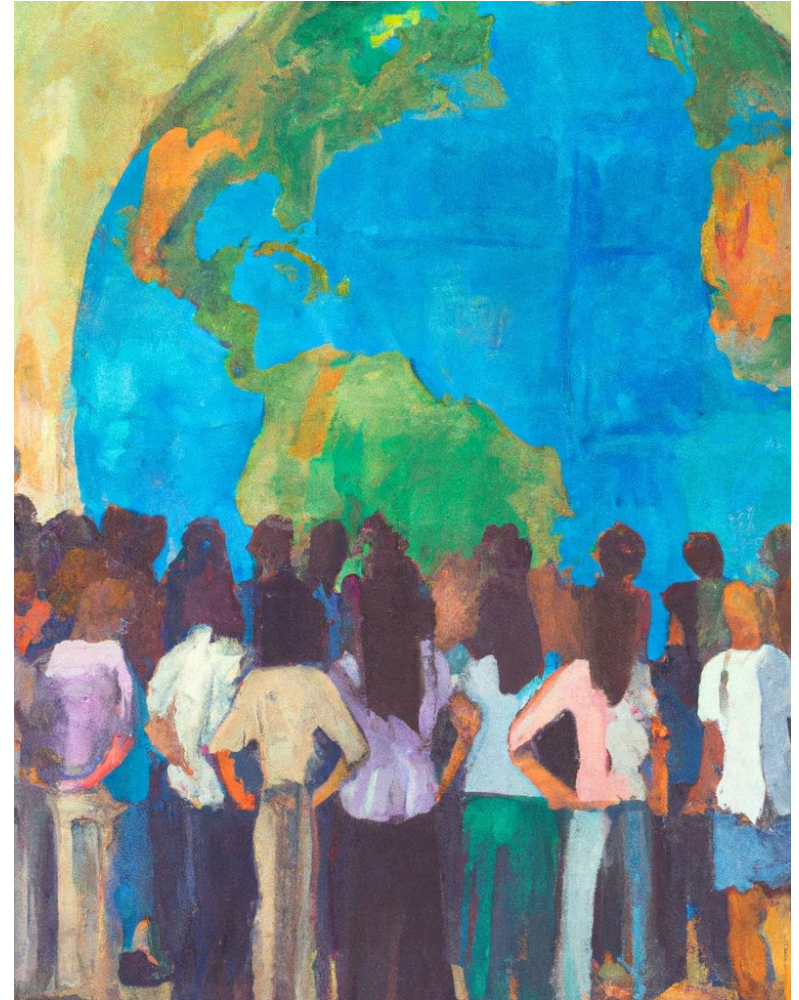


GLOBAL COMPETENCE AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP DO YOU NOTICE ANY DIFFERENCE HERE?

OECD (2018):

Global Competence is a multi-dimensional construct that requires a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values successfully applied to global issues or intercultural situations.

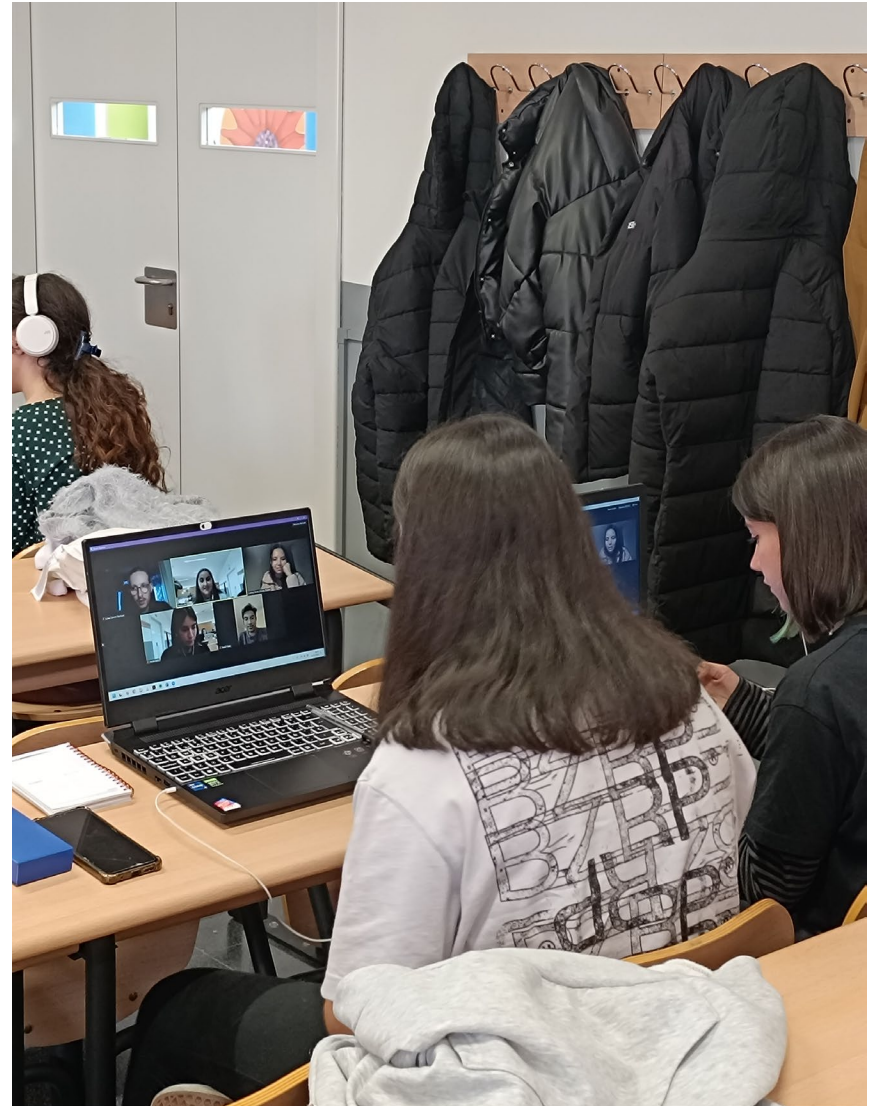
Leask (2015): **Global Citizenship** - developing graduates who “will be committed to action locally and globally in the interests of others and across social, environmental, and political dimensions” (p. 60).



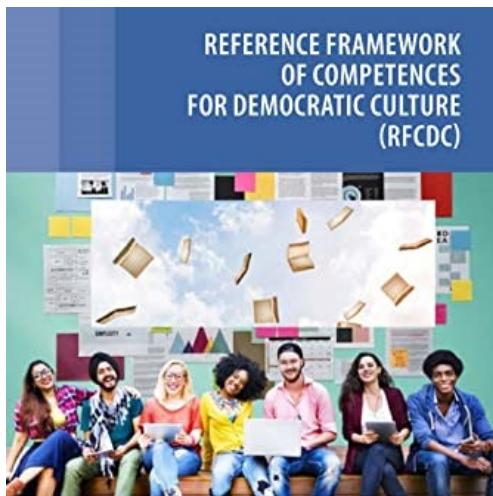
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GLOBAL COMPETENCE AND CITIZENSHIP FRAMEWORKS?

The essential difference between *competence* and *citizenship* frameworks lies in the **importance attributed to active engagement of the learner in society**

Porto (2014): “It [intercultural citizenship] integrates the pillar of intercultural communicative competence from foreign language education with the ***emphasis on civic action*** in the community from citizenship education” (p. 5).



INTEGRATING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM



Guidance document for higher education



Values

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

Attitudes

- Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices
- Respect
- Civic-mindedness
- Responsibility
- Self-efficacy
- Tolerance of ambiguity

Competence

- Autonomous learning skills
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Co-operation skills
- Conflict-resolution skills

Skills

- Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
- Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability

Knowledge and critical understanding

The Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council Of Europe, 2016; 2018)

PORTO (2014): BRITISH/ARGENTINIAN PROJECT ON THE MALVINAS/FALKLANDS CONFLICT

- **The first stage:**
 - Introductions and attitudes towards the war discussed online together
- **The second stage:**
 - Interviews with war veterans and sharing videos online
- **The final stage:**
 - Students became involved in civic action in their local communities:
 - Students planned and taught lessons about the war in diverse educational settings
 - Students created awareness-raising leaflets about the war, which they distributed in their city



A COLLABORATIVE TASK: GREEN KIDZ- ARGENTINA – DENMARK EXCHANGE (10-11 YEAR OLDS)

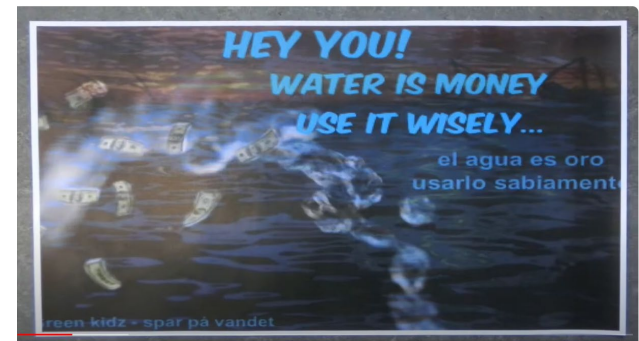
- **Phase 1:**
- The children identified 'green crimes' in their schools and in their communities - They drew or recorded these crimes and uploaded their drawings and videos to their virtual platform.
- They engaged in a trash analysis mini-project in their schools, which involved them listing and classifying the trash in the waste bins. They compared and discussed results online with their partners.
- They carried out a survey among family members and friends regarding their environmental habits, uploaded results to the platform and discussed them.
- **Phase 2:**
- The Argentinian and Danish children collaborated online to design posters to raise awareness of environmental issues.
- **Phase 3:**
- The children in each country took action locally by carrying out civic actions in their communities. The Argentinians were interviewed by a local journalist and the collaborative posters appeared in the local newspaper. In Denmark, students put up the collaborative posters in their school and their community; they contacted Greenpeace and the local newspapers.

INICIATIVA EN LA ESCUELA ANEXA

Alumnos de La Plata y Dinamarca se abrazan por el medio ambiente

Lo hacen en el marco de un proyecto de enseñanza de inglés

Salirse del esquema de enseñanza tradicional puede arrojar resultados que sorprenden a los propios docentes. Lo aseguran en la Escuela Anexa, donde en el segundo semestre de este año las clases de Inglés para 60 alumnos de la institución fueron mucho más que simples clases.



Ecological and intercultural citizenship in the primary English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom: an online project in Argentina - Melina Porto

CONNECTING STUDENT TEACHERS AND IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

Virtual Innovation and Support Networks are defined as Virtual Exchange programmes which bring together **in-service school teachers, student teachers** and **experts** in facilitated online collaboration around real-world educational issues.

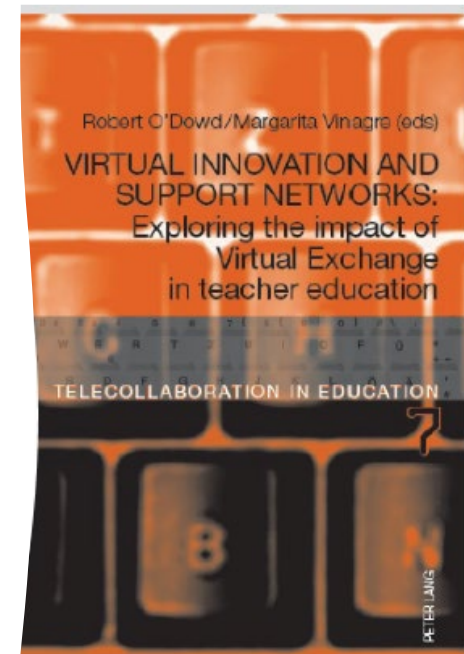
<https://valiantproject.eu/>

Free access to book publication:

<https://www.peterlang.com/document/1487254>



VALIANT
Virtual Innovation and Support Networks



EXAMPLE OF A VALIANT VIRTUAL EXCHANGE



Classes of initial teacher education
in Bochum, Germany and León, Spain
+
In-service high school teachers
from all over Europe

Spanish and German student
teachers meet online to
design EFL activities for
secondary school
classrooms.



Students meet in-service
teachers via zoom to refine
and discuss the activities.



Teachers put into practice in
their classes the activities
designed with the student
teachers.

COMPARE THESE VIRTUAL EXCHANGES TO 'TRADITIONAL' TELECOLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

'TELECOLLABORATIVE' APPROACHES TO VIRTUAL EXCHANGE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Partnerships usually involve native speakers of the other target language – e.g. American students of Spanish working with Spanish students of English .

Projects focus on comparing 'factual' / cultural aspects of the partner countries.

Students exchange, compare and discuss information with their partner class.

Specific focus on differences between Cultures X and Y, Languages X and Y.

TELECOLLABORATIVE V. TRANSNATIONAL APPROACHES TO VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

'TELECOLLABORATIVE' APPROACHES TO VIRTUAL EXCHANGE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Partnerships usually involve native speakers of the other target language – American students of Spanish working with Spanish students of English

Projects focus on 'factual' / cultural aspects of the partner countries

Partners exchange, compare and discuss information within their classrooms

Specific focus on cultural and linguistic differences between Cultures X and Y.

TRANSNATIONAL APPROACHES TO VIRTUAL EXCHANGE BASED ON GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Partnerships involve a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds and use a *lingua franca* for communication

Projects focus on themes which are of social and political relevance in both partners' societies and on a global level

Students use the outcomes of their online interactions to undertake action and change in their respective local and global communities – a citizenship approach

Focus on becoming more aware of '*cultural difference per se*'

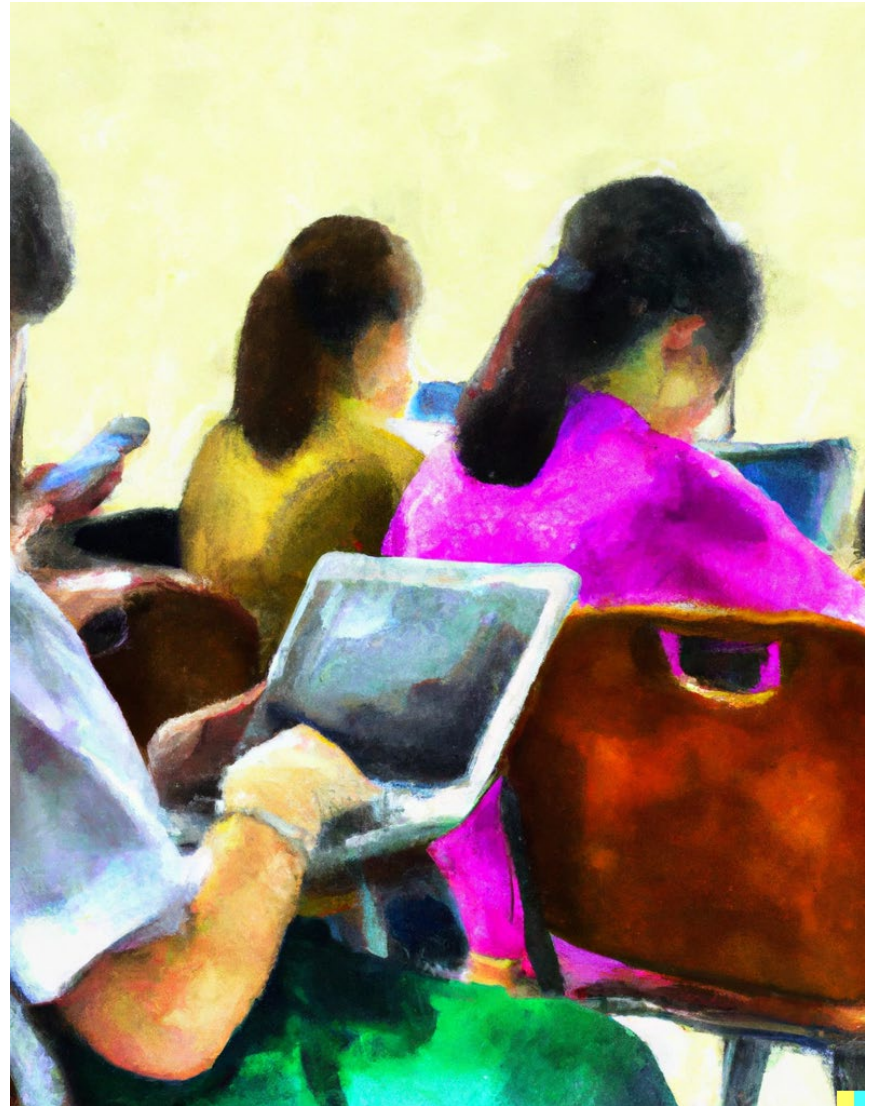
ONLINE
COLLABORATION
IN GLOBAL
CONTEXTS:

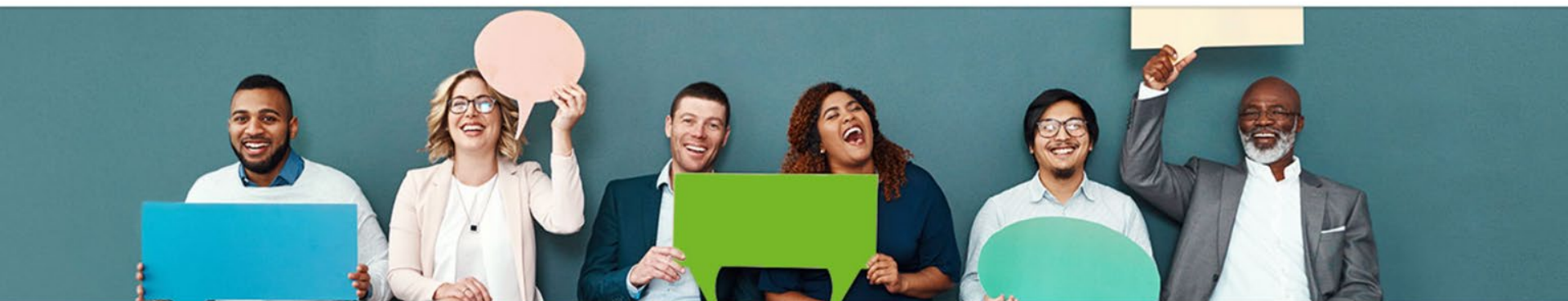
WHAT ARE THE
CHALLENGES
FOR STUDENTS
AND FOR
TEACHERS?



ENGAGEMENT *WITH* DIFFERENCE DOESN'T GUARANTEE LEARNING *FROM* DIFFERENCE

- **Reasons for 'rejecting' intercultural learning in Virtual Exchange (VALIANT project, 2024):**
- **Previous Erasmus experiences:** “I was an Erasmus student, I learned a lot about different cultures, so this is not really new to me”.
- **Living in multicultural societies:** “I was used to being friends with people from different cultures before, so it was familiar territory”.
- **Previous online projects:** “As it's not my first VE, I can't say this has had that big an impact”.





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Virtual exchange and Internationalisation at Home: navigating the terminology

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Curriculum & Teaching

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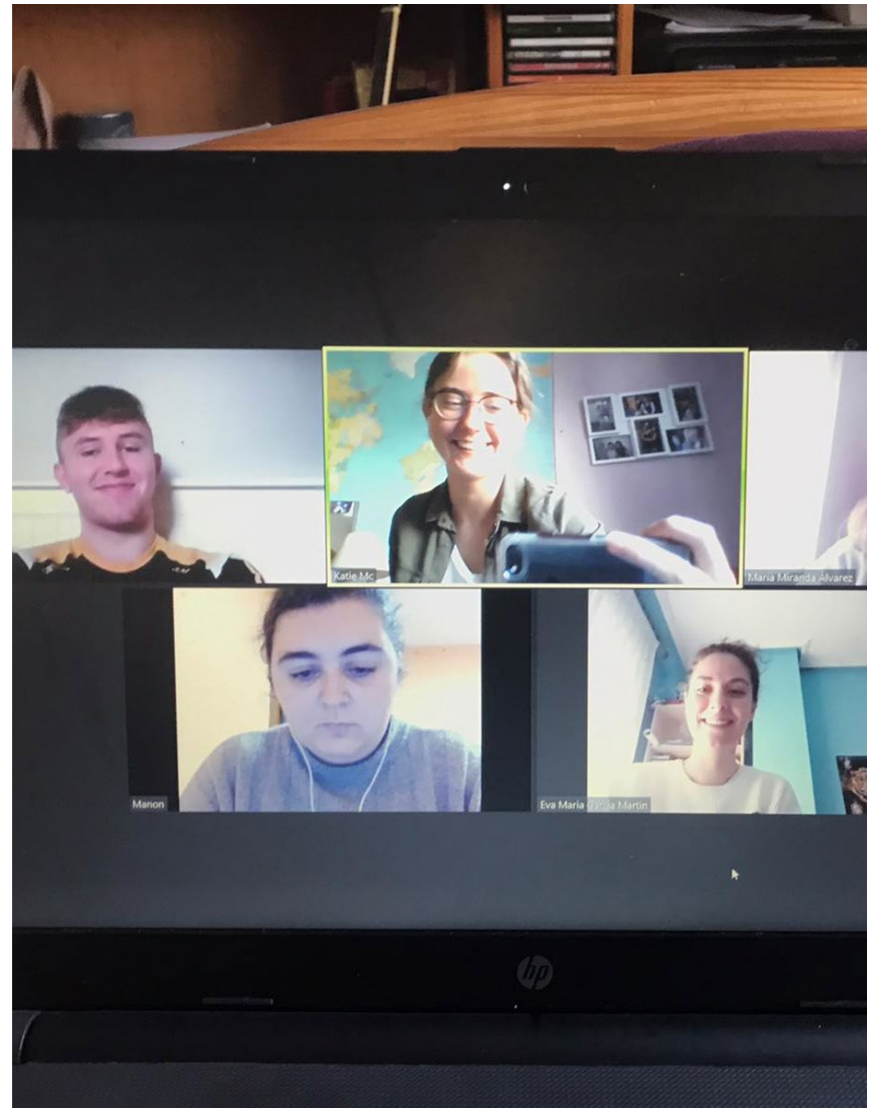
CAN VIRTUAL EXCHANGE EXCLUDE CERTAIN STUDENT GROUPS?

- O’Dowd and Beelen (2021):
- VE is based on the principles of **collaborative learning** which may not be suited to all students and which teachers may not be familiar with.
- **Foreign language proficiency:** Students may feel overwhelmed by the challenge of collaborating in videoconferencing sessions with international partners who are more proficient in the language of communication than they are.

THE DANGER OF BEING “THROWN IN AT THE DEEP END”?

[Spanish student in a VE with Finnish, Dutch and Polish partners]

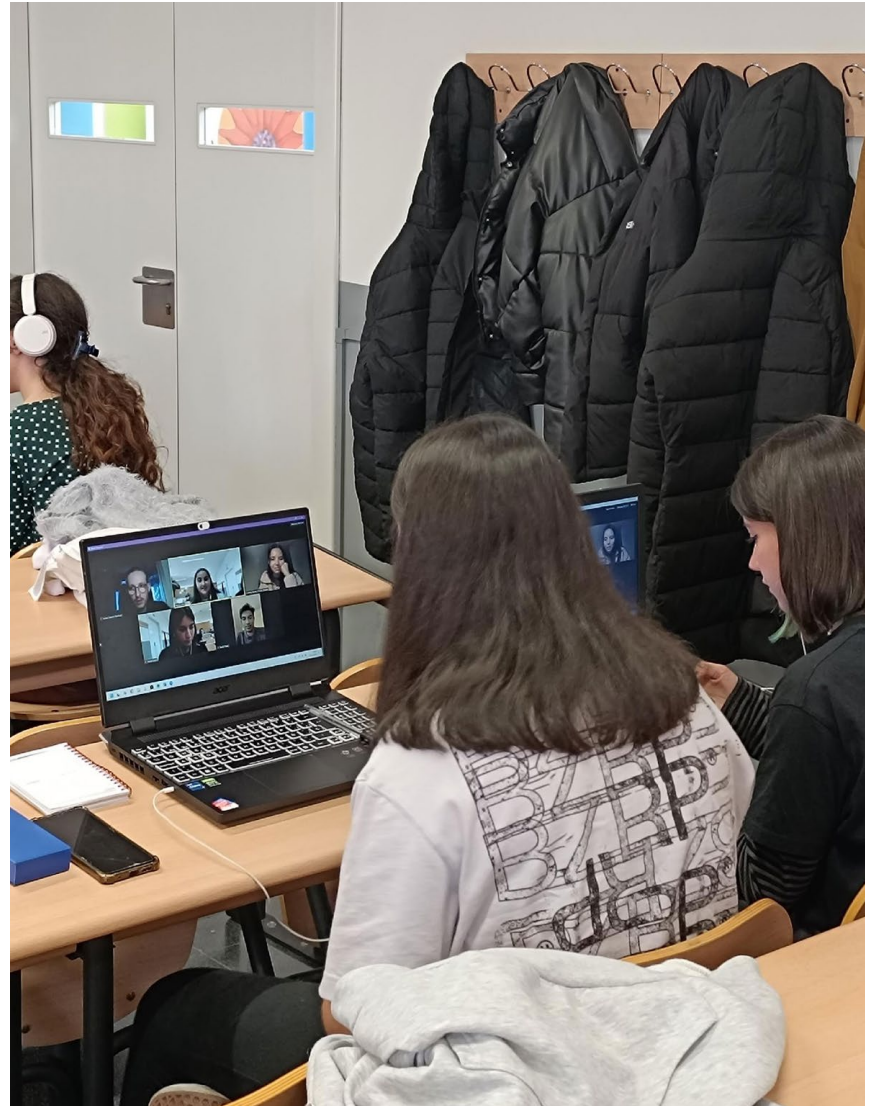
“During this meeting I had some trouble communicating, as I am not used to speaking English. But I tried to do my best. However, when I saw the excellent level of English that the other students had, I felt insecure and didn’t speak too much. I also had a lot of trouble understanding them, as they spoke very fast and had very thick accents.”



THE IMPORTANCE OF DESIGNING GOOD TASKS....

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THESE SPANISH STUDENTS' REACTIONS WHEN ASKED ABOUT CULTURAL DIFFERENCE WITH THEIR AMERICAN PARTNERS?

- Student 1: “I will say that I liked the exchange very much and that American students looked like very nice people. I talked to them about my city and about theirs and it was nice to see that there are little differences but not as much as I thought.”
- Student 2: “I have realized that my partner and I aren't so different, in fact, we have similar hobbies and ways to spend our free time. Like I have said, the main differences I see between her country and mine are the timetable and the weather.”



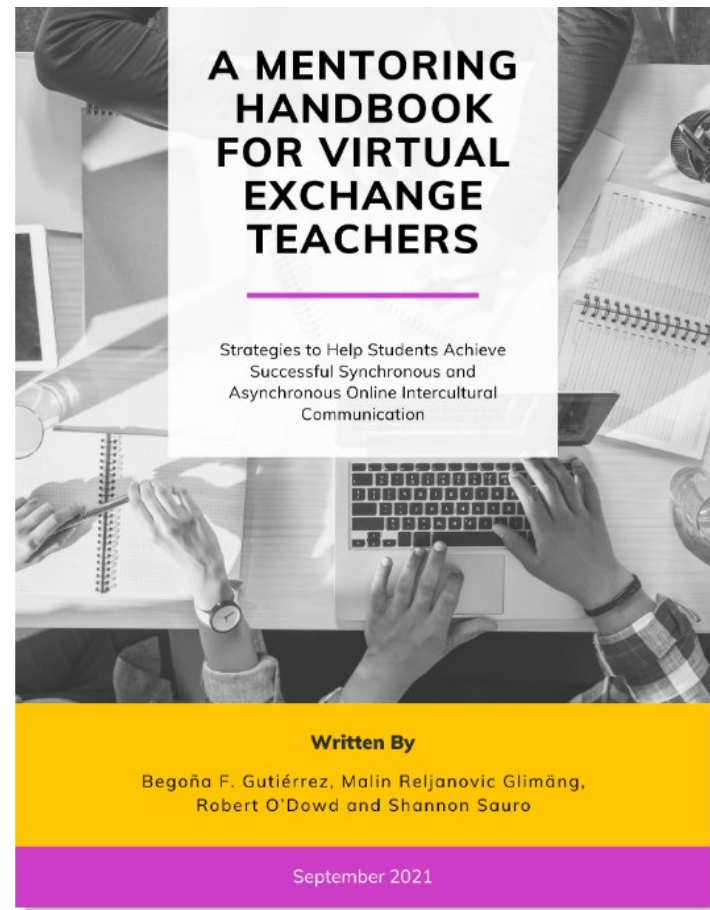
“Producing something together is the most important part of the whole project. It’s a hands on activity and they have to generate something and this is where they realise cultural differences, how people go about things and how they deal with it”.

THERE IS A
CLEAR
RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN
LEARNING
OUTCOMES AND
*THE TYPE OF
TASKS*
STUDENTS ARE
ASKED TO DO:

- Tell your partner about your favourite places to go out at night in your hometown.
- Post an image to the forum that exemplifies to your partners an aspect of their daily routine.
- **Compared to...**
- Work with your international partners to create a document called “The impact of emigration on our local towns”. The final documents will be submitted to the press and to local immigrant NGOs in your towns.
- Work together with your international partners to design a promotional video of sustainable practices on your two campus. Once your videos are ready, they will be published by both universities in their social networks.

BUT IN VIRTUAL EXCHANGE, STUDENTS NEED SUPPORT...

- Communicating their ideas effectively and in culturally appropriate ways.
- Interpreting the messages they receive from their international partners.



What do you think of this first email message from a German student to her partner in Ireland?

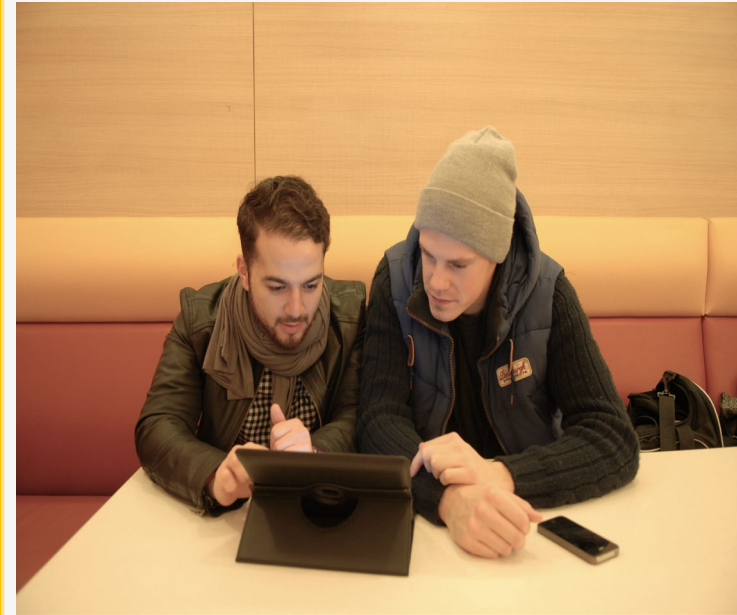
Hello, how are you? I study English and history and I want to become a teacher. This term we do some cultural studies concerning Ireland and I very interested in it because I actually do not know much about it.

Now I would like to ask you some questions. Do you live in Northern or in Southern Ireland? How many people live in your town? Are you a Catholic or a Protestant? I have heard that regular churchgoing declines more and more in your country-is it true?

What are you doing in your free time? Do you often go to pubs? What do you think about Germans? Irish people have the reputation of being very indirect and polite in their speaking style. I have read that there was an enormous economic change in Ireland.

How have you or your parents experienced the social and economic change in the past 20 years?

That's all for now. I am looking forward to hearing from you!



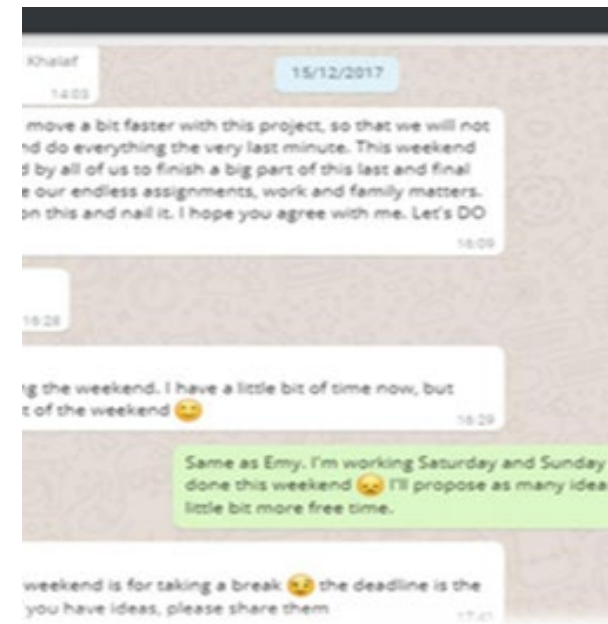
**Cultural differences in digital practices...
The teacher in Sweden writes to her
partner teachers in Spain and Israel:**

“One evening, a member of one of the Spanish class closed out an interaction with one of my Swedish students on whatsapp with a kiss emoji.

Suddenly my student was stressed because she was faced with a difficult dilemma. Did she have to kiss her back?

My student says she only sends kisses to close friends, but this was a group member and this whatsapp chat was more professional. However, if she didn't send a kiss back, what other emoji could she send?”

Sauro, S., & Spector-Cohen, E. (2023). Pedagogical mentoring during virtual exchange: What can we learn from critical incidents? *Journal of English for Purposes of International Communication*, 1(1), 9-27.



Contrasting reactions...

Spanish teacher's reaction:

"The Spanish kiss on WhatsApp all the time. It comes from "un beso" which is a common way of saying goodbye."

Swedish teacher:

"After she related this tale to the whole class, one of the other students exclaimed: 'I only kiss after the third task!'"





AWARENESS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE IN INTERACTIONAL NORMS – SPANISH EXAMPLES

“In terms of thinking about my own society and values, one of the aspects that I found interesting that before this project I did not even consider was tone. What I mean by tone is the way Spaniards tend to speak sometimes, we usually are quite straightforward, and it may sound rude or strong to other cultures. That aspect is something that I will be working.”

“I see that we (Spaniards) are more extrovert than other cultures but I already knew this. What I have realized is that this can be interpreted as ‘pushy’ by other cultures.”

WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH CRITICAL INCIDENTS?

- Be open to critical incidents. Don't avoid them. They are learning opportunities.
- Encourage students to imagine why their partners behaved / interacted the way they did.
- Maintain regular contact with your partner teacher. Use their insights to help your students understand what is going on.
- The goal of VE is not for everyone to agree on everything. The goal of VE is to encounter and learn from cultural perspectives and practices which are different to our own.



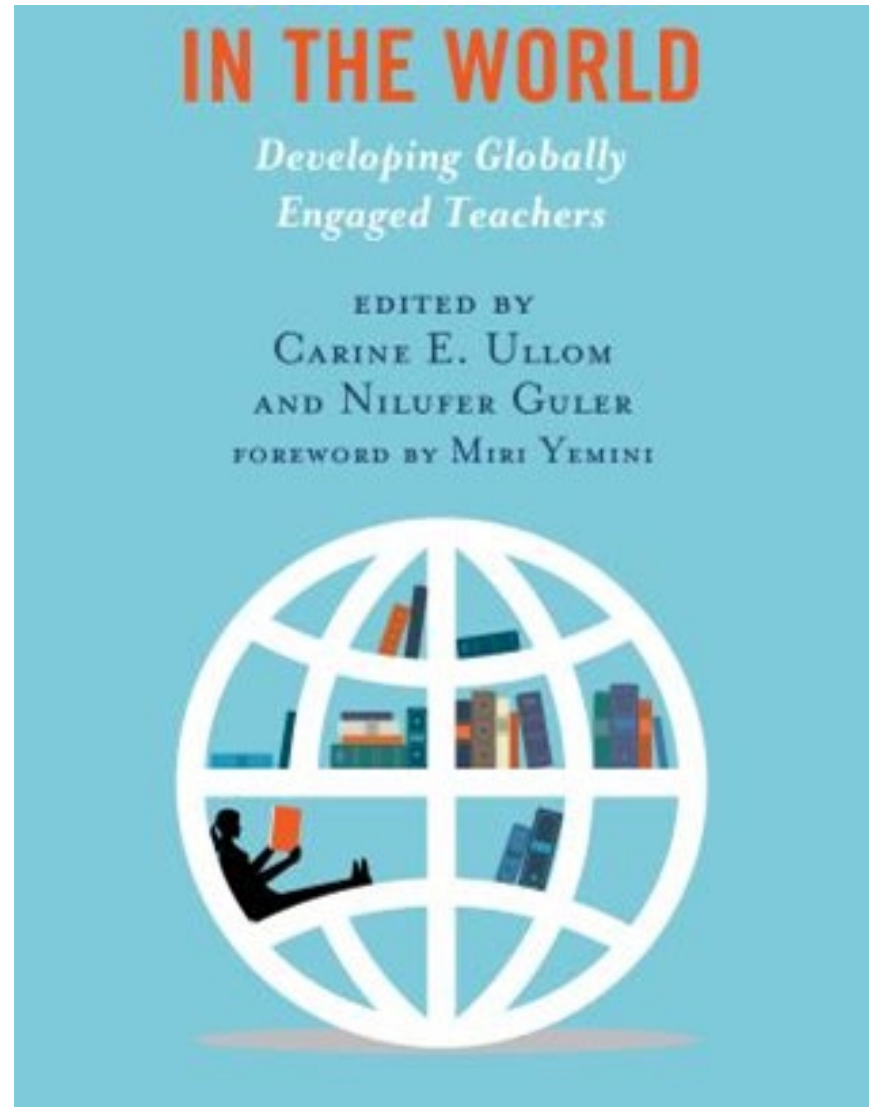
ANOTHER
CHALLENGE:
ENSURING
EQUITY OF
EXCHANGE IN
YOUR VIRTUAL
EXCHANGE
PROJECTS



THE QUESTION OF EQUITY OF ENGAGEMENT WITH DIVERSE GROUPS IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Agreement, L. et al (2023) “Developing an equitable global south-north partnership in support of transformative study abroad.”

“...study abroad participants from the Global North often initially reflect an attitude of coming to help, instead of being more receptive to learning from their host communities” (p. 170).





LET'S LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES FROM VIRTUAL EXCHANGES:

WHAT ISSUES OR CHALLENGES RELATED TO EQUITY DO YOU SEE HERE (IF ANY)?

EXAMPLE 1. AN EXAMPLE FROM A VE BETWEEN STUDENTS IN PALESTINE AND THE USA

International teams of Palestinian and American engineering students work together to solve sustainability challenges and to develop green building designs for a Palestinian Refugee Camp.

The designs is judged by a panel of experts in a final competition.

Palestinian students from the winning teams travel to the United States to meet their American counterparts and learn about green building in the United States.



EXAMPLE 2: A VE BETWEEN STUDENTS IN QUEBEC AND THE USA

An American group of learners exchanged emails with a group from Quebec for over a year and a half in order to carry out various parallel learning projects. Each group was learning the other's language (English-French).

The exchange is reported to have worked extremely well and the American group are said to have considered their Quebecois partners competent and highly-proficient models for learning French.

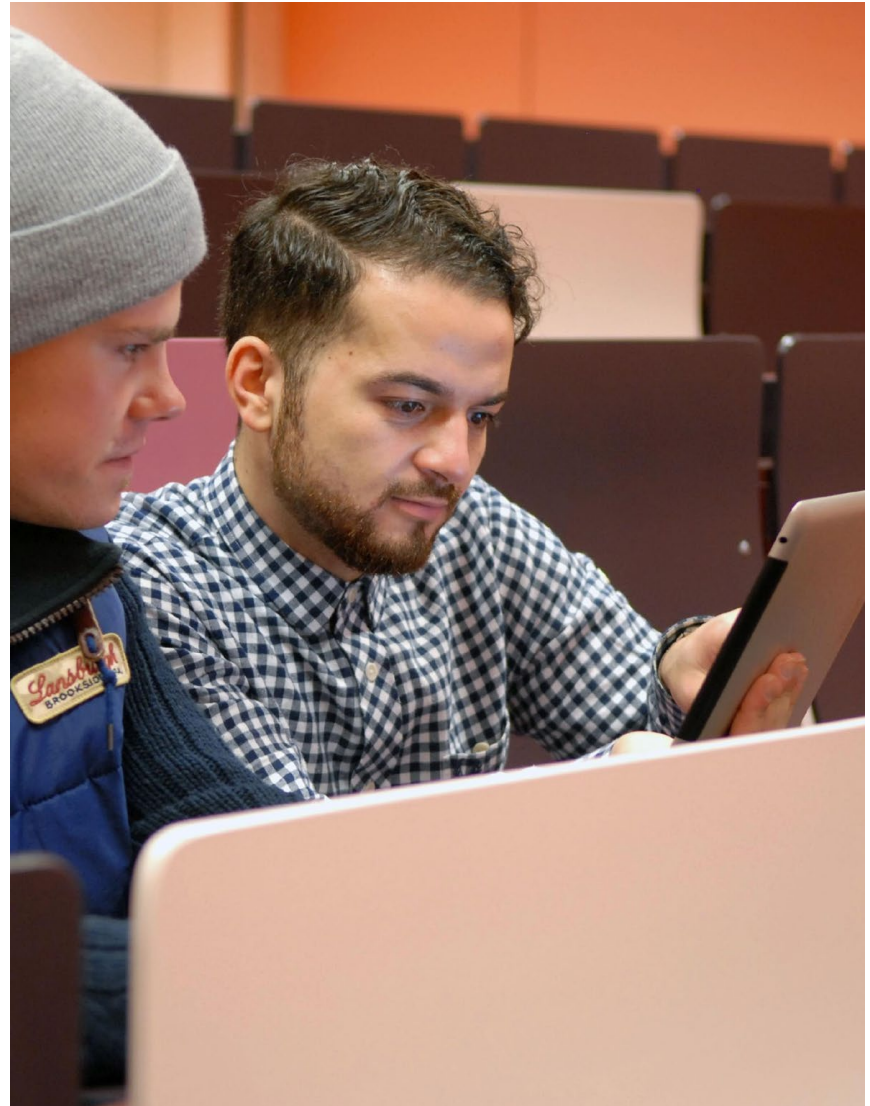
It was not until the two groups met at the end of the exchange that the American students realised that their partner class actually consisted of deaf children.



EXAMPLE 3: A MESSAGE FROM A STUDENT IN THE USA TO HER PARTNER IN SPAIN

“How do people there feel about same-sex marriages raising children? Are the children being raised to believe this type of marriage is the norm? Do same-sex marriages in Spain have problems with roles, like in America? For example, who serves as the mother role and who serves as the father role model? At least in a single parent, a combined family or and adoptive family those role models are there and usually clear, whereas in same-sex partners they are not. Another question would be do these children grow up to enter into a same-sex marriage themselves.

These are very hard questions to answer. America was based on the Bible, we open our Congress meetings with prayer, our money is imprinted with "In God We Trust" and laws are based on Bible beliefs. The Bible states homosexual ways are wrong. What are the beliefs in Spain?”



EXAMPLE 4 : A VIRTUAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN A CLASS IN NORWAY AND THEIR PARTNERS IN A SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRY

The Norwegian students invest a lot of time making introductory videos for their partners in Africa and sharing them online. The videos are long, well-designed pieces of work.

The Norwegian students are frustrated when they still have not received feedback from their African partners about the videos after 2 weeks.

When the teacher enquires, he is told that the students do not have sufficient data on their phones to download the videos or to record their own videos.



CHALLENGES TO EQUITY OF RELATIONSHIPS IN VE

- The partner class and culture is portrayed as 'in trouble' – and needs to be 'saved'
- The partner class and its culture is treated as novelty or curiosity
- The partners are 'unaware of the reality' and need to be told another perspective
- The tools employed in the VE are not accessible to all participants



A FINAL
CHALLENGE:
VIRTUAL
EXCHANGE
PROJECTS
INVOLVING
CLASSES IN
CONFLICT ZONES



AN IMPORTANT EMERGING AREA OF VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

<p>Virtual Exchange projects between students from nationalities or ethnic groups in conflict</p>	<p>Classes or individual students from groups traditionally polarized or with historical enmity</p> <p>Arab-Israeli partnerships</p> <p>US-MENA regions</p> <p>Northern and Southern Ireland</p>	<p>Prejudice reduction towards the outgroup</p> <p>Increased knowledge about the outgroup</p> <p>Intercultural competence development</p>	<p>Hellerstein, Leitner, Hamarshi & Taha (2023); Schumann & Moore (2022); Soliya (2022); Walther et al. (2014)</p>
<p>Virtual Exchange projects between students in a conflict zone and students outside of the conflict zone</p>	<p>Classes or individual students from a zone of conflict engage with students from outside the zone of conflict</p> <p>Students in the US or Europe collaborating with students in the Ukraine, Israel, Afghanistan</p>	<p>Development of peacebuilding skills</p> <p>Sharing experiences of conflict and trauma</p> <p>Developing intercultural competence</p>	<p>Minet, Dietrich and Ecki (2022); Sauro, S. & Spector-Cohen, E. (2023).</p>

AN IMPORTANT EMERGING AREA OF VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

What are the potential benefits for students in and outside zones of conflict?

How can we prepare our students for engaging with partners in zones of conflict?

What are the potential risks for our students – and for us, as teachers?



Over to you: Discussion Questions

- After this overview of Virtual Exchange, what questions or thoughts come to your mind?
- What are the biggest challenges facing you – as a teacher – when planning and developing a Virtual Exchange?
- What benefits do Virtual Exchange projects offer teachers?
- We saw various examples of projects. Do any of them inspire you for your own particular context?



THANK YOU!

- Contact:
- robert.odowd@unileon.es
- @robodowd

Bibliography and collection of links and resources on VE available from this Google doc.