

Slovenia: “Primary school and intergenerational learning”

Organization implementing the project

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Context

IGL and education is becoming an increasingly interesting but still relatively unexplored phenomenon. Throughout history, intergenerational learning has taken place in various environments such as at work, in the family, at events, rituals, etc. Older people passed their knowledge on to the young.

The organization established a project network (primary school, centre for adult education, university) and prepared an intergenerational education project.

Action

This network provided a framework for an intergenerational learning project which aimed to encourage older people to learn by working in tandem with primary school students. Together they learned computer skills, which were then used to record stories reflecting local culture and history. The stories were found in the local oral history. These stories had never before been recorded in writing, but had only been passed down orally.

Nine tandems were included in the group. The meetings were held in the computer classroom of the Dornberk primary school. The staff included two primary school teachers, an education coordinator from the Centre for Adult Education Ajdovščina and a university researcher.

After the first year, during which computer education was provided for the elders paired with pupils, results were gathered and evaluated. Then, activities were planned for the following year. The plans for the follow-up project included the following objectives:

- to foster appreciation for local history,
- to introduce youth to the local culture through stories,
- to present personal histories through life stories.

Learning about Alexandrian women in the context of local history was aimed at encouraging reflection on similar issues in the modern world such as interculturality, migration, discrimination, intolerance and exclusion.

Outcomes and impact

Students/children:

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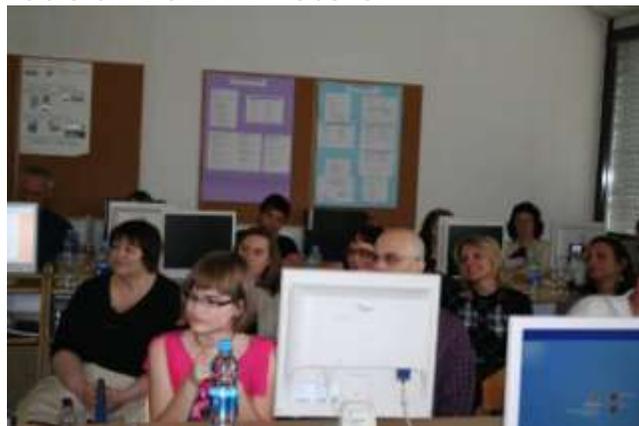
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- at the end, they expressed satisfaction, and even enthusiasm, for group work with elders;
- at the beginning of the project, many had doubts; individual animation was required;
- after the first year, all participants wanted to and did continue to participate in the project;
- after the second year, they expressed satisfaction and willingness to participate in similar projects;
- the participating students were more patient, tolerant with slow learners, more understanding and cooperative during classes;
- changed their communication with teachers (improved attitude and communication, it seems as if assuming a different role made them realize the complexity of education and as a result the relationship between the participating teachers and students improved);
- the students showed high motivation for work, which is illustrated by the students asking if they could still work on an occasion when the meeting was to be cancelled due to a teacher's absence.

Students/elders:

- expressed satisfaction with the acquired knowledge and enthusiasm for learning,
- experienced the idea that new technologies open doors to information (enthusiasm about the internet),
- wish to progress faster,
- expressed intention to continue using the computer,
- expressed intention to participate in similar projects in the future.

An added value from this project was a published scientific monography:
Intergenerational Learning and Education in Later Life and two e-books *Tandems go! Twinning the Elderly and Young People as a Possibility of e-Learning* and *Education - a bridge between generations, A guide for intergeneration learning*.
The links to the twp publications are also available on the ENIL website.



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