

*I commend this publication to experts in various fields of study (andragogy, pedagogy, sociology, gerontology, social work), whose area of work is aimed at the education of older adults and to students whose interests are in the field of andragogical work, as well as to all other interested readers who will undoubtedly find it very useful.*

prof. Adnan Tufekčić, University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

*The contents of this book and the way they have been presented are very appropriate for the promotion of debate among researchers, and for the encouragement of new related research. In short, it is a good book, affordable and easy to read, with motivational content, full of useful information for a broad readership and will lead to new projects and related research.*

prof. David Padilla Góngora, University of Almería. Spain

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# KEY COMPETENCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING IN EDUCATION OF SENIORS

Edited by  
**ALEKSANDRA MARCINKIEWICZ-WILK**



# **KEY COMPETENCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**

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Reviewers:

prof. Adnan Tufekčić, University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
prof. David Padilla Góngora, University of Almería, Spain

Linguistic consultants:

Anthony King, England  
Ken Flaming, England

Cover design, technical editing and typesetting:

Robert Błaszak

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## IN THE FOURTH WAVE SOCIETY

ALEKSANDER KOBYLAREK

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
[aleksander.kobylarek@gmail.com](mailto:aleksander.kobylarek@gmail.com)

This article tackles the problems and dangers of the marginalization of the elderly in the rapidly developing technology society. The author points to four types of competences necessary in understanding the social, cultural and civilizational changes brought about by the development of the internet society - these are: technological, social, communicational and cultural. Together they form a set of inter-related skills which are mutually developmental. An investigation of their development and functioning in advanced age helps to create the conditions in which seniors can take their proper place in the dynamic society of the Fourth Wave, as well as giving them a sense of well-being.

Dynamic societies require continuous and rapid lifelong learning. Undoubtedly, Western civilization is one such dynamic society, whose well-being depends on knowledge, wisdom and learning for all its citizens, including seniors. The rapidly developing Fourth Wave society (internet, new technologies, information, knowledge based) places very high demands on its members. The functioning of daily life, political elections, income, and the comfort of its citizens all depend on their awareness of civilizational processes and their ability to influence them. We can suppose, therefore, that the greater the awareness of the citizen, the greater the potential of society and the better the quality of life for those who are able to take advantage of the benefits of civilization and acquire knowledge in various areas.

Seniors occupy a fairly specific place in the Fourth Wave society. On the one hand, they suffer from knowledge deficiency, health problems, lack of social contact and a reduction in income due to retirement, and all this leads to an increased risk of marginalization among the elderly. On the other hand, seniors have more free time, which they can dedicate to coping with their various shortfalls and deficiencies. And here the only obstacle is a lack of the skills demanded by the rapidly developing Fourth Wave society and which particularly affect seniors who have lost social contact and are grappling with the world of new technologies. This could lead to further social isolation and subsequent marginalization, both social and technological, from which there can be no escape.

It is worth looking, then, at the specific skills which are required by the Fourth Wave society to enable the citizen to not only feel comfortable in it but also to take an active part in it. In my opinion these skills can be divided into four categories - technical, social, communicational and cultural.

Technical skills, are above, all an awareness of the new technologies (systems and equipment) and the ability to use them. Grappling with the mysteries of technology is characteristic of people who have retreated from social life. Seniors, settling in a comfy armchair in a desire to cut themselves off from the social hub-bub, consider that they don't need to be familiar with new technologies, because they already have everything they need for the modest life they are used to. This comes from a natural fear of failure, caused by an underestimation of their own possibilities or a mistaken conviction that the new technologies have no real use or value. If new models of mobile phone and updated computer systems are not taken on board at the appropriate time, then the user faces exclusion when the old technologies become obsolete. As a result, everything has to be learnt from the beginning, because the leap in technology has advanced so far that older devices are no longer supported. Seniors then find themselves in a technological black hole, which in the Fourth Wave world can mean an inability to perform even basic functions, such as the online purchase of tickets, or ordering of specific goods or services. As a natural consequence of this, there may be difficulties in meeting some of their needs and a lowering of their standard of life. Advances in technology are ruthless, because we have no choice. Either we try to keep up with them or we limit our functioning and put up with stagnation - or worse, become prey to marginalization and a lowering of our living standards. We have to accept that in the Fourth Wave society performing even the most modest activity via the Internet has become as natural as breathing. This is only an example, of course, and we can surely count on future cultural and technological changes, which in various ways will lead to marginalization.

Social and interpersonal skills embrace familiarity with the customs and procedures of everyday life - *savoir vivre*. It would seem that seniors ought to be particularly sensitive and knowledgeable in the complexities of social life, but two detrimental facts need to be taken into consideration. The fundamental problem is that following retirement seniors very often lose many of their social contacts, resulting in a decrease in group experience and loneliness, leading to further detrimental consequences. The isolation and loneliness of seniors is compounded by the rapid civilizational changes of the Fourth Wave society, which is itself undergoing significant changes in the sphere of social contact and behavioural procedures. At a certain point, seniors realize that „in their time“ many things were done differently, and they become less confident in their contacts with others - the more so the longer they are left alone, without coaching in social intercourse. Current social behavioural patterns in the Fourth Wave society are related to a transactional approach to daily life. We want to be wealthy and independent, so we work so hard that we no longer have time to nurture our relationships. In this respect, seniors lose out the most because their already limited contacts become even more limited. They have no opportunity for contact either with their peers or their family. Their peers have probably already passed on, and their family have long since flown the nest, because following demographic changes the multi-generational family no longer has a reason to exist. A way of avoiding loneliness and providing appropriate social training is

the development of new relationships through, for example, charity activities, NGOs, seniors' clubs and universities of the Third Age. All of these organizations, working with others and for others, are a good pretext for forming new relationships and even regaining position and prestige in the social hierarchy. Acceptance by others, recognition of their social work, even respect and admiration, all enable seniors to reconstruct and strengthen their own personalities. By continually working with others, seniors naturally also become familiar with new operational patterns, methods of problem solving, and administrative procedures which were hitherto unknown to them. What seemed until now to be impossible can be accomplished without effort or stress.

Communication skills are partially linked with technological and social skills, but they also have their own peculiarities related to the language and methods of communication of the so-called rising generation, which for seniors is becoming more and more unfathomable. In the case of the Fourth Wave society, many expressions culled from English are appearing in our native language, and specialist IT vocabulary is entering colloquial speech. A lack of basic English and computer skills can lead to a total inability to decipher communications which for the younger generation are an everyday occurrence. It would appear, therefore, that courses in basic English as well as computer skills are essential in the Fourth Wave society, and should be organized for those who recognise their deficiencies in these fields. Linked to communication skills - some would say they are part of them - are psychological skills, which depend on an ability to read hidden messages in the replies of an interlocutor and to express empathy. These skills ought to be naturally developed among seniors because of the acquired life experience and wisdom, but when communication is based on other principles - the language of the rising generation - these skills will count for nothing.

Cultural skills involve suitable preparation for meetings with representatives of other cultures. The world of the Fourth Wave is a „transit zone“ of people, values, and behavioural patterns. This is particularly important in a united Europe, where member countries are continually meeting members of other countries and cultures. Seniors who previously functioned in a monocultural society, or one with a relatively uniform culture, may have problems in understanding a very diverse world which is undergoing continual change. Without appropriate cultural preparation, seniors will be susceptible to manipulation from extreme nationalist organizations, fomenting their fear of foreigners, or they may become too trusting of the representatives of cultures governing by their own laws and cultivating their own brand of morality.

All these skills are closely connected with each other. Currently, the situation appears to be that participating in the activities of an NGO can, among other things, unlock the mysteries of using the new technologies, develop social skills, resolve problems and teach negotiating skills. Working for society can create an opportunity for making new contacts, receiving emotional support, improving qualifications and working in an international environment, which in turn helps to overcome the psychological language barrier and provides opportunities to meet representatives of other cultures, This helps to correct a false image of fore-



igners and negate xenophobic attitudes, thanks to a coming together of diverse cultural patterns of behaviour.

Out of two opposing theories of adapting to old age, the theory of withdrawal cannot cope with the exceptional demands of the dynamic Fourth Wave society. Withdrawal from social life would be very destructive for the average senior, who has to somehow make up the deficiencies of old age. It is maintaining a high level of activeness, engaging in new enterprises and taking on new challenges which allows them to remain a fully functioning member of society.

One way of activating seniors, preventing their marginalization and enabling them to help shape the world around them is education, not only in the sense of broadening their skills and awareness of how the world around them functions, but also offering something additional, such as meetings, new experiences, reflection and understanding. To achieve this we need well-prepared teachers, programmes, and centres of education. But above all we need to continually update our knowledge on the specifics of teaching and developing the elderly, and to achieve this investment in scientific research conducted by professionals is essential. This is a burning issue because western societies are ageing, and it seems to be a progressive and irreversible process. Seniors who are not prepared for the challenges posed by the Fourth Wave society will become a marginalized group, and even something of a burden. Seniors who are suitably prepared for the challenges of the internet society and have the competences to understand the changes in the world around them, will become the creators and moderators of that society. Instead of becoming a burden, they can form an essential social resource in the new society. The seniors themselves, as well as society, will also benefit because they will no longer suffer from a sense of uselessness and rejection, which in turn leads to loneliness and withdrawal from society.

**LIFELONG LEARNING  
IN EDUCATION OF SENIORS**



## THE MEANING OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE INFORMATION AGE

ALEKSANDRA MARCINKIEWICZ-WILK

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
aleksandra.marcinkiewicz@uwr.edu.pl

EWA JURCZYK- ROMANOWSKA

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
ewa.jurczyk-romanowska@uwr.edu.pl

Modern society is referred to as The Information Society. The reasons for its creation is seen in the technological progress and information, and its characteristic is the high rate of change, which applies to almost all areas of social life.

The development of new technologies has meant that many aspects of life have been digitized - from research or the military to medicine, education, banking, communications ending with entertainment, culture, sport and personal life (Zacher, 1997, p.118).

The comprehensiveness of technology and the growing importance of information implies the necessity for specialized skills and knowledge.

The new social reality differs significantly from the one which we know from the past.

To understand the essence of the information society the process of its formation and characteristics must be shown, which determines its peculiarity.

To show the main characteristics of the new society (IS) it is necessary to refer to *The Coming of Post Industrial Society* by Daniel Bell (1999, p. XV-XVII). Whether the particular society can be regarded as information society is distinguished by its employment structure. When there are more people employed in the services sector than in the agricultural or industry sector only then we can call the society post-industrial.

In this case, the main resource is not capital or land, but information. For this reason, the prevalence of scientists and specialists in occupational structure and the growing importance of theoretical knowledge, which is seen as a source of innovation, are the two factors that characterize the information society (Nowak, 2008, pp.25-48).

The very term *information society* was first used in 1963 by the Japanese Tadao Umesao in the article about an evolutionary theory of society based on *information industries*. Then the term was popularized in 1968 by futurologist Kenichi

Koyama in the trial *Introduction to Information Theory* (1968). This concept arrived in Europe in the seventies (Goban-Klas, 1999, pp.29-30). In the literature, there are many terms used interchangeably, such as *Turing man*, *network society*, *post-industrial society*, *Third Wave* (Nowina Konopka, 2006, p.15), *the knowledge society*, *information society*.

One of the most popular definitions in the world is contained in the IBM Community Development Foundation report, according to which *society is characterized by a high degree of use of information in everyday life for most of the citizens, organizations and workplaces; use of uniform or compatible information technology for its own, social or educational use and professional activities, as well as the ability to transmit, receive and exchange fast the digital data regardless of distance* (*The Net Result – Report of the National Working Party for Social Inclusion*). Given the wording, the emphasis is on information and its management. It is also important to use new technologies in all aspects of human life. However, this definition does not reflect the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the information society, as it focuses on the technological aspect, pays less attention to the social, educational and economic dimension.

As indicated above contemporary society is by no means similar to that in the past. The development of technology, the increasing importance of knowledge as well as the dynamic changes in all areas of life constitute the unique character of the information society.

Referring to the essential ground in the information society development distinguished by Mieczysław Lubański a new kind of society can be considered in the following dimensions (2004, p.15):

- technological - refers to the development of the so-called information and communication technologies;
- economic - refers to a variety of changes in economic processes, both in the relationship between economic subjects, as well as in the customer service styles;
- social – refers to changes in people’s life, and most all general access to information;
- educational - acquiring knowledge of the possibilities of practical use of information technology also awareness of the need to adapt to the requirements of the information society.

This part of the discussion is focused on educational substrate of the information society, as the subject of the research is the educational activity of seniors.

Considering information society should also indicate the characteristic phenomena and processes that relate to it, namely:

- **new characteristics of the civilization** - a technical civilization, networking the world and people’s lives;
- **diversity** – of experiences, levels and structures, potentiality of cultures, religions, policies, strategies, etc.
- **complexity** - the increasing complexity of the systems, especially the so-called great interactions, etc.;
- **turbulence** – which is becoming a permanent feature and has a lot of reasons - international, related to the financial system disorder in the world,

to tensions and conflicts, catastrophes, natural disasters, unexpected interactions and the culmination of various influences, including media;

- **confusion** – inconstancy, nonlinearity, randomness, disorder, unpredictability, a new type of order;
- **kaleidoscopic** – laying structures and states of affairs in a way that prevents the identification of the causes. It also affects the perception of change;
- virtuality of the worlds of man – it is enhanced by new technology.

Interesting is the fact that the virtual space indicates supra-local features (Zacher, 2007). On the other hand Manuell Castells points to the features that are characteristic for the new kind of society, such as (Castells, 2008, pp.79-80):

- information as a base of information society, the technologies work for information, rather than shape it;
- the pervasiveness of the impact of new technologies - the fact that information is an integral part of human activity, all aspects of human function (individual and collective) are formed directly by technology;
- network logic - it refers to any system or set of relationships, which uses new technologies. The network in other words is a system of communication on the Internet which consists of links reinforced by the strong flow of information between them. At the same time, the network is created not only by the linkage between the institutions, but also individual members. Every person is a link in the network. The factor connecting people in social networks is fragmentizing (Mikułowski Pomorski, 2003, p.53). The analysis /morphology of the network, according to M. Castells truly reflects the increasing complexity of interaction and unexpected directions of their development. The network as a system preserves diversity. The maze of the network only consists of the edges therefore it can be entered in different places. Out of all the organizations which are said to have an order, the network is the least structured one (Castells, 2008, p.79).
- flexibility - this feature is closely connected to the logic of the network and the constant changes and fluency of the new reality. As a result, the processes taking place in the IS are not only reversible, but also institutions and organizations can be reconstructed and modified;
- linking particular technologies in a highly developed systems – the boundaries between technologies and areas of knowledge blur.

The paradigm of information technology is profound and it is imposing in its materiality, but at the same time ductile and open in its historical development (Castells, 2008). Both L. Zacher, and M. Castells believe that the information society is characterized by versatility, complexity and networking. The typology of the two authors paints a picture of a society that is difficult to capture in any frame, because of the assumption made that it is ephemeral, flexible and fragmented and at the same time all of the components of IS are interrelated and interdependent.

Technology is a significant part of the information society. Nowadays we can distinguish two groups of ICT users. What seems to justify an affirmative answer to this question is the generational division presented by Marc Prensky in Digi-

tal Natives, Digital Immigrants (Prensky, 2001). He notes that "Today's students have not just changed incrementally from those of the past, nor simply changed their slang, clothes, body adornments, or styles, as has happened between generations previously. A really big discontinuity has taken place. One might even call it a "singularity" - an event which changes things so fundamentally that there is absolutely no going back. This so-called "singularity" is the arrival and rapid dissemination of digital technology in the last decades of the 20th century. Today's students (...) represent the first generations to grow up with this new technology. They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, video-games, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. Today's average college grads have spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not to mention 20,000 hours watching TV). Computer games, email, the Internet, cell phones and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives" (Prensky, 2001). This generation is called Digital Natives because "students today are all "native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet" (Prensky, 2001).

The older generation that was not born into a world dominated by cyberspace, but who learned it later on in their lives, is in a different situation. This generation is fascinated with latest technologies, they are able to easily find their place in most of the aspects of the virtual world, to adopt new solutions and to use them in their everyday lives. This, however, happens through learning. The process can be compared to learning to speak a foreign language - one can master it, but it will never become one's mother tongue. That is why this generation has been called the Digital Immigrants (Prensky, 2001).

When employing this classification one ought to ask about the even older generation. In reference sources they are named Digital Foreigners (Thomas, & Thomas, 2006, pp. 361-366) or Baby Boomers (Grzesiak). These terms are used to denote the generation who are now in their 50s and 60s and who are aware of the existence of the cyberspace and who have some experience using it and who, nevertheless, treat it as a foreign environment, who feel that they do not belong to virtual communities, and who are on the internet only because they need to (because of work, communication, etc.).

The generations of Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants, and to a necessary extent also Digital Foreigners, shape the contemporary world which is characterised by a rapid development of technology and the key importance of communication. That is why contemporary society is called the information society (IS). This society, as it is stated in a report by the IBM Community Development Foundation, is "characterised by a high level of information intensity in the everyday life of most citizens, in most organisations and workplaces; by the use of common or compatible technology for a wide range of personal, social, educational and business activities; and by the ability to transmit and receive digital data rapidly between places irrespective of distance" (Habib, Harris, Hellawell, Matthews, Percy-Smith, Taylor, & Thompson, 1997, p.3). In accordance with this view information plays a crucial role in the society's life and information technologies are indispensable in nearly

all aspects of human life. Tomasz Goban-Klas and Piotr Sienkiewicz point out that "it is a society in which it is not direct contacts (...) but contacts through media that constitute the dominant form of social contacts" (Goban-Klas, Sienkiewicz, 1999, pp. 42-47). The aforementioned definitions show how the significant quantitative and qualitative changes were caused by the progress of technology. Lack of ICT skills makes it impossible to fully participate in social life. That is why one can mention the phenomenon of digital divide, or e-exclusion, i.e. the lack of participation in all the aspects of social life that require ICT skills. In Poland there is a high number of the members of the generation who have no ICT skills at all. They can be called Digital Aliens. They are the people who have had no contact with the virtual world, who are afraid of having to learn computer skills, and who are simultaneously excluded from social life because of their lack of these skills. Therefore education plays such an important role.

In a society based on information, education becomes a strategic factor for social development and the embodiment of this goal is seen in the concept of lifelong learning. It is very important because for the UNESCO and the European Union the aim of lifelong education is to prepare people for life in the information society and to support the many-sided development of the individual. Education in the modern world has become an integral part of life, allowing easier life in the new reality. Nowadays it is said that lifelong learning is no longer a voluntary educational activity undertaken by privileged part of society but even compulsion and necessity, essential to the proper functioning of the surrounding reality.

In a society based on information, education becomes a strategic factor for social development that's why the concept of lifelong learning is the key to achieve that. It is very important because according to UNESCO and the European Union the goal of lifelong education is to prepare people for life in the information society and to support the multilateral development of the individual. Education in the modern world has become an integral part of life which helps to adapt in the new reality. Today it is said that lifelong learning is no longer a matter of choice undertaken by privileged part of society but a necessity which is essential to live in the surrounding reality (Malewski, 2001, p.37).

Knowledge and education have had a crucial role in the development of a new type of society because the progress of human civilisation is linked with the development of education. According to Jerzy Semków: *it is hard to deny that education and civilization mutually stimulated and stimulate their development* (2005, p.16).

Social development cannot be considered without taking into account the role of education. There are two aspects to be considered when talking about the relation of education and social development: systemic (macrostructural) and individual (microstructural)

In the macrostructural (systemic) education is the factor that precludes the development of civilization. However, in the microstructural aspect (individual) learning helps people to keep up with the changes that are followed by the emerging society and also allows comprehensive development of an individual. Education provides access to the goods of the information society thus preventing marginalization and social exclusion. It is worth noting that the links are close because



man is embedded in both of these dimensions. In macrostructural – by continuous acquiring of knowledge and abilities the individual enables the development of that knowledge and technology. Nonetheless in the individual dimension education enables people a social participation in development and self-realisation. The relationship between a person who is learning and the social world is noted by Peter Jarvis in the aspect of learning by doing (Jarvis, 2012, pp. 9-26).

Today education should take into account the character of new social reality. It is not enough to complement the knowledge in the ICT field but also from other grounds of knowledge. In the case of learning networking logic by M. Castellsa is shown as the progress in one area implicates changes in other. Therefore the progress of technology causes rapid obsolescence of knowledge. This forces continuous updates of messages, abilities and competences. Regarding the characteristic of information society its functions and challenges it brings, it is possible to indicate what is expected from education in the new social reality.

Education that is typical for the information society should be: complementary to the information society. As one of the features characterising new society, M. Castells acknowledged the possibility of *combining modern technologies into the systems* (Castells, 2008, p. 79). Referring to this new logic, education should also be treated as one of subsystems of a larger system which is information society. Learning should not be detached from reality and exist only for itself but be an integral part of society:

- **flexible** - constant changes characteristic of the new reality should be reflected also in education. It should therefore be flexible enough to take account of the first civilization changes, on the other hand, it should also enable human development consistent with their needs (expectations and educational needs of the individual are not always compatible with the needs of society as a whole). This flexibility is also reflected in the access of people to all forms of education, regardless of their education, age and origin. It refers both to its availability and openness to man, and the possibility of transformation (to adapt to social change);
- **general**, while specialist - this feature also results from the specificity of a society based on information. Education should be general enough to cover the multiplicity and complexity of the directions of development of knowledge, technology and society. Facilities man in general acknowledges allow him to understand the changes in which he participates, and quickly adapt to the new conditions. Nevertheless, the development of technology requires man to have very specialized knowledge - so that firstly he could use this technique, and then develop it .

A. Giddens notes that although education specialist skills may be necessary for a number of changing professions, the most important thing is to develop cognitive and emotional competence (Malewski, 2010, p. 66). Education should be dichotomous in nature - should be the basis for general education, which enables understanding of overall change, and quickly adapt to them. In turn, the development of technology implies the need to learn in very specialized areas of knowledge. These two elements are not

mutually exclusive, bearing in mind that it should be based on general education, because it remains valid longer, compared to a rapidly ageing expertise;

- **supporting human** - that is, one that equips man with the necessary knowledge, skills, enabling him to participate in social life and development and self-fulfillment. Therefore, education should develop skills such as risk management, criticality of thinking, innovation (in the way of thinking and acting), because they arise from the nature of the information society. Besides, that man can progress first must satisfy the need to belong. Therefore, the inclusions can be considered as a social need for downstream towards self-development. Education should support a man in such a way that he is able to mitigate the negative effects of civilization while enjoying its benefits in order to promote self-development.

Features describing the expected nature of modern education on the one hand reflect the transformations of civilization, on the other hand point to the difficult situation of a man who must find his place in an unknown and uncertain reality. Changes in the sphere of education must be rooted in broader social changes and the changing perceptions of the individual and his relationship with society (Malewski, 2010, p. 563). Nevertheless, the creation of the information society is also a challenge to the same education, which takes the form of a continuous, uninterrupted process, understood as a requirement of civilization (Solarczyk-Ambrozik, 2005, p. 39).

In this perspective, education should last throughout a person's life, because only in this way it is possible to constantly keep up with changes in civilization. For this reason, great importance is in the present actually assigned to the idea of lifelong learning. The increased interest in the idea of lifelong learning has set a new direction of development of pedagogical research. On the basis of adult education expansion of the concept of lifelong learning it has initiated a rapidly growing trend research taking the issue of learning units and local communities.

Keep in mind that the purpose of the idea of lifelong learning is the integration of all forms of education (formal, non-formal and informal). The task of the idea of learning throughout life is to mitigate the differences between education and training, as well as ensuring the proper use of leisure time. In the context of this concept, learning is understood as a multidirectional human activity learned throughout life (at every stage), by the situation in which it is located (the life) (...) the process is seen as spontaneous and purposeful, which includes socialization and education (Czerniawska, 2007, pp.87-99).

Modern theories of andragogy accentuate the multithreading learning and its socio-cultural context (Kurantowicz, Nizińska, 2012, p. 13). This explains the emphasis on learning in the information society. The relationship between learning and social context is visible in the concept of existential learning of Petra Jarvis. According to this theory, learning is influenced by society and remains in a strong relationship with the social world. What's more, learning is situated in the social relations that occur between subject learner and his surroundings. All aspects of the "I" unit reflect the social structure along with the usual for its qualities.

Learning a man has to form a lifelong process that covers all forms of education. It is not detached from the social world, nor the individual human experiences. Education in the modern world has become an integral part of life, allowing for easier operation of the new reality. You can now also meet with opinions that lifelong learning is no longer a voluntary educational activity undertaken by privileged part of society, but even compulsion and necessity, essential to the proper functioning of the surrounding world (Malewski, 2001, p. 37).

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## KEY COMPETENCIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE EDUCATION OF SENIORS - THE IDEA AND AIMS OF PROJECT

BARBARA BASCHIERA

University Ca' Foscari of Venice (Italy)

**barbara-baschiera@unive.it**

**barbara.baschiera@um.edu.mt**

ALEKSANDRA MARCINKIEWICZ-WILK

University of Wroclaw (Poland)

**aleksandra.marcinkiewicz@uwr.edu.pl**

This chapter recalls the context in which the European framework of Key Competences has been formulated and it explains why and how, together with the concepts of Lifelong Learning and Lifespan Perspective, it was the basis for designing a model for developing Key competencies in the education of seniors.

### KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

*“That education should be regulated by law and should be an affair of state is not to be denied, but what should be the character of this public education, and how [...] persons should be educated, are questions which remain to be considered” (Aristotle, Politeia, Book 8).*

In the 4th century BC, Aristotle expresses the same considerations as we do in the 21st century.

There are many references, documents and guidelines looking towards the future of education, in order to clarify how education and training policy can effectively prepare learners for life in the future society, to understand which competences will be relevant and how these will be acquired.

In the past few years, in fact, as part of the process of discovering new ways of making EU Member States more competitive, education and training have seen very fast development and a gradual formulation of common European core skills and competences in lifelong learning was significantly developed in a number of Education policies (Hozjan, 2009).

But what is a competence?

“A competence refers to a complex combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes and desire which lead to effective, embodied human action in the world, in a particular domain. One’s achievement in personal relationships or in civil society are not based simply on the accumulation of second hand knowledge stored as data, but as a combination of this knowledge with skills, values, attitudes, desires and motivation and its application in a particular human setting at a particular point in a trajectory in time. Competence implies a sense of agency, action and value” (Hoskins & Deakin Crick, 2010).

Due to its recognition in the context of the real world, usually the concept of competence has been applied to vocational education and training (VET) as a consequence of its direct connection with the labour market. Since the 1990s, the term ‘competence’ has also become increasingly utilized for basic and general academic education at lower and upper secondary levels (Halász & Michel, 2011).

With the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda (2000), the meaning of the acquisition of key competences for the well-being of citizens, for personal fulfillment, social cohesion and economic development, merged strongly.

Between the initiatives taken in the last fifteen years to design new instruments aimed at developing knowledge, skills and competences at all levels of education, the European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning represents a new paradigm of education in a lifelong perspective and takes into account the increasing demand for key competences in personal and social spheres.

The framework identifies eight key competences and transversal themes necessary in a society characterized by the rapid change and obsolescence of knowledge and skills:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in a foreign language
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competence
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression.

All these competences have the same value, but in a climate of rapid change, of growing internationalization, more than ever constructive participation requires people to be informed and concerned about their society and to be active in it.

The changed way in which people access information and services combined with the risk that many seniors feel left behind and marginalized by the digital revolution led us to choose and develop three KC.

As defined in the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2006/962/EC):

- **Communication in foreign languages** “is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts according to



one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. Competence in foreign languages requires knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction [...].

- **Digital competence** is underpinned by basic skills in ICT: the use of computers to retrieve, access, store, produce, present and exchange information and communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet. It "requires a sound understanding and knowledge of the nature, role and opportunities of ICT in everyday contexts: in personal and social life as well as at work [...].

Skills needed include the ability to search, collect and process information and use it in a critical and systematic way and the ability to access, search and use internet-based services. An interest in engaging in communities and networks for cultural, social and/or professional purposes also supports this competence".

According to Formosa (2012) the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) and e-learning strategies represents a central priority on a widening participation agenda. In the new digital world senior citizens need to master and to understand the nature, role and opportunities of an increasing number of new technologies for leisure and communication, to be aware of issues regarding the validity and reliability of the information available.

- **Social and civic competences** "include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation. Social competence is linked to personal and social well-being which requires an understanding of how individuals can ensure optimal physical and mental health, including as a resource for oneself and one's family and one's immediate social environment [...]. For successful interpersonal and social participation it is essential to understand the codes of conduct and manners generally accepted in different societies and environments. It is equally important to be aware of basic concepts relating to individuals, groups, work organisations, gender equality and non-discrimination, society and culture. Understanding the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity is essential. The core skills of this competence include the ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints, to negotiate with the ability to create confidence, and to feel empathy. Individuals should be capable of coping with stress and frustration and expressing them in a constructive way and should also distinguish

between the personal and professional spheres. The competence is based on an attitude of collaboration, assertiveness and integrity.

Civic competence includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as the main events and trends in national, European and world history. An awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Europe is also essential.”

These competencies are applicable to both younger people and adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills. They symbolize a tool for empowering the learners and giving them the motivation, autonomy and responsibility to control their own lives and their participation in society.

The implementation of the KC for Lifelong learning in education programmes for seniors represents a chance to avoid increasing social exclusion, to flourish and to succeed in a globalised economy and increasingly diverse society.

## LIFELONG LEARNING AND LIFESPAN PERSPECTIVE: THE BACKGROUND FOR DESIGNING EDUCATION PROJECTS FOR SENIORS

A really important step towards the acquisition of key competences for the well-being of citizens, for personal fulfillment, social cohesion and economic development is represented by the European Commission communication on Lifelong Learning. It defines lifelong learning as being about acquiring and updating all kinds of abilities, interests, knowledge and qualifications from the pre-school years to post-retirement (CEC, 2000). Lifelong learning doesn't represent just a simple summing up or integration of traditional education programmes and modern learning opportunities. Its aim is to provide people of all ages with equal and open access to high-quality learning experiences throughout Europe (Eurostat, 2009a).

Lifelong learning still represents a radical change from existing norms and patterns of learning in comparison with traditional front-end education. It means adopting an integrated, lifelong and life-wide approach to learning and enhancing the importance of non-formal and informal education. It aims at enabling each individual to achieve all his/her potential, fostering a learner-centred approach rather than a teacher-centred one.

The core of this process consist of the inherent potential of learning that allows people to develop their capabilities and desires, inside a context able to offer educational opportunities to all citizens, regardless of age group, since learning throughout the whole lifetime is possible if there are areas, space and educational and training relationships.

The perspective of lifelong learning does not only give full legitimacy to learning between older adults, but establishes its need. In this way, educational projects involving senior citizens lose their casual, discontinuous voluntary character and start being considered as essential educational opportunities, similar to those directed towards young people and adults.



Another assumption underlining the importance of learning at any age, is represented by the Lifespan Perspective. Baltes and Reese (1986) elaborated an analytic systematization of the approaches that see human development as a phenomenon covering the entire span of life of each person. Through the use of observation and experimentation, the lifespan perspective declares human development as multi-dimensional rather than a continuous and consistent cycle (Berger, 2011). According to this perspective, no age of life has primacy over the others and human development is like an ongoing and non-linear process.

Considering human development as a lifelong and multifaceted process means assigning a key role to learning throughout the course of life.

Taking into account this background, we worked so that the learners could be active actors at the center of the learning process and could be able to grasp their needs and determine their own training programs. The project idea was that of designing a learning model which could suit a wide variety of groups of older people and the types of learning activities they wished to pursue.

## THE IDEA OF KEY PROJECT

The development of qualification and assessment frameworks based on competences is strongly linked to the current demands of globalisation, modernisation and the knowledge society. In addition to helping students to enter the workforce, key skills or competences are also regarded as a basis for 'community cohesion, based on democracy, mutual understanding, respect for diversity and active citizenship' as well as for 'personal fulfilment and happiness' (European Commission 2010a, p. 11).

The EU has developed 8 key competencies for lifelong learning which are described as being "a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. They are particularly necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment." These competencies are applicable to both younger people and "adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills".

The improvement of key competences was mentioned prominently in the eLearning initiative (European Commission, 2000) and further elaborated in the Communication on e-Skills, which highlighted the need to address digital (il)literacy (European Commission 2007, p. 8).

The priorities for the second cycle of ET 2020, set out in the annex to the 2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission, also include working "[...] together to promote the acquisition of the key competences identified in the 2006 Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning, including on the learning of digital competences [...]"

The Innovation Union is one of seven flagship policies revealed in October 2010 as part of the broader Europe 2020 strategy. One of the objectives of The European innovation partnerships (EIPs), a part of Innovative Union, is to enable EU citizens to lead healthy, active and independent lives while aging.

The education offer addressed to older people is increasing but its efficiency is still not satisfactory. For example according to Eurostat, the majority of persons aged 55 to 74 who have already gained experience using the Internet reported a low level of Internet skills in 2010.

In the UK over two thirds of all digital exclusion is among those aged 65 and over (66.79%) and over 82 per cent are aged 55+ (Age UK Digital Inclusion Evidence Report 2013). And among the 55+ age group likelihood of understanding a foreign language, e.g. able to read newspaper or magazine articles in a foreign language, is only 20%. It is worth mentioning that only 3% from this group is studying languages, 5% continuing to learn a new language in the last 2 years and 3% starting to learn a new language in the last 2 years (Special Eurobarometer 386: Europeans and their Languages, 2012).

The project idea of the Key project took its origin from these debates with the aim to bring them into practice in the field of the Older Adult Education.

The main objective of our Project is to encourage the participation of persons aged 55 to 74 in lifelong learning through the development of their key competencies.

To create a model of 'key competences' that senior citizens should possess to meet the challenges our society, we distinguished three areas of education which should be developed in modern Europe. According to these education areas workshops were created and conducted. The goals of workshops and courses will be to: improve of abilities to use new technologies, learning of English, development social competence and interpersonal skills.

## KEY COMPETENCIES DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROJECT KEY

Modern society is referred to as The Information Society. A very important element of society is development of the ICT sector. New technologies exist in many aspects of human life, so abilities of using ICT are now necessary. People who cannot use new technology are marginalized in the information society. This phenomenon is referred to by scientists as the digital divide. Older people are a group which is the most vulnerable to e-exclusion. According to this ICT skills are one of the most important competence in information society.

It should be noted that contemporary Europe is an open place. United Europe is a place of contact of many cultures, religions, ideas and lifestyles. Thus people need tools to communicate with each other. The most popular language is English, so this skill is also very important. Moreover, using new technologies there is a lot of information in English. Therefore on the one hand English is useful to use computers and other technologies. On the other hand, knowledge of a foreign language allows understanding of other cultures. Europe's borders are open and there is freedom to travel. Therefore, knowledge of a foreign language (especially English) is very useful.

Interpersonal skills are another category, which is important in the new reality. This should be understood as the ability to enter into interpersonal relationships.

It should be noted that many older people have problems with making friends, expressing opinions on a forum or conflict resolution. Interpersonal skills allow older people to overcome the fear of getting into social contacts. Ability to create a network of informal contacts is particularly important in the context of the problem of isolation of older people.

These three areas of competences seem to be most important for older people living in modern Europe. Therefore workshops created and conducted in the KEY project focus on development of these competences. It should be noted that all workshops are conducted in a certain order, making them interesting and easy for seniors.

Firstly, seniors take part in the interpersonal workshop where they have an opportunity to develop their assertiveness, empathy, and communication. They practice the ability to express their feelings and talk about themselves. One of the tasks was to create a personal biography. The next workshop focussed on the development of English skills - especially those aspects useful for communicating with other people. Seniors had a task to translate their biographies into English. The last was an ICT workshop where seniors learned how to write a blog. So, one of posts was their biography.

According to key competences qualitative research was conducted. The aim of narrative interviews was to give seniors an opportunity to show their opinions about challenges, possibilities of development of older people and risks of marginalization of this group of society. This research method allowed a diagnosis of how older people find themselves in a new reality. Moreover, the biography method was used to analyse how the process of learning appears to seniors. During biography workshops seniors created stories of their lives- in this way they promoted history through the prism of their own experience. In this way young people learn about history ,country, city or Europe by reading biographies of seniors.

Development of key competences allow them to participate in social life and protect them from social marginalization. Partners will be able to exchange experiences in educational work with seniors. Science research about key competences and experiences of partners was the basis for creating an innovative program to teach seniors in reality of Information Society (the curriculum is available in the Annexe).

## KEY PROJECT'S PARTICIPANTS

Project *Key competencies for Lifelong Learning in education of seniors* (KEY) was implemented within the framework of the Program Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Project from 2014 to 2016. The main objective of our Project is to encourage the participation of seniors aged 55 to 74 in lifelong learning through the development of their key competencies Organizations from three countries, Poland (Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica), Italy (Ca' Foscari University of Venice) and United Kingdom (Kairos Europe) took part in this project (<https://sites.google.com/site/projectkeyka2/home/key-s-people>):

**Pro Scientia Publica Foundation** (Poland) is a private non-profit organization. Its main aim is to support the development of young scientific personnel (university students and Ph.D students) and support all educational initiatives designed to build understanding between communities that see their mission in the creation and dissemination of science: between masters and students of the knowledge society, graduates working in adult education and instructors and managers of the educational projects, seniors from the University of the Third Age in the University of Wroclaw and students – trainees.

The Foundation primarily stimulates and supports the activity of young scientific talent, allowing them a good start in the world of science and fostering their professional activities. It also initiates its own scientific and educational projects that build bridges of understanding between generations involved in the creation and dissemination of science. The symbol of this agreement became the bridge, on which is inscribed in the logo of the Foundation.

**Ca' Foscari University of Venice** (Italy) has a national and internationally outstanding reputation for academic excellence in both teaching and research. At the moment Ca' Foscari offers 4 main subject areas of teaching and research activities (economics, humanities, languages and sciences);<sup>15</sup> First Cycle Degree Programmes and 27 Second Cycle Degree Programmes, 42 Specialist Master's Programmes, 14 Research Doctorate Programmes. It actively participates in European programmes for education and training and research, with projects involving partner institutions from all continents.

The Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage focuses on the relationships between philosophy and social, psychological, cognitive, anthropological and pedagogical sciences. Moreover it includes historical, historical art and cultural research, dealing with conservation, maintenance and management of cultural heritage. The Department has experience in international relations, carried out at the Ca' Foscari-Harvard Summer Schools and in international and European projects.

**Kairos Europe** (UK) has been operating since 2011 in the field of adult education, promoting several projects with a focus on different target groups, especially disadvantaged categories such as migrants, asylum seekers, unemployed, and so on. Kairos Europe has been working with several partners both in the UK and overseas and has established a wide network of cooperation across Europe. Our most recent specialisation includes the delivery of workshops for different target groups. The aim of these workshops is the development of basic and transversal skills, such as entrepreneurship, digital skills and multilingualism; the enhancement of ICT skills; the contribution to the re-skilling and up-skilling of adults; additionally, they are conceived as a means for personal and professional growth, for rediscovery and the acquisition of skills such as confidence, self-esteem and self-empowerment.

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**KEY COMPETENCIES  
IN EDUCATION OF SENIORS  
– EVALUATION OF WORKSHOPS  
IN THE KEY PROJECT**



## **INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP – DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION**

BEATA DZIAŁA

**University of Wrocław (Poland)**

beatadziala@gmail.com

Within the project, the first classes took place in interpersonal and social competences. Over a dozen elderly people took part in them. After the workshops there was a study – focus group interview, where participants had the chance to express their opinion about the workshops. In this context, at the beginning issues were discussed related to the learning of adults, functioning of the elderly, as well as interpersonal competences and their roles. We also discussed the study and its implications – opinions of participants. Interpersonal workshops based on psychological exercises, aimed at getting the participants new knowledge, competence, self-development, development of reflexivity, as well as the ability to use these skills to cope with everyday functioning.

### **LEARNING OF ADULTS**

In the context of these workshops is worth taking into account the fact that adults learn in a specific way, which can be determined by several important features of this learning. The andragogical model by Knowles is based on the assumptions that set it apart from the pedagogical model. Firstly, is the need for knowledge – adults need to know why they have to learn something. Secondly, adults have self-image relating to liability and self-directing, and the educational process should be carried out in way so that they do not feel that someone denies their ability to decide for themselves. Thirdly, very important is the role of the prior experience of students, but also the current experiences and needs, which are associated with the fourth principle, which focuses on the fact that adults want to learn things that are useful in dealing with life situations. It affects directly the assumption that adults instead of education focused on the subject, prefer this focusing on the life and problems of everyday life. The sixth principle refers to the area of motivation, which in the case of adult learners should be internal to the education could be effective. (Knowles, Holton, Swanson, 2005).

According to Tomczyk Learning of the elderly will be recognized as an elementary process leading to a relatively constant mental changes, exhibiting their



skills, socialization and acquisition of new skills. Learning to recognize as a whole is related to three interrelated dimensions: cognitive, emotional (themes, attitudes) and social" (Tomczyk, 2015, p. 132). According to the author aims of education of the elderly should focus on promoting their self-determination. Through education, seniors can gain new skills that enable them to develop and function. In this perspective, Tomczyk quoted Fabiś and gives the following functions of education:

- Emancipation function – it refers to the maintenance of the elderly positions in a variety of environments, as well as continuous development and freedom from adverse conditions, stereotypes and prejudices, also raising the social status of older people and increasing their independence;
- Altruistic function – it should prepare people to understand others, to act for them, through getting to know each other, contacts, activities and volunteering at local level;
- Privatism function – should lead to the self-realization, including: the fulfillment of their own dreams, ambitions, aspirations and passions. Thanks to it an older person develops own interests in the personal and spiritual field. This makes it easier to deal with existential problems and those that bind with daily functioning, and helps prepare for death. (Tomczyk, 2015)

An important category in adult education is lifelong learning, which is understood by Jarvis has an individual process which continues throughout the whole of life – lifelong learning" (Jarvis, 2004, pp. 64-65), which is also the basic concept for the education of the elderly. It is important to perceive the fact, that adults also feel the need for education. Especially if it relates to everyday situations, but also changes in their lives e.g. retirement. They often cause lifestyle changes and interest in other forms of activity (Manheimer, 2008).

### SPECIFICITY OF ELDERLY

In the context of lifelong learning, we should take into account the developmental aspect of adulthood, and in particular – for a given group of participants – the period of late adulthood. Despite the many changes at that time, which affect the functioning of the elderly in the field of biological, mental and social fields, an important development potential of this period is characteristic of old age (both in terms of psychological and social perception), which is wisdom. This, which is the most typical for this period is called the spiritual or transcendent wisdom and refers to the attitude to life, which becomes more philosophical. This is the result of processes that redirect to a worldview from material which is more rational, to the cosmic and transcendent worldview, which allows for the perception of own life in a broader perspective (Straś-Romanowska, 2011).

It is also associated with the theory of continuous development and adaptation of lifetime by Bond – continuity theory. It assumes that, despite the widespread changes in the functioning and psychological health of the body, as well as social factors, many older people have notable consequences in terms of their: attitudes,

values, ways of thinking, social activities and the kind of social networks. „The essence of continuity theory is the ability of people to develop cognitive structures with which they organize and interpret their life experiences” (Bond, Corner, 2004, p. 76) This may be evidence that, despite the social stereotypes of the period of late adulthood, it can be especially development for the individual, also in the area of social skills.

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND LEARNING

Social functioning is a complex issue, which consists of both social skills and social behaviour and cognitive processes taking place during the interaction. Life in society involves emotional, cognitive and linguistic skills. Social functioning is very important for the development, as well as for important relationships and being a member of society, it is essential for physical and mental health (Cordier, Speyer, Chen, Wilkes-Gillan, Brown, Bourke-Taylor, Doma, Leicht, 2015).

According to Johnson interpersonal skills are crucial for the functioning of human in society. However, as the author states –use of interpersonal skills should be learnt. In order to initiate, develop, and maintain relationships that will be satisfying, the need for some skills: mutual knowledge of each other and trust, mutual understanding, influence to each other, and help in solving problems and conflicts in a constructive way. They relate to openness, self-awareness, self-acceptance, and trust. Secondly, it is important to transfer the feelings and thoughts in a precise way. Thirdly, effective help of another person is important, as well as communicating of acceptance and support, as well as the ability to solve appearing problems and conflicts. Development of interpersonal competences that influence a better quality of human functioning is also associated with theories of adult learning and essential elements, which should be found in this process (Johnson, 1992).

Illeris mentions reflexivity as important in today’s competence. In opinion of the author reflexivity today should be understood in relation to „the general societal conditions that have constant meaning to that individual who has to choose his or her way, not only externally, between all sorts of offers, but also internally, in terms of life course, lifestyle and identity” (2007, p. 72). Reflexivity is also important for personality traits such as: independence, self-confidence, sociability, sensibility and flexibility. These processes do not always have a positive dimension because personal development can encourage the development of defensive attitudes, which can be detrimental to the individual (Illeris, 2007).

Important in the context of this subject can also be a concept of a „biographicity” which was also one of the main themes and topics of workshops. In the theory of Altheit biographicity is treated as the experience of modern people “being able to form their own lives to a great extent” (Illeris, 2007, p. 72). This idea focuses on the fact of how we perceive our lives, and how we interpret our lives, in relation to the difficulties we encounter and the what choices we make. It can refer to learning from the experiences and development of interpersonal skills.

## COURSE OF CLASSES

Classes took place every week at the same time. They considered social and interpersonal skills. Each were related to a different topic:

1. Biographical workshops, part 1
2. Biographical workshops, part 2
3. Verbal communication
4. Non-verbal communication
5. Conflict resolution strategies
6. Negotiations and conflict resolution techniques
7. Assertiveness
8. Emotional intelligence
9. Self-presentation
10. Information society – summation

At each workshop there was a similar scheme of activities. First took place a theoretical introduction to the topic of classes. It consisted of the presentation of the most important issues, by trainer. Often the most important issues were agreed with the participants and also sorted by creating e.g. diagram, graph, specification or categorization.

Often at this point discussions took place. They were caused by other points of view of the participants or their disagreement on some of the concepts or definitions. It helped more reflectively to think of the discussed issues at the workshops and also it gave the participants feeling that, despite the common theory or psychological definition, they also have the right to have their opinion. It often happened to exceed the time planned for this part, I see these fragments of as very valuable for classes. Not only for participants but also for the trainer. It helped to deepen their own reflection, go to beyond schemes and also exercise with practical skills of discussion in which key arguments are contested.

After this fragment, which was a smaller part of the classes (15-20 min.), a more practical part took place, where the participants practiced theoretical issues discussed earlier. Most often it was done by working in groups, sometimes individually. Forms of work that were used are: group work, role plays, simulations, discussions, individual tasks, and the type of tasks like „card-pencil“.

The participants liked all forms of activities and they were eager to undertake tasks on each course. At the end of each classes evaluation took place, which was a summary of the given topic or was the task for the participants to use the knowledge gained in the classroom, e.g. creating feedback in a specific way.

## QUALITATIVE STUDY

In all groups, qualitative research was carried out – focus group interview. Within it to the participants were asked the following questions: Do you consider that participation in classes (in this cycle) helped you to gain some new knowledge? Do you consider that thanks to workshops you gained new skills? Did you

develop social and interpersonal skills during these workshops in some way? Do you learn something about yourself through these workshops? Do you in any way use this knowledge or skills in everyday life? What did you like in the workshops? What did you not like in the workshops? If these types of classes are planned again, what would you change?

Qualitative content analysis, for data analysis, was carried out which was based on finding the meaning of the content, as well as attempts to interpret the message (Peräkylä, 2005). From the statements of the participants were selected categories and most frequently occurring response and it has been presented in two tables. Table 1 contains positive aspects mentioned by the participants and declared learned or developed skills by them. Table 2 contains weaknesses and issues that should be improved.

**Tab. 1.** Strengths / gained competencies

Gained skills	Italy	UK	Poland
<b>Interpersonal skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The historical events helped tell personal stories with enough distance, and so avoiding being too intrusive.</li> <li>• The verbal communication exercises really helped with developing listening skills and as bonding tools, were very good at forming bonds as it takes away from feeling exposed in a large group scenario.</li> <li>• Helped with focusing on each other and ultimately building trust.</li> </ul>	Learned how to listen to each other, through sharing their life experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped to overcome social barriers.</li> <li>• Gaining new negotiation skills.</li> <li>• Ability in assertive behavior.</li> <li>• Self-presentation skills.</li> <li>• Openness in relation to the another.</li> <li>• Growth in the level of self-awareness and reflexivity.</li> </ul>
<b>Ability to share their experiences</b>	Switching the pairing is essential, as it further helps the whole group bonding.	Learned how we experience things differently and how to see something according to someone else's point of view.	

Sources: Own compilation.

Tab. 2. Week points/ preferable changes.

Weak points/ preferable changes	Italy	UK	Poland
<b>Organizational issues - workshops</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They should be opening the session with ice breakers and be quite flexible when it comes to delivering the workshops.</li> <li>• There should be a very light version of the personal biography.</li> <li>• Sharing personal stories in a group situation can be quite daunting for seniors who are not used to interacting with a variety of people in their daily life.</li> <li>• Making graphs of their educational history can be intimidating.</li> <li>• Doing a mind map instead of graph which is maybe a kind of incentive.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None/ small amount of anecdotes, stories to relax the atmosphere.</li> <li>• Lack of materials/ multimedia presentations that they could get after classes.</li> <li>• Lack of information about what will be the topic of next workshops, therefore, the lack of preparation by the participants.</li> <li>• To few tasks as a whole group.</li> <li>• Working groups should be changed at each class to not work with the same persons and increase the exchange of experiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Organizational issues - project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting with skill based workshops such as English and/or ICT, is preferable: This gives time to the group to grow accustomed to each other and therefore be better inclined to share personal histories once a certain level of trust is been established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English course should have come before the interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Doing the focus group before the workshops.</li> </ul>	

Sources: Own compilation.

## DETAILED FEEDBACK FROM POLISH PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE COURSE

### **The new knowledge gained through classes**

Participants emphasized the importance of classes in consolidating knowledge they already had and also in defining some concepts. Workshops helped also in gaining new knowledge and allowed to systematize information. Seniors

stressed also that through classes they can now refer to sources from the field of the discussed issues, and also enabled a critical approach to knowledge. Gained knowledge will help them in discussions in everyday life, and thus will give them a self-confidence.

### **New skills gained through classes**

Classes helped to overcome social barriers, which are related for example with public speaking oral performances in front of a group. Important role in this had form of work like role play. Seniors emphasized also that workshops were beneficial because of gaining and practicing new negotiations skills, that could be done by discussed topics and simulations.

It is noteworthy that the ability of assertive behaviour was very important. Thanks to the classes they succeeded to reflect on this kind of behaviour, as well as use it in practice.

Important for the participants were also self-presentation skills. They had opportunity to practice and also get a feedback, which turned out to be very relevant.

In general, they emphasized the role of classes in creating and developing openness to new problems and challenges.

### **Development of social and interpersonal skills**

In the development of social and interpersonal skills participants stressed the general strengthening of interpersonal competence, such as increase of openness in relation to another or increased of self-confidence. Seniors noticed growth of assertiveness too, especially in family life.

Equally important were the changes in area of activity. As stated the participants, through those activities began to analyze instead of the more emotional reactions.

### **Getting to know themselves**

According to the opinions of participants, classes helped in the growth in the level of self-awareness and reflexivity. In general, seniors claimed that workshops strengthened some elements of personality, while others were weakened. It was also important to realize own openness to people and new ideas, also in a more skeptical attitude to the opinions about other people.

### **Using skills gained through classes in everyday life**

Regarding the use of the skills acquired at the workshop in the practice of everyday life, participants emphasized: behaviour associated with assertiveness, stimulation to work on their own emotions, exercise patience in pursuing into their arguments, negotiation techniques, less emotional responding.

### **The advantages of workshops mentioned by participants**

As advantages seniors perceived themes discussed at the workshop and forms of used activities, such as role plays or practicing negotiation techniques, also a

way of teaching. Important for the participants was a group taking part in workshops and ability to freely talk by each person.

The weak points mentioned by participants

As disadvantages participants mentioned: none/small amount of anecdotes, stories to relax the atmosphere; lack of materials/multimedia presentations that they could get after classes; lack of information about what will be the topic of next workshops, therefore, the lack of preparation by the participants; too few tasks as a whole group. Senior also noted that working groups should be changed at each class to not work with the same persons and so increase the exchange of experiences.

### SPECIFICITY OF THE GROUP

The Polish group I worked with was very open and co-operative. Its specificity consisted in that most people knew each other earlier, from all sorts of activities at the University of the Third Age. There were also a few people who weren't linked to rest of the group. Between these participants during the series of classes, conflict arose. It was a difficult situation for the whole of the educational process. It came up, one side - from the difference of views, another side was caused by needs of each participant to grab "for themselves" the largest part of time and space at workshops. Over time this situation was resolved, because seniors changed the behaviour that led to this, to as little as possible interfere in the territory of the other persons. From the point of view of a person who ran the classes, it was the best possible solution. Obviously, in the meantime I tried to alleviate the situation, as did other persons participating in the workshops.

Certainly the opening up and willing cooperation of the group helped integration activities, also a large number of tasks to be done in smaller groups, which often rely on the exchange of experiences. This allowed participants to talk about themselves freely and feel more and more comfortable. They also emphasized the positive role of the group in perceiving the workshops. They wondered whether the group was that from the beginning, or integrated in the class, creating a good team. Because of the subject of the course, which has already assumed to be opening and integrating, I think in large part, the role of series of workshops contributed to the integration of the group and a sense of freedom of participants.

### DIFFICULTIES

Naturally the mentioned conflict can be seen as difficulty. Not only because of the changing atmosphere in the group but also in the view of "technical" carrying out of activities, e.g. dividing participants into smaller groups to do some tasks. It is very important in such situations how the trainer behaves. I decided that in this case, when I had to divide all into two groups, to put two people in conflict on the same team. The assumption proved to be effective in practice, because one



of the persons, who caused extreme emotions because of extroversion, decided to withdraw.

Another difficulty for the trainer was the result of unexpected insights and analytic way of thinking by participants. It was particularly seen at the beginning of classes when we were discussing the basic theoretical issues. But I see it as a very valuable for the learning process.

## SUMMARY

As a summary we may mention strong points of workshops which were:

- subject that was interesting for participants
- different forms of activities at workshops
- tasks which helped participants to use knowledge in practice
- group participating in workshops
- experience of participants
- the atmosphere in the group and during classes
- using skills and knowledge in everyday life
- increase self-confidence of participants
- gaining new knowledge and skills by participants

And also the weak points or things that should be changed:

- workshops should be longer
- there should be more time for the theoretical part and for discussion
- participants should get materials
- working groups should be changed more often

It is important in work with the elderly to have in mind a few things. It is important to remember to use large print when giving course notes and when writing on the Whiteboard. Giving simple and clear (many bullet points and in large print), printed notes is equally important. the key is to summarize previous meetings and only introduce one new topic at the time.

Despite the fact that the participants had negative comments and objections to the course, it is worth noting that according to the theories of adult learning, classes were valuable for them. Despite the fact that the workshops did not last long, seniors declared developing interpersonal skills, self-development, as well as the practical utility of the acquired knowledge and skills in everyday functioning.

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**TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE CONTEXT  
OF BIOGRAPHIES:  
REFLECTIONS ON ENGLISH CLASSES  
FOR THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE ERASMUS PLUS  
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP “KEY COMPETENCIES  
FOR LIFELONG LEARNING IN EDUCATION  
OF SENIORS”: KEY**

JACEK GULANOWSKI

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
jacek.gulanowski@gmail.com

KAMIL BŁASZCZYŃSKI

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
kamil.b.1988@wp.pl

**OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF THE PROJECT**

The main objective of the “Key competencies for Lifelong Learning in education of seniors”: KEY Project was to encourage the participation of persons aged 55 to 74 in lifelong learning through the development of their key competencies.

Other goals related to this main objective, were:

- To encourage elderly people to use networking ICT tools as well as mobile technologies and resources to take part in social community life.
- To create opportunities for older people to stay active.
- To contribute to older people’s participation in the current information society.
- To enforce the relations with others and guarantee social inclusion.
- To reduce the mistrust against networking ICT tools, resources and services.
- To promote the benefits senior citizens can enjoy using networking ICT tools, resources and services.
- To train trainers and management staff of adult and/ or seniors training organizations, seniors associations and (educational) public bodies in the field of seniors’ training on networking ICT tools, resources and services.
- To obtain good and demonstrative practices by carrying out pilot training experiences during the life of the project.

The main activities for the participants of the project were English courses (to develop English skills); ITC courses to develop ITC skills, workshops and lectures about social skills, and biography workshop and individual interview on personal development of seniors.

Organizations Involved in the KEY Project were: Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica (Poland), Università Ca' Foscari Venezia (Italy), and Kairos Europe Limited (United Kingdom). Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica was the Coordinator of the Project.

### ENGLISH CLASSES IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The KEY Project aimed to offer a wide opportunity of participation, particularly for the isolated senior. The project would thus generate new prospects of inclusion, and would empower the elderly to maximise the opportunities for new social roles, opening the road to continued learning. Thus, all workshops and/or courses were interconnected and their aim was to: improve abilities to use new technologies, learn English, develop social and interpersonal competences.

The expected impact of these activities on the project participants was that they:

1. will develop communication in mother languages;
2. will develop communication in foreign languages;
3. will develop digital competencies;
4. will discover learning to learn;
5. will develop social competences.

The programme of the English classes was prepared by the Coordinator of the project based on previous experiences in teaching English to adults, especially seniors. All organizations realized the same programme and used the same materials during classes in all of the countries involved. The main goal of the classes was to help participants to write their biographies in English (or to translate them to English) with the help of the teacher. All the topics and skills covered during the classes were chosen according to this principle.

Topics, aims, and materials used during the English classes are listed in the table below.

**Tab. 3.** Plan of English courses of the KEY Project.

Lp..	Exercise / Task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Advance introduction	Participants learn how to introduce themselves and have a small talk.	Learning basic communications skills in English	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, printed handouts
2.	Famous persons: game	Participants play roles of famous persons and talk about famous persons who inspire them.	Learning to ask and answer questions about yourself	1 hour	printed handouts

Lp..	Exercise / Task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
3.	Languages	Participants read a text about learning languages, solve the problems and discuss their ideas.	Revision of fundamental grammar and vocabulary, discussing the problems of language learning.	1 hour	printed handouts
4.	How to speak better	Participants discuss things they like and dislike using a model for more detailed speaking.	Learning to speak about different topics in a more detailed way.	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, printed handouts
5.	Telling stories	Revision of past simple and past continuous tenses. Then participants create a story together (using those tenses).	Learning to tell stories using past tenses.	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, printed handouts
6.	Family vocabulary	Participants learn the basic family vocabulary, then read a text about a family and create a genealogical tree.	Learning family vocabulary.	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, printed handouts
7.	Speaking	Participants play a printed board game which encourages them to speak about themselves.	Learning to talk about everyday issues.	1 hour	Printed board game, pawns, dice
8.	Translating biographies	Participants read their biographies and choose the terms and phrases they don't know how to translate into English. They create a list of those expressions and then translate it together with the teacher.	Learning translation skills.	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, paper, pens
9.	Translating biographies	Participants attempt to translate their biographies. They create a list of difficulties they encounter. The teacher supervises the translations. In the case of more complex difficulties the participants should try to find a solution together.	Learning translation skills.	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, paper, pens
10.	Translating biographies	Participants read each other's biographies in English and share their remarks and reflections. Participants prepare a joint list of difficulties they have encountered during the translation. Then they send it to participants from other countries.	Learning translation skills.	1 hour	Whiteboard/flip-chart, markers, paper, pens

Sources: Own compilation.

The participants were expected to have basic knowledge of English to be able to communicate at a basic level in this language. The classes were conducted in all organizations from 01-03-2015 until 31-03-2016. After the English classes participants took part in focus interviews.

## METHOD

For the purpose of gathering the material, all partners agreed that they would use focus interviews for collecting data from the interlocutors. Focus interview is a social sciences method of research. The method is classified as a qualitative type, which means that the aim of the method is to understand the opinion of the interlocutors and on this basis reconstruct the characteristics of the studied phenomenon. Thus this method is used in individual or special research cases. The choice of this method in research process was, from a methodological point of view, natural, as the KEY project and the education processes of language learning were such a special case.

### FOCUS INTERVIEWS

#### - COMPARISON OF RESULTS IN ALL ORGANIZATIONS

The study has been conducted in three countries: Poland, Italy and the UK. The authors of this paper decided to divide all gathered material according to the country where the study was conducted. After presenting the results gained in each of the studies, there is a short summary of each. Every summary has been created on the basis of six indicators: new skills, new knowledge, social skills, personal skills, usefulness, general judgement. For the purpose of comparison of the opinions of people who were involved in the language courses during the project, a 5 point scale was used (much worse, worse, no change, improved, much improved) to express general opinion of the participants about the usefulness of the project in developing their language knowledge and skills.

### POLAND

The study was conducted on a focus group of 10 project participants (1 man and 9 women). All participants of the language course were seniors from the U3A in Wrocław University<sup>1</sup>. The seniors who attended English courses were not homogenous. The group consisted of seniors who have been learning English in

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1 U3A - University of The Third Age: Social Institutions which are classified as institutions of non-formal education. U3A are non-profit institutions aimed to educate seniors (people who are generally in retirement), for the purpose of their re-socialisation. The need of re-socialisation (re-education, re-valuation) is created by global, glocal and local processes such as: information revolution, globalisation, creation of EU, technical and technological changes etc.

the past for many years as well as people who have just started to learn this language. Despite these differences the level of the language capital of the seniors (their communication skills and knowledge of English) was high. This is a very important remark, because the aforementioned capital may have influenced the statements about the language course, which is presented below.

To keep a clear and logical structure of narration, the statements of the seniors have been presented in a question-answer manner. The same questions have been asked during the focus interview: Do you think that participation in the English course helped you gain new knowledge?; Do you think, that participation in the English course helped you gain new skills? What are these skills?; Do you think that participation in the English course helped you develop new social skills or competences? What are these skills and competences?; Did you find out something new about yourself thanks to the English course? What did you find out?; Do you use the acquired language knowledge and skills in everyday life?; What was good or bad in the language course?; What should be changed or improved in future actions?

### **Do you think that participation in the English course helped you gain new knowledge?**

The first question directed to the seniors, considered their personal opinion about new knowledge they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*Mnie to bardzo pomogło. (...) Jaką wiedzę zdobyłam? Tzn. podszkoliłam ten angielski w takim, w sensie takim, żebyym mogła coś napisać, coś powiedzieć, bo te podstawy, to ja, ja już miałam. I nabrałam takiej pewności siebie... (...) No mnie bardzo pomogło, w tym sensie. [It helped me very much. (...) What knowledge did I gain? I have improved my English, I mean, to write something, to say something, because I already had the basics. And I gained this self-confidence (...) It helped me very much, in this sense. (...)] (Interlocutor 1)*

*(...) I ileś razy jak człowiek usłyszy, raz, drugi, trzeci budowę zdania, słowo, nawet słownictwo podstawowe, którym ja ciągle gonię, pomaga, zdecydowanie każdy kontakt (...). [Every time when you hear for the first, second, third time the structure of the sentence, word, even basic vocabulary, which I always chase, it helps, definitely, each contact] (Interlocutor 2).*

*(...) No to słownictwo i jakby takie szablony, i w jaki sposób opowiadać o sobie, jak swo... jak swoją biografię ułożyć, jak rozmawiać z drugim człowiekiem, jak opowiadać o swoim hobby i tak dalej, i tak dalej. I to dostaliśmy w prezencie ksero i można do tego sięgnąć. [So, the vocabulary and some kind of schemes, and how to say something about yourself, how to create your biography, how to talk with another person, how to tell about my hobby and so on. And we received materials as a bonus, to which we can peek] (Interlocutor 3).*

*Ja trochę poszerzyłam słownictwo. Parę słówek takich nieznanymi mi przybyło. (...) Także uważam, że były ciekawie prowadzone, tylko po prostu dla mnie było troszeczkę za mało mówienia. [I have expanded my vocabulary a bit. I noticed a couple of unknown words (...) Also, I think that they were interesting, but for me there was not enough speaking] (Interlocutor 4).*

*(...) Także na pewno się dowiedziałam się paru słów, no ale też należą do tej grupy osób, które w sumie już nie mają takich większych trudności z mówieniem, więc... Ale ja każde takie doświad-*

czenie sobie... (...) *Ja każde nowe doświadczenia sobie bardzo cenię, także ja jestem zadowolona z tego tutaj kursu. [So, I have learned a couple of new words for sure, but I belong also to the group, which doesn't have such big problems with speaking, so... But each such new experience I value very much, thus I am very happy because of this course] (Interlocutor 5).*

*Dla mnie na pewno był nowy zasób słów (...) Też mnie to zmobilizowało do tego, że się zdecydowałam w lutym na indywidualny wyjazd, gdzie będę musiała korzystać z tego języka, bo nikt mi nie będzie w stanie pomóc. Na pewno też mi uświadomiło duże braki jak wiele słów już w tej chwili nie pamiętam. To na takiej troszkę zasadzie wygląda, że gdzieś mi dzwoni, bo ja to przecież wiem, a okazuje się, że ja już nie pamiętam. [For me it was the new vocabulary. (...) It also mobilised me to make a decision of an individual trip in February, during which I will have to use this language, because nobody will be able to help me. For sure it also made me realise how large gaps I have in vocabulary and how many words I don't remember. It looks like this a little bit, that somewhere the bell is ringing, because I know that, but I don't remember it] (Interlocutor 6).*

### **Do you think, that participation in the English course helped you gain new skills? What skills?**

The second question directed to seniors, considered their personal opinion about what new skills they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*Nie nabyłam żadnych nowych umiejętności. Startowałam prawie od zera. Moje umiejętności były na poziomie 1 i w skali 1 do 10, no powiedzmy od 0 do 10 na poziomie 1. I właśnie ta różnica poziomów spowodowała, że nas nawzajem, że ja no właściwie nie nabyłam żadnych nowych umiejętności. [I did not gain any new skills. I have started almost from zero. My skills were on level one in 1 to 10 scale. And the difference in levels meant that I did not gain any new skills] (Interlocutor 2).*

*No ja czasami poprawiłam błędną wymowę tam paru słówek, słownictwo ale z umiejętnościami no też yyy... nie poszerzyłam swoich umiejętności jeśli chodzi o wymowę, bo po prostu nie mam tej bariery już językowej, bo ja już się uczę całe życie tego angielskiego, także no, nowych nie nabyłam ale poszerzyłam to słownictwo, czasami poprawiono mi wymowę. Także to było dla mnie ważne. [Well, sometimes I have corrected my incorrect pronunciation of some words, vocabulary, but skills maybe so... I did not expand my skills in terms of speaking, because I just don't have that language barrier, I am learning this language all my life, so I did not gain new skills, but I expanded my vocabulary, sometimes my pronunciation was corrected. That was important to me] (Interlocutor 3).*

*Umiejętności... Tak bym nie powiedziała, ponieważ byliśmy skupieni na pisaniu życiorysu, a na pewnym poziomie, kiedy człowiek się styka z innymi ludźmi i rozmawia w tym języku, to przede wszystkim ma, że tak powiem opanowany swój życiorys, bo wszyscy wypytują o wszystko. (...). [Skills... I would not say this, because we have been focused on writing our biography, and on some level, when you are in contact with other people, and you speak this language, first of all you have mastered your own biography, because everybody is asking about everything (...)] (Interlocutor 4).*

*No ja, ja się, tzn. yyy... nauczyłam się jednego z umiejętności, że należy budować przy takiej znajomości yyy... języka proste zdania. Zaczynać od „I”, „We” itd., itd. Krótkie, proste. Zro... dać kropkę, bądź myślnik, czy średnik i „jechać” dalej (...). [I ... have learned one skill,*



that with such knowledge of language you have to build simple statements. Begin with "I" or "We" etc. Short, simple, give a dot, dash or a semicolon and move forward (...)] (Interlocutor 8).

### **Do you think, that participation in the English course helped you develop new social skills or competences? What skills and competences?**

The third question directed to seniors, considered their personal opinion about what new skills they gained after ending the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*Nie, nie, nie, nie mogę nazwać tego. 10 lekcji to jest naprawdę tak krótki czas, żeby... całe moje życie to jest rozwijanie kompetencji tego typu, żeby umiejętnie kontaktować się z ludźmi itd. Itd. Też się uczyłam całe życie angielskiego, też się nie nauczyłam. I... 10 lekcji to naprawdę za krótko, żeby mówić o jakichkolwiek dodatkowych kompetencjach, które Ja zdobyłam. Bo nie zdobyłam. [No, no, no I can't say that. 10 lessons this is a really short amount of time, such competences are developed throughout whole life, to skillfully contact with other people etc. I have learned English all my life too and didn't learn it. 10 lesson is really not enough to talk about some more competences that I have gained. Which I didn't] (Interlocutor 1).*

*Yyy... kompetencje społeczne, to ja zdobyłam w wieku 19-20 lat, bo byłam tak zamknięta osobą straszliwie. Ja z resztą tutaj na biografii mówiłam, że byłam wyobcowana w szkole średniej, także droga przez mękę itd. Tu nie nabyłam, bo już ten straszny okres kiedy byłam taka eee... wyobcowana już mam za sobą ale tu cieszę się, że poznałam nowych ludzi. [Hm... social competences I have gained when I was 19-20 years old, as I was back then a very closed person. I have said here on the biography, that I was alienated in middle school, it was a torture etc. I didn't gain them here, because that time when I was alienated is behind me, but I am glad that I have met here new people] (Interlocutor 2).*

*W zasadzie potwierdziłam to co mam. Czyli dość dużą łatwość komunikowania się z ludźmi, dość dużą dozę krytyki, a nawet krytykanctwa. Ciągłe wszystkich poprawiam albo krytykuję. Tak mam, taka się urodziłam. Ale nie jest to nigdy złośliwe, raczej ma pomóc mnie i osobie, którą krytykuję. [I have confirmed what I have. A big easiness of communication with people, quite a big dose of critique, or even criticism. All the time I am correcting or criticizing. This is who I am. But it is never for the purpose to be nasty, I want to help myself or the person I am criticizing] (Interlocutor 3).*

*(...) myślę, że zajęcia nie miały wpływu na moją postawę społeczną iii... jakąś taką szeroko rozumianą otwartość. [I think that this courses didn't influence my social attitude and broadly understood openness] (Interlocutor 5).*

*Tak, Ja yyy... jeśli chodzi o um... o kompetencje społeczne, nie zdobyłam takowych tutaj na zajęciach. Nie korzystałam, nie miałam okazji żeby, żeby... może, no może tylko tyle, że z koleżanką, poprosiła mnie o, jeśli to można nazwać, żeby nas troszkę poduczyła (...). [Yes, when it comes to social competences, I didn't gain those during those classes, there weren't any occasions, or maybe only then when I ask my colleagues to help me name something, or teach me a little bit more (...)] (Interlocutor 6).*

*Tak trudno mi powiedzieć tutaj. No jedynie może ta otwartość, że jak jestem wśród osób towarzyszących, czy po prostu tak, jak tu w gronie, to że potrafiłam coś powiedzieć. Bo tak nie raz sama próbowałam w domu się uczyć ale jakoś mi to nie wychodzi, że nie umiem sama do siebie gadać. No i też po prostu, no że jestem może tak też o, tak jak koleżanka powiedziała, że tak*



*naprawdę jestem skryta w sobie ale wśród ludzi staram się yyy... otworzyć (...). [It is hard for me to say. Maybe only that openness, when I am with other people, like here. At home, I tried to learn by myself, but it was no use, I can't speak to myself. Or maybe it's that I am shy and when I am with others I try to open up] (Interlocutor 9).*

### **Did you find out something new about yourself thanks to the English course. What did you find out?**

The fourth question directed to seniors, treated about their personal opinion about what new knowledge they gained about themselves during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*Właśnie takie zajęcia pozwoliły mi na to, żebym uwierzyła w siebie. Bo myślałam, że nigdy, nigdy się nie ośmielę, żeby zacząć mówić, żeby komuś coś odpowiedzieć. Moje wnuki, dzieci – perfect znają wszyscy angielski. No a teraz już babcia tak zaczyna z nimi troszeczkę dyskutować. No... Uważam, że to jest... bardzo fajna sprawa. [Those are that kind of classes that made me believe in myself. I thought that I never will encourage myself to talk, to say something to someone. My grandchildren and children know English perfectly. Now granny is starting to chit-chat with them a little. Well... I think this is... a very cool thing.] (Interlocutor 1).*

*Muszę się przyznać, że chyba jestem bardziej leniwa niż przypuszczałam. I to mi tu angielski uświadomił, bo mi się nie chciało uczyć w domu. Jakoś nie bardzo chyba wierzyłam w efekt. 10 lekcji dla mnie, to za mało. I nie miałam takich motywacji. Nawet to napisanie życiorysu to też... gdzieś tam miałam napisany... Po prostu... no tego wszystkiego we mnie zabrakło. Brak motywacji i lenistwo do kwadratu na temat języka, bo w ogóle nie jestem leniwa. (...) [I must confess that I am a little bit more lazy than I supposed. English course had made me realise that, because I didn't want to learn at home. Maybe I didn't believe in any effect. 10 lessons for me is not enough. And I didn't have the proper motivation. Even writing that biography... I wrote something... Just... there was something missing in me. Lack of motivation and enhanced laziness toward language, because generally I'm not lazy (...)] (Interlocutor 2).*

*Ja po raz pierwszy tutaj, właśnie na tych zajęciach, spojrzałam na swoją biografię pod względem edukacyjnym. I okazało się, że całe życie się uczyłam, lubię się uczyć, no i tak mi zostanie. Jaka ta... Jak... Jaką tą ilość wiedzy jestem w stanie przyswoić, to jest inna rzecz ale po prostu lubię się uczyć. [For the first time here, during those classes, I have looked on my biography in an educational matter. And it turned out that all of my life I was learning, that I like to learn and that it's a feature which will stick with me. How much of knowledge I can learn it's another matter. It's just that I like to learn] (Interlocutor 4).*

*Znaczy... yyy... ja się na każdym takich zajęciach dowiaduję, że Ja... yyy... za mało... siebie doceniam. A właśnie słysząc jak inni... mówią o sobie... bardzo dużo właśnie co zdobyli, czego się dowiedzieli, to Ja sobie myślę: „Przecież Ja to wszystko to też znam, a... a czemu Ja tego, Ja czego nie ujęłam? Czemu Ja właśnie o tym nie napisałam? Czemu Ja się...?”. No i to jest właśnie ta dla mnie ta mała... ta mała... wartość. I mean... [I think that on every such course I appreciate myself too little. When I hear how others are speaking, what they gain or what they knew, I think to myself: I know that also, why didn't I mention that. This is what I gain, that little thing] (Interlocutor 6).*

*Konkretnie... powiem na pewno, że jeszcze muszę się wiele uczyć, i jak mówiła koleżanka, to nie wystarczy raz w tygodniu, tylko trzeba częściej zaglądać. No ale to jest nasz problem narodowy*

*z tą systematycznością. To, że tu przychodziłam, jeszcze raz powtórzę, to mnie mobilizowało do tego, niektóre słowa, niektóre zwroty... nowe zostały podawane, co starałam się przyswoić na ile je długo będę pamiętać ale od tego mam notatki. Całe życie staram się wszystko notować. Nie zawsze zaglądam ale zawsze mam gdzie [To be precise... for sure I know that I have a lot to learn and what have said my colleagues, this is not just once a week, it has to be more often. But this is our national problem if it comes to regularity. Coming here mobilised me to know some words, statements, I tried to learn them. How long I will remember them? For that I have my notes. All my life I try to note everything. Maybe not always I reach for them, but I have where to peek] (Interlocutor 7).*

### **Do you use the gained language knowledge and skills in everyday life?**

The fifth question directed to seniors, treated about the usage of new knowledge and skills they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*(...) Ja oczywiście poprzez filmy angielskie z napisami i teraz, teraz też to stosuje i wylapuje słowa. Ja je oczywiście mogę przeczytać po polsku i wiem co on, oni mówią ale fajnie, że słyszę słówko i czasem, ale nie zawsze, zapamiętuję, no bo już w tym wieku. (...) To jest pierwsza rzecz. No druga, że spróbowałam raz yyy... napisać list po angielsku do mojej siostrzenicy i to było śmiesznie bardziej niż udane, no ale... to zrobiłam. A tak nie miałam okazji, więc... Już koniec. [Of course by English films with subtitles, I use them now and I catch the words. Of course I can just read them in Polish and I know what they mean, but it's cool that I can hear some words, but I don't always remember it, because, well, at my age. (...) This is the first thing. The second one is that I tried to write a letter in English to my niece and it was more funny than well written, but I did it. No more occasions in this matter... This is the end] (Interlocutor 2).*

*(...) „katuję” kogo się da tym swoim angielskim... (...) No także yyy... od lat piszę listy po angielsku, także to mi bardzo pomaga, dlatego, że nie miałam kłopotu z pisaniem biografii. Dlatego, że ja formułuję zdania krótkie, proste i, i niestrasznie rozbudowane i nie strasznie bardzo opisowe. Także przy biografii nie miałam kłopotów” [I am torturing everybody I can with my English (...) Also, for years I have been writing letters in English, it helps me a lot, this is why I did not have any problems with writing my biography. I form short, simple and not very complex and descriptive statements. I didn't have problems with my biography] (Interlocutor 3).*

*Np. robię sobie listę zakupów po angielsku i okazuje się, że nie wiem czegoś, jak się nazywa dany produkt, to natychmiast muszę znaleźć, prawda? I już wiem. W związku z tym, to poszerza horyzonty. Filmy również oglądam w wersji oryginalnej i... co prawda są napisy ale ich nie czytam, bo zdejmuję okulary. Więc, yyy... yyy... tylko słucham yyy... wiadomości oglądam na różnych stacjach, także też ten akcent, prawda? [For example I make myself a shopping list in English, and I found out that I don't know what is the name of the product, which I must find out, right? It forces me to expand my horizons. I also watch films with original sound and... well, there are subtitles, but I don't read them because I take my glasses off. So, hmmm... hmmm.. I just listen hmmm.... to news on different stations also for the accent, right?] (Interlocutor 4).*

*Ja może tak jak dostaję jakiś produkt, czy kosmetyk, czy coś innego, i jest polski i jest... instrukcja obsługi, czy w ogóle skład po polsku, czy po angielsku, to próbuję – zaczynam od angielskiego tym razem. To jest jedna umiejętność. A druga... yyy... obiecałam sobie, że będę chodziła na spektakle, które są w języku angielskim, bo są takie w teatrach. (...) Ponieważ zajmuję się*

*kulturą tutaj w naszym Uniwersytecie i korzystam często z wyjść do teatru, więc będę teraz wyszukiwała wersji w języku angielskim, nie?* [I use those skills when I receive a product or cosmetics or something else, with Polish and English instructions, firstly I read the English. This is one skill. The second one is, that I promised myself that I will go to theatre plays in English, because there are such theaters. (...) Because I am responsible for culture in our University, and I often go out to theaters, I will search for English ones] (Interlocutor 8).

### **What did you find positive and negative during the course?. What should be changed or improved in future actions?**

The sixth question directed to seniors considered their personal opinion about what they have found as positive and negative during the course and what should be changed in future language courses. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*(...) A zalety? No zalety no to już powiedziałam na początku. (...) Tak, co wcześniej powiedzieliśmy, oczywiście. Przede wszystkim to, że się człowiek nie bał tutaj (...).* [Positives? As I said at the beginning, yes, as we said at the beginning. First of all I was not afraid here] (Interlocutor 1).

*(...) różnica poziomów nie pozwoliła mi skorzystać na tyle, ile bym chciała być może z tego lektoratu, bo ja naprawdę nie umiem, proste zdania tylko potrafię powiedzieć i to też często z pomocą, prostych słów w sumie nie mogę przypomnieć, bo już je znam. Także to dla było też... no, no i że tak krótko..., że to 10 lekcji no to też dla mnie jest wada, bo wolalabym mieć rok np. taki lektorat (...)* [(...) Differences between the levels did not permit me to gain as much as I wanted, maybe because of this course, I really couldn't. I can say only simple statements, because I do not remember the words. And also it was too short, because 10 lessons is not enough, for me it is a negative, I would like to have such courses all year] (Interlocutor 2).

*(...) Tak jak koleżanka tutaj wspomniała, uważam, że powinny być dwie grupy – dla podstawowa i dla zaawansowanych (...).* [As my colleague has said there should be two groups – for the beginners and for intermediates] (Interlocutor 3).

*O zaletach mówią wszyscy, a Ja jak zwykle... Yyy... tego typu zajęcia yyy... yyy... nie cierpią ciszy, przerw. W związku z tym, dawanie czasu na pisanie czegoś tam, jest dla mnie yyy... nie do przyjęcia. Ludzie powinni jak najwięcej mówić, jak najwięcej powtarzać. Mało tego, jak ktoś mówi, że ukończył yyy... coś tam, to drugi niech powie: „Ona ukończyła Uniwersytet”, prawda? To ćwicz, w szczególności właśnie tę grupę słabszą. Yyy... i to, i to tyle no w ramach krytykanctwa, reszta w porządku.* [Everyone is talking about positives, and me as always... Hmmm... such lectures hate silence, breaks. And because of that giving time for writing something is unacceptable. People should speak and repeat as much as they can. Furthermore, If someone is saying that he had graduated hmmm... something, then the second one should say: „He has graduated the university”, am I right? This will train especially those weaker pupils. Well, this is all the criticism, all else was alright] (Interlocutor 4).

*(...) no stanowczo właśnie takie wymieszanie yyy... poziomu znajomości języka angielskiego naprawdę, a, a ani nie był komfortowy dla tych, którzy yyy... dosyć dobrze znają angielski, ani nie był komfortowy jak słyszałam od koleżanek, dla tych którzy sobie tam właśnie słabo radzą, bo oni mieli kompleksy wobec nas, a my jakoś no trochę tak czułyśmy taki niedosyt (...).* [Well,

definitely the mixing of language skills in one group, really, this wasn't comfortable for those who know English well, and wasn't comfortable for those who are not as skilled as others, because they have complexes and we felt some kind of dissatisfaction] (Interlocutor 5).

**Tab. 4.** Focus study in Poland - English course.

Indicators	Country: Poland
new knowledge	improved
new skills	no change
social skills	no change
personal skills	improved
Usefulness	improved
general judgement	generally positive

Sources: Own compilation.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AFTER THE FOCUS STUDY IN POLAND

In the focus study it was difficult to identify a unified vision of seniors about the language course in which they have participated. We can assume on the basis of the analyzed statements, that each educational experience is judged by them as valuable. Although it is also very clear that seniors had great difficulties, when it comes to pointing out any specific exemplifications of practical importance of the conducted course. Maybe because the seniors themselves aren't capable of separating their language life experience from this particular language experience.

Alas, seniors in their opinions have pointed out such constitutive elements of language learning as sole importance of vocabulary, language practice, the need of high self-motivation for the purpose of self-learning. They also mentioned the importance of self-limitations (brain structure and efficiency of memory), connected with their age, as well as the importance of personality (openness for new contacts). And lastly, the seniors pointed out the importance of self-awareness of one's lack of knowledge.

#### ITALY

The Italian focus group numbered 18 interlocutors (4 women, 4 men, the rest wanted to hide their gender and name). Comparable to Polish group, seniors represented a mix of people who varied in terms of level of skill and knowledge in usage of English language. The focus study was concentrated on the same problems as in Poland. Thus, the structure of presentation of the research material is the same in the Polish study.

**Do you think that participation in the English course helped you gain new knowledge?**

The first question directed to the seniors, considered their personal opinion about new knowledge they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*For me it was very exciting to take part in the workshop. I wanted to learn, to understand what I was reading, to translate the biography by myself. I spent a lot of time translating the biography, but I'm happy to have done it (Giovanni).*

*I liked the course, I learned things I did not know (Interlocutor 1).*

**Do you think, that participation in the English course helped you gain new skills? What skills?;**

The second question directed to seniors, considered their personal opinion about what new skills they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*I like English language, I have worked hard to learn. I translated the biography utilizing google and my dictionary (Gabiella).*

*For me it is difficult to memorize, I use Duolingo (Interlocutor 2).*

*My grandson gave me his books to study and a CD, so I can hear the right pronunciation (Interlocutor 3).*

*I tried to study English several times. Now I'm able to speak a little more. I wrote my autobiography working alone. I loved staying in the group, during all the workshops (Anna).*

*I'm studying a lot to improve my skills. The major difficulty is the pronunciation. Many words have multiple meanings. I always look forward with pleasure the English language workshop (Lidia).*

**Do you think, that participation in the English course helped you develop new social skills or competences? What skills and competences?;**

The third question directed to seniors, considered their personal opinion about what new skills they gained after ending the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*It has been a pleasure to attend the workshops together. I had difficulty in remembering foreign words. Maybe my memory is a little rusty. To translate my autobiography I was supported by my classmates (Paolo).*

*I make so much effort to memorize new words, but I like being with my group of peers (Interlocutor 4).*

*It was an interesting experience, I tried to help people who had some difficulties with the translation. Some activities were a bit difficult (fill out the gaps) (Interlocutor 5).*

*Being together, teaches us to live better (Interlocutor 6).*

*There was a lot of solidarity in the group, we helped each other (Interlocutor 7).*

**Did you find out something new about yourself thanks to the English course. What did you find out?**

The fourth question directed to seniors, treated about their personal opinion about what new knowledge they gained about themselves during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who participated in the focus group:

*I tried to think in a different language, but for me it was difficult (Lucia).*

*I'm studying Spanish too; I have the same difficulties when I try to memorize new words (Interlocutor 8).*

*I studied English at school, this workshop allowed me to implement my level, having fun. Unfortunately I forgot many words (Interlocutor 9).*

**Do you use the gained language knowledge and skills in everyday life?**

The fifth question directed to seniors, concerned the usage of new knowledge and skills they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*I find it difficult to pronounce the language. For the translation of the biography, I was helped by my wife (Dino).*

*I'm using what I have learned to talk to my Australian relatives (Interlocutor 10).*

**What did you found positive and negative during the course? What should be changed or improved in future actions?**

The sixth question directed to seniors considered their personal opinion about what they have found as positive and negative during the course and what should be changed in future language courses. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*This experience was very positive. Now I can understand more. I can translate some things. It was a positive experience because I like to stay with other peers (Interlocutor 11).*

*The group is composed of people with whom I found myself very comfortable. The group was smooth and stimulating. I tend to confuse the pronunciation with the German language. I really enjoyed it. Together we're fine (Carla).*

**Tab. 5.** Focus study in Italy - English course.

Indicators	Country: Italy
new knowledge	no change
new skills	improved
social skills	improved
personal skills	no change
usefulness	no change
general judgement	positive

Sources: Own compilation.



## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AFTER THE FOCUS STUDY IN ITALY

In general it can be noted that in Italian focus group interlocutors have pointed out that from broad range of competences the most distinctive ones were new language skills and social skills. There have been little complaints about the course itself so we could assume that positive view of the course prevailed among the interlocutors. It is easy to distinguish that for the Italian seniors the possibility of contact with other people (to help each other and to support one another) was the most important in the course.

## UNITED KINGDOM

English focus group, was a mixed-level group if it comes to personal language skills and language knowledge of the participants. The integral condition of the group was diagnosed by the participants themselves, who were describing it as follows:

*Our group had very mixed levels, most of us have been living in the UK for most of our life and some for several years. However we have mainly socialized primarily within our own community, speaking our native language and had very little chance to practice English. As a result even after many years living in England we had many gaps in terms of grammar, spelling etc.*

Also it should be noted that English focus group, have created other type of material for further analysis. Groups from Poland and Italy were moderated by researchers to encourage participants to create individual statements in which they were including their personal judgements, feeling, thoughts and needs. The English group on the contrary have focused not on individual statements but on collective ones. So statements which are presented in the text, represent the collective point of view of participants who were engaged in the focus study.

It should be also noted, that there has been no evidence of how many participants have been creating their collective statements. There was also no information about the age and gender of the participants engaged in the focus study.

### **Do you think that participation in the English course helped you gain new knowledge?**

The first question directed to the seniors, considered their personal opinion about new knowledge they gained during the language course. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*The course helped us with filling gaps like using verbs correctly, adverbs as well as conversational phrases.*

### **Did you find out something new about yourself thanks to the English course. What did you find out?**

The forth question directed to seniors, concerned their personal opinion about what new knowledge they gained about themselves during the language course.

Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*Many of us already knew the basic grammar, nouns and phrases, but quite a few spoke very little English.*

*We think that a lot of people really needed more time to learn grammar, as a lot of us can talk a little bit but really struggle to read and write.*

**What did you found positive and negative during the course?. What should be changed or improved in future actions?**

The sixth question directed to seniors considered their personal opinion about what they have found as positive and negative during the course and what should be changed in future language courses. Here are some examples of statements of seniors who had participated in the focus group:

*The games were a fun way to put into practice what we were learning.*

*Some of the English exercises where we had to fill in the words, were a little too advanced for our level, but we really enjoyed learning through games, with the famous person and the board game where we had to talk about ourselves.*

*Also a lot of exercises were aimed at intermediate level speakers.*

There are no statements which could have been classified to 2nd, 3rd and 5th problematic questions of the focus studies. Therefore, we assume that those specific issues have not been a topic of discussion for some reasons.

**Tab. 6.** Focus study in United Kingdom - English course.

Indicators	Country: United Kingdom
new knowledge	No change
new skills	Improved
social skills	No change
personal skills	Improved
usefulness	No change
general judgement	Positive

Sources: Own compilation.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AFTER THE FOCUS STUDY IN UNITED KINGDOM

It is possible to distinguish a positive narration about the conducted language course in the collective opinion of the UK interlocutors. The following improvements have been pointed out: new language skills (words, phrases) and personal skills (awareness of one's lack of knowledge). In the aforementioned statements of the interlocutors, the technical context of language learning in which



the most important were abilities to create proper language in terms of grammar dominated.

## LANGUAGE COURSE SUMMARY - INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

Basing on the analyzed narrations it was possible to distinguish national differences between opinions of the participants of the KEY project in the aspects of language learning. The summary of participants from each organization is presented in Table 4.

**Tab. 7.** Focus study summary - international comparison of focus studies in all organizations involved in the KEY Project.

	Poland	Italy	UK
new skills	improved	no change	no change
new knowledge	no change	improved	improved
social skills	no change	improved	no change
personal skills	improved	no change	improved
usefulness	improved	no change	no change
general judgement	generally positive	generally positive	generally positive

Sources: Own compilation.

Generally in the narrations about the course, there has been dominating positive opinion about the course. Although in seemingly uniform vision, there have been noticeable different opinions about the most valued elements of the course. Polish interlocutors, because of their focus on their profits and practical orientation for the usage of new knowledge, can be described as egocentric and pragmatic pupils. Italian interlocutors, because they point out the importance of the other learners, can be classified as socially orientated. And lastly, the representatives from the United Kingdom, because they pointed out that they have low lexical and grammatical competences, have been classified as technically orientated.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

It is clear that in each group there were statements which were positive and negative. Some of the positive and negative statements were common for some of the groups, some were not. The reasons which could moderate the reception of the educational process, are classical variables that create the technological base of every educational process. These are: methods of learning, technical preparation, the profile of students, the profile of teachers and random events (which cannot be foreseen thus they are uncontrollable, thus can not be scientifically verified).

Because the method and techniques of work were homogenous, the responsibility for created differences lay in profile of the students, profile of the teachers and random events. The first variable, the profile of the students, can be decoded by the most important feature of all students: their knowledge, experience and ambition. If they are shared among the group, we can say that the groups of students is educationally homogenous, if opposite, they are heterogeneous.

From the technical point of view, very important was the heterogeneous level of language knowledge and language skills of the participants engaged in the language course in the KEY project. The mentioned variable can be important, because the same educational experience can vary under the influence of the cultural capital worked out by the individual person. That explains the differences in opinion of the interlocutors, about the level of the course itself, where about the same course can be found statements about rewarding and unsatisfactory level of conducted courses.

From the methodological point of view, heterogeneous level of participants, was a very good prism for more critical opinions about the course itself. In the perspective of universalization of teaching methods, due to the generally positive opinions, conducted courses have been successful and are a good base for further improvement in the future.

The national differences are also very interesting, because they reveal cultural and social features of seniors. Thus it can be assumed that these differences were the basis of varied expectations. Therefore European seniors can not be treated uniformly when it comes to language learning needs, thus every educational programme must consider cultural and social differences.

A variable which was not explored during the study was the profile of the teacher. That was a conscious methodological decision and was a logical consequence of theoretical approach of the authors. In that approach there was the assumption, that standardized methods and techniques of working with students will eliminate such factors as individual profile of the teachers (unique features). Maybe it is a trail worth exploration in the future, also through comparative studies.

## CONCLUSIONS

The created language learning process was an interesting phenomenon of study. The learning process was unified on the organisational level, but was very individually received, which was noticeable on national levels of the groups.

## ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION OF SENIORS. RESULTS FROM ICT WORKSHOPS – KEY PROJECT

ILONA ZAKOWICZ

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
ilona.zakowicz@uni.wroc.pl

*“Learning is more effective when it is fun”  
Peter Kline*

The paper discusses the results obtained from computer workshops and focus group research during the development of „Key competencies for Lifelong Learning in education of seniors” Project (KEY). The main purpose of these workshops was to teach seniors how to create and manage an internet blog, which was achieved and followed by several “senior” blogs from Poland, Italy and the United Kingdom.

A dynamic development of new information and communication technologies makes digital skills one of the key competencies and priorities in education of seniors. The ability to surf on the internet, to use computer, mobile phone or cash machine facilitates the social inclusion of seniors prevents the marginalization of this group. In times when the European societies are ageing very quickly, all the undertakings aimed at improving seniors’ quality of life should be considered a priority. No wonder then that the number of ICT educational courses, workshops, training and projects for seniors is constantly growing – as is the percentage of 60+ internet users.

### ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION OF SENIORS

The results of Megapanel PBI/Gemius research shows that the number of older users of computer or internet (aged 55 and over) grows every year. In 2005 they constituted only 4% of a total number of internet users, but in 2015 it was already

a 14%<sup>2</sup>. Explaining this noticeable growth in the number of “e-seniors” we should pay particular attention to all the activities preventing digital marginalization of the older people – educational projects (local and international), computer workshops conducted by the Universities of the Third Age, libraries, Academies and Senior’s Clubs. There has also been an increase in the number of ONG, institutions and companies offering ICT courses for seniors. We might assume then that the dynamic growth in the number of seniors interested in modern technologies has been followed by a growth in particular educational offers. In the result, the number of e-seniors is still growing and with it an interest in new information and communication technologies.

New technologies, as Jacques Delors points out, *improve access to the new areas of non-formal education* (Delors 1998, p. 64), hence all the educational initiatives fighting against digital marginalization of the elders should be considered a priority in seniors learning. The attained skills and abilities allow a constant gaining of knowledge and reflect the idea of whole life learning. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital skills are a must, since they help us to manage in a modern, complicated world. Why should those skills be a priority? Because:

- They allow enhancement and updating of one’s knowledge in the fast changing world
- Help in better understanding of cultural, social and economic changes
- Help in personal development, also in finding new hobbies and passions
- Facilitate the adaptation into the digital society
- Minimize the feeling of social inadequacy
- Allow change in the social perception of elders by overcoming the prejudicial stereotypes
- Help in preserving personal activity and self-reliance
- Allow the usage of new technologies for personal learning purposes
- Facilitate the interpersonal communication – receiving information and talking without space or time limitations
- Enhance critical thinking and making personal judgments and opinions.

As Delors points out, “education must simultaneously provide maps of a complex world in constant turmoil and the compass that will enable people to find their way in it” (Delors, p. 85). Providing educational guide points has a particular importance in the case of the older people, who often feel socially inadequate. The development of new technologies has changed our reality diametrically. Since, to understand the modern world, seniors are “forced” to develop their digital skills and competencies if they are to follow social changes. This point of view was emphasized several times by the seniors – their opinions are gathered in the following part of this article.

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2 *Poles in the internet. What has changed through the last 18 years?* <https://www.gemius.pl/wydawcy-aktualnosci/polacy-w-sieci-co-sie-zmienilo-przez-18-lat.html>

## ICT WORKSHOPS

### – ASSUMPTIONS, OBJECTIVES, METHODS AND RUNDOWN

Computer workshops were the last of three parts of the KEY project. Its main objective was to teach a group of seniors how to create and handle a blog. In the course of 10 meetings (each one 90 minutes long) the group learnt to create and handle a personal blog and how to find and comment on other blogs on the internet. The training objective was to show the older people all the advantages that the digital skills give – especially a computer and mobile phone usage. Connection to the internet allows the elderly to make their own blogs and thus help in maintaining memories by writing diaries or biographies. Seniors could decide by themselves how their blogs would look and what information they would contain, thus the blogs are very diverse, but they are mostly about their owners passions, hobbies and biographies.

The ICT workshops were conducted simultaneously in three countries: Poland, the United Kingdom and Italy, between January and May 2016. Each consisted of 10 meetings, each one 90 minutes long. The participants were elderly people aged 60 and over, with basic and sometimes advanced knowledge about the usage of a computer connected to the internet. This knowledge was a basis for more advanced tasks, like managing a blog. Every group had a different number of participants – Poland: 15 persons, Italy: 18 and the United Kingdom: 10 persons.

The main objectives of teachers and animators were as follows:

- React to social digital exclusion
- Show to the participants opportunities that the modern technologies create
- Inspire the elderly to self-study using new technologies
- Developing digital skills and competencies
- Whet the appetite for participation in digital society by creating a blog

The ICT workshops were divided into two parts. The first one concentrated on creating and handling a blog. The second part was a focus group research - the participants were asked questions about the importance of new technologies in education of seniors and their feelings concerning the meetings.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPUTER WORKSHOPS AND METHODS USED

The ICT workshops were planned to be realized and ended by the participants at the same level. The program of the workshops was the same for each country. During these meetings the coordinators were using the same methods: lecture, discussion, presentation, individual consultations. The participants from Poland got some additional materials, such as printed instructions for changing blog setup or posting a comment. The group from Wroclaw's U3A had some homework to do as well, which was later verified by the teacher (her suggestions posted in the pupil's blog comments). Persons having difficulties during the workshops could get some advice from their teacher via email – those consultations became very popular among the participants.

## ICT WORKSHOPS' RANGE OF TOPICS

**Tab. 8.** What the seniors have been taught during the ICT workshops.

What the seniors were taught during the ICT workshops	
1.	What is a blog, what can it contain, how to find other blogs on the internet, how to get an inspiration for own blog
2.	How to create a blog and become a blogger
3.	How to log into the gmail account, send and receive emails, use attachments
4.	How to find and use some of the Google Tools, like Google Translator, Google+, Google Cloud Disc, Blogger.
5.	How to adjust the blog setup to one's own preferences (layout)
6.	How to write a post, edit it and publish
7.	How to search photos and put them on a blog
8.	How to take photos using mobile phone and post them on a blog
9.	How to use graphic design software like Picasa and PhotoFancy; photo editing, saving and posting on a blog
10.	How to post on a blog the biography written during the second part of KEY Project
11.	How to find other participants blogs and put a comment

Sources: Own compilation.

## FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH – DEVELOPMENT AND RESULTS

The ICT workshops were conducted simultaneously in three countries: Poland, the United Kingdom and Italy. Their participants answered the questions regarding training's advantages and disadvantages, also learning difficulties. They provided opinions about the importance of new technologies in education of seniors and the role that international projects like KEY play in the increase of the older people's quality of life.

## POLAND

In the focus group research 13 persons participated, responding to questions about the quality and course of workshops, importance of the new technologies in education of seniors, blog creation lessons and their expectation about teaching methods. Some of their answers are presented in the following part of the article.

**Question 1.**

**What is your opinion about the third part of the KEY project, i.e. computer workshops?**

- *Nauczyłam się dużo. Pierwsza rzecz to obrabianie zdjęć z którymi i tak w dalszym ciągu walczę. Nauczyłam się prowadzić bloga [I have learnt a lot. The most important for me was the photo editing with which I still have some difficulties. I learnt how to make a blog].*
- *Wykorzystam te zajęcia które tutaj były do powiedzenia działalności na temat kultury w naszej sekcji w UTW [I will use my new skills to improve our U3A culture section's activities].*
- *Dla mnie trzecia część projektu była najciekawsza. Może dlatego, że ja, że mnie to fascynuje. Ja bardzo lubię pracować w komputerze, no i przede wszystkim lubię pisać. Robiłam to w zeszytach, na kartkach. Może nie zdążyłam jeszcze tego przelać na bloga, nigdy nie przypuszczałam, że się nauczę pisać bloga. Nie wiedziałam w ogóle z której strony się to je. Więc teraz będę mogła sobie te swoje przemyślenia, te wspomnienia przenieść właśnie na bloga. Dlatego mój blog jest pod tytułem »Przeminęło z wiatrem«. Dziękuję bardzo i to była dla mnie, też bym, też powiedziałabym to, co Jola, że chciałabym żeby jeszcze z rok [As for me, the third part was the most interesting one. Maybe because the subject fascinates me. I do like to work on the computer, and above all, I love writing. I did in notebooks and on paper sheets before. I had never written it my blog; never thought I would learn how to do it. I did not know how to do it, for me it was an enigma. Now I could commit to blog all my memories and reflections. That is why I called my blog 'Gone with the Wind'. Thank you for making it possible – I would like to tell you the same thing Jola said – hope it would last one more year].*

**Question 2.**

**What in your opinion could be the improvements in the workshops' training methods?**

- *Wypuścić wcześniej tych „kumatych”, że tak powiem w cudzysłowie. Natomiast parę razy zostawić takich opornych jak ja i tam żeby dołączyli, żeby pozbawić ich kompleksów [Make separate groups for the more skillful participants and the "recalcitrant's" like me, so we could work together without feeling uneasy].*
- *Skrócić każde zajecie a dodać spotkanie indywidualne. Powiedzmy jednego dnia jak ktoś inny by się umówił, innego ktoś inny. Bo każdy z nas ma jakieś inne problemy albo inne potrzeby (...) [Make the meetings shorter and add some individual classes. Let's say, one day for one person, another day for the other one, since each one of us has different problems and needs (...)].*
- *Można by zaplanować siedem zajęć takich stricte programowych, a trzy to już są tylko korepetycje [There could be seven classes that stick to the program strictly and three last meetings maybe individual ones – review and counsel].*
- *Może grupy powinny być mniejsze? [Maybe the groups should be smaller?].*

**Question 3.**

**What do you think about the teachers' performance?**

- *Najbardziej mi się podobały też te trzecie zajęcia, komputerowe. [...] To że pani nam dała to wszystko jednak wydrukowane i że ja mogę w to zerkać to dla mnie jest ważne. Ja się w ten*



sposób właśnie nauczyłam się wklejać zdjęcia, bo ja zerkam w to i po kolei mam. Bo pani przynosiła to wydrukowane. Jakby czułam pani obecność ciągle gdzieś tam na moim blogu, że pani... byłyśmy w jakiejś takiej korespondencji e-mailowej. Ja się tu meldowałam, a coś tam zrobiłam, a coś... Jakby czułam opiekę nad tym, co robię i to mmm to wyraźnie było widać. [I enjoyed the third class most – the one regarding computer usage. (...) I appreciate that you gave us all the instructions printed so we could have a look at it when needed, it was important for me. This helped me to learn how to post a photo – I was glancing at the instruction and got it all done step by step without problems. I felt your presence all the time – we were emailing each other and that helped a lot, I felt cared for].

- Ważne w tym wszystkim było, że na te zajęcia chcieli się przyjść. Że Pani stworzyła też tu taką atmosferę, że sie z przyjemnością szło. Nie bałam się do kogoś zadzwonić, czy poprosić, więc dla mnie to naprawdę wielka przyjemność. I myślę, że jestem wyrazicielem całej grupy. [Those lessons were attractive, you wanted to come – that was important for me. You created a friendly atmosphere, people attended those meetings with pleasure. I was not afraid to call somebody or ask for help, so I enjoyed it a lot. I think I am speaking for all participants now].

#### Question 4.

**Do you think the older people would enjoy having and using blogs to communicate?**

- To wszystko zależy kto co lubi. Więc ja ogólnie powiem jakby w imieniu wszystkich, że tak, że jest wiele osób które są tym zainteresowane i to powinno być kontynuowane [It all depends on what you like. The general opinion among the participants is that there are a lot people interested in such an activity and it should be continued].

- Nawet jeżeli nie będzie się prowadziło tego bloga, to warto brać, warto wiedzieć... [Even if you will not update your blog, it is worth to know, take the opportunity to learn].

- Tak. Też chciałem powiedzieć, że wato znać. Dobrze, że się tego nauczyliśmy czy poznaliśmy [Yes, indeed. I admit that it is good to know. It is good that we have learnt all this].

- Ja tam humanistycznej weny nie mam ale chętnie poczytam koleżanek i kolegów [I am certainly not a poet, but I will enjoy reading my colleagues blogs].

#### Question 5.

**What did you enjoy the most? What will you remember? What do you think was your greatest success or achievement during the ICT workshops?**

- Ja zdecydowałam, że będę dalej pisać, czego nie robiłam całe życie mimo że byłam dziennikarką [I have decided to keep on writing – something I have not done in all my life, in spite of being a journalist].

- Ja pewnie będę częściej zaglądała do tych programów komputerowych. A jak nie to będę chodziła na jakieś warsztaty żeby się bardziej zastanović [I would probably use the computer programs more often. Even if not, I will attend some other computer classes to get to know it better].

- Ja będę pisać bloga chociaż tak tematycznie to nie wiem o czym. Ale myślę że powinnam to robić choćby ze względu na to żeby nie zapomnieć tego czego się nauczyłam. Oprócz tego rozpoczęłam uczestnictwo w zajęciach komputerowych multimedialnych. Bo wyraźnie



*czegoś mi brakowało* [I will write a blog, though I do not know yet about what and if I could do it on a daily basis. Nevertheless, I believe I should do it to remember all I have learnt so far. Besides, I have already started further computer classes. I felt like I needed it].

*- Na pewno będę się zajmowała dalej obróbką zdjęć. Wystąpiłam już koleżance kartkę urodzinową, z tej że obrobionego zdjęcia, z własnego zdjęcia. Także bardzo dziękuję za wszystko co tu otrzymałam* [I would keep on editing photos, that's for sure. I sent a birthday card to my friend using an edited photo. I am grateful for all I was taught here].

*- Cały projekt uważam za fajny. Pomysł niezły. Trzecia część uważam cały czas najlepsza. Czy bloga będę pisał? Nie jestem pewny* [I think all the project, its idea, is quite cool. I enjoyed the third part most. Will I write a blog? I am not sure].

*- Ja odniosłam właśnie największe korzyści z tego ostatniego. Chociaż bardzo dużo już takich różnych kursów komputerowych mam za sobą ale tu jednak się czegoś nowego nauczyłam. I no właśnie umiejętność zakładania bloga była mi potrzebna bo ja się zadeklarowałam że właśnie dla tam towarzystwa w którym działałam, stowarzyszenia właśnie się podejmę prowadzenie bloga* [The last, third part gave me the most pleasure. Although I had already attended some computer classes before, here I learnt some new things. The ability to create a blog means a lot to me, because I promised in my organization, in my society, that I will create and handle one].

## SUMMARY

The participants of the ICT workshops, conducted by KEY project teachers, stressed some important aspects regarding the education of seniors. First of all, in their opinion computer workshops convinced them of the importance the modern technologies might have in their personal education. They realized how much they had already known and what could still be improved. They also learnt what new opportunities a computer with the internet connection gives them. Second, the participants pointed out the significance of educational materials provided by the teacher, such as printed step-by-step instructions, notes and copies. They allowed the seniors to refresh their memories and review all the information received during the meetings, having a positive impact in fixing it in their minds. Last but not least, the participants enjoyed a friendly atmosphere created by the teacher – it helped them a lot to relax and gain the computer knowledge faster and in more efficient way. Moreover, the seniors attended the classes with pleasure and did their homework systematically and with optimism. Finally, the workshops taught their participants how to use a computer with internet connection more efficiently – in some cases having a blog and editing photos has become a new passion.

In all, the seniors found all the project very useful. They perceived its educational value which they hope to develop. It also allowed them to gain new hobbies and passions. The participants are very glad to have taken part in the project, developing their communication skills and learnt some English.

## THE UNITED KINGDOM

In the focus group research 10 persons participated. Its results are as follows:

*The computer competency levels of the learners was fairly low and in a few cases non existent. This presented quite a challenge for both the learners and the teacher, yet the group worked hard and engaged with each topic with enthusiasm and dedication, successfully completing the program. The seniors also showed an interest in joining any further training available1.*

The seniors noticed all the positive and negative aspects of the project, especially a strong differentiation in computer competency levels, broad spectrum of useful information and difficulties in maintaining a blog:

*- Some of us never used a computer before, and the rest of the group had very basic skills. The course was a great help especially with google mail, we were taught how to sign up to Gmail, send and receive emails, also changing the text and attaching photos and documents. We also found very useful using Google Docs, good practice for typing and learning how to use the keyboard, even if it was sometimes difficult.*

*- Writing about ourselves for the Blog was not easy, when you have done so much it's hard to choose what part to write about. But also writing in general, the majority of our group had very little experience typing and it would have been good to learn it a bit more before. In general as we had little to no experience with computers a longer course where we could learn more of the general functions, would have been a huge help for the rest of the program.*

### SUMMARY

The participants of the ICT workshops in the Great Britain had mostly very basic computer knowledge and skills. However, in spite of difficulties they encountered during the meetings, they realized the program with enthusiasm and interest. They found all the offered activities very useful. At the same time, it proved to be very a challenging time for most of them, as they must show at least basic computer skills. The lack of seniors' competencies made it also more difficult for the teacher to perform. Nonetheless the participants were inspired by the opportunities the modern technologies give them and admitted that the workshops should last longer to enable filling up the gaps in their ICT competencies.

## ITALY

In the focus group research 18 persons participated. Their opinions about the ICT workshops are as follows:

*- The support of the other students and tutors was very important. All were willing to help me, telling me what to do if I did not remember.*

*- When I forget something, my colleagues refresh my memory.*

*- The tutors and the course colleagues have been very supportive.*

*- For me it was very useful to learn the use of the iPhone.*

- *The course was very interesting and useful.*
- *Each lesson began with a review of the previous lesson.*
- *For me the use of the blog was really interesting.*
- *The English course was more difficult than the ICT one.*
- *I learned many new things, which I can put into practice.*
- *Being together is very enriching, the problem was that everyone had a different PC.*
- *It was fun and interesting. I worked on all topics. I enjoyed socializing.*
- *The blog is very interesting, I like to write. Sometimes I need the help of my teammates when I forget something.*
- *I learned different things, I had the opportunity to meet new people. For me it is essential to know new technology, to navigate, to communicate, to be up to date. It was fun and interesting. I worked on all topics. I enjoyed socializing.*

### SUMMARY

The Italian seniors paid a particular attention to the friendly atmosphere they experienced during those meetings. The teacher helped them a lot by motivating and inspiring in their times of doubts, but the participants helped each other as well. Before every class there was a review of the previous lessons which helped the seniors in memorizing all the newly gained skills and proved to be a great advantage. The participants appreciated a broad spectrum of useful knowledge they were taught. They found lessons about using the smartphones especially interesting, but enjoyed the blog creation classes and email correspondence as well. The seniors also valued the opportunity to meet new people and spend time together.

### RESULTS SUMMARY AND REVIEW

The focus group research was conducted simultaneously in three countries (Poland, Italy and the United Kingdom). The groups varied in number of participants, competencies level and the contents of lessons. As a result, each group, although theoretically realizing the same program, had been provided with the ICT skills level currently available. In spite of these differences, the results are optimistic. The participants declared that the KEY project has a great educational potential and will certainly improve the older people's quality of life. They wished to join further meetings if the project would be continued.

### PARTICIPANTS OPINIONS ABOUT THE THIRD STAGE OF THE KEY PROJECT – POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

One of the difficulties encountered and promptly noticed by the seniors was the differentiation of competencies level inside each group, which made whole learning process more challenging for both the teachers and the participants. The

seniors claimed as well that the project could last longer and the groups should be smaller. They also suggested that some individual, advisory meetings should be added to the computer classes to help resolve particular problems of each participant.

## PARTICIPANTS OPINIONS ABOUT THE THIRD STAGE OF THE KEY PROJECT – STRONG POINTS

The participants appreciated the broad spectrum of skills and competencies they were taught: creation of blog on the web, using smartphones, photo edition and graphic software classes, using of Google Tools and email accounts. The seniors found them very useful in their everyday life – recently gained skills will allow them to use their computers more efficiently, but also communicate with other people, read and comment other blogs and act for the seniors, e.g. in the institutions they work for. The KEY project enabled its participants to meet new people and integrate with their age mates. It was also a platform for knowledge exchange – the seniors could help, motivate and inspire each other. The project verified the computer knowledge of the participants as well. They found out what they had already known and how much was still to be learnt. They were inspired and encouraged to further education by joining other workshops, for instance. We may risk an assumption that all the activities and objectives planned for this stage of the KEY project have been met and realized at a satisfactory level.

## CONCLUSIONS

When preparing the workshops for seniors we must bear in mind some fundamental aspects. First of all, the participants in respective groups should present similar skills and competencies – it could be verified by conducting preliminary tests concerning personal knowledge about the modern technologies. Secondly, the classroom should be well equipped – all the computers have to be of the same type. A teacher should decide what kind of computers will be used – laptop or PC, what model and operating system. These preparations make it easier for the teacher and the participants to gain knowledge and take advantage of presentations and educational materials.

A friendly atmosphere created during the classes is also very important. A teacher should not criticize his pupils, but motivate and inspire them, helping them overcome the difficulties and paying attention to their needs. The group should be constantly taken care of by integrating its members, minimalizing the uneasiness and stress that the learning process inevitably causes – that may be achieved for instance by avoiding conflicts amongst the group members. It should be made possible for the seniors to reach for the knowledge already gained, to review their skills and share their competencies with other participants.

Conducting ICT workshops is not an easy task. It requires a broad knowledge of the subject and professional skills from the teacher. The person who realizes projects of this kind should therefore be prepared for the education of seniors and have a professional knowledge of pedagogics, psychology and gerontology. This knowledge will allow the teacher to perceive the abilities, limitations and expectations of the older people that should be taken into account when teaching about the opportunities that the modern technologies create. It is always worth making an effort offering the seniors some additional workshops that may counteract their social exclusion or marginalization. The KEY project improved its participants' quality of life and increased their self-esteem. It allowed the seniors to gain new skills useful in their everyday life activities.

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## THE KEY PROJECT IN OPINION OF TRAINERS

AMELIA FIORILLO

Kairos Europe (United Kingdom)  
amelia@kairoseurope.co.uk

The Erasmus+ “**Key competencies for Lifelong Learning in education of seniors**” project has given a chance to older people from 3 different countries Italy, Poland and the United Kingdom to gain fundamental skills in Interpersonal communication, English and ICT.

The training activities carried out were a great way both for older learners and their trainers to apply and implement new teaching/learning methods and also to promote interaction among the people participating in the training, and last but not least to develop long-lasting friendships.

The training activities were a challenge for the trainers of the 3 countries participating in the project and below follows a short feedback of their experience and some suggestions for future action.

### ITALY

The group of Italian trainers that took part in the program was actually satisfied with the overall project, but they highlighted several little things:

- the difficulties in maintaining the concentration of senior learners during the workshop,
- the different level of English knowledge that also made grammar and the construction of sentences difficult,
- and the complexity of some of the examples proposed in class.

In particular, lesson no.7, which was thought up as a speaking game, was disliked by most, as well as the topic about irregular verbs.

**On a positive note**, the guidance given during the workshop was really helpful and the most interesting insight was being able to build a discussion together about different arguments and compare each person’s experience with the others in an international environment.

#### **What to do to improve the product?**

1. try to have a less varied program,
2. try to create an intergenerational lesson,
3. and have a higher level of English.

## UNITED KINGDOM

The UK trainer who took part in the program believes the course was effective at introducing new tools and technology, especially how to use emails, learn to type on a keyboard and how to use Google Translate.

**The difficulties encountered were due to:**

- the very low experience with computers of senior learners,
- whereas the speed in which the course was structured wasn't the best for them
- and also one to one assistance was often needed.

The idea of having to deal with smartphones in class was a little disconcerting as most of the senior learners didn't have one and were reluctant to use it; furthermore, the process of writing a blog was a bit complicated probably because of their low experience with a keyboard and a general distrust of anything published online.

**On a positive note,** the lessons about learning how to use some of the Google tools, especially Google Docs and Google Translate, were the most useful for the learners. They also expressed a good amount of interest in the photo editing topic, for example using Google Picasa.

In the end the workshop was really enjoyable and helpful for senior learners to have their first hands on experience with computers and the internet in general.

**The only things to bear in mind for the next workshop** will be the more time dedicated to the first approach, introducing the computer work environment to the learners, and articulation of the program of the course in order to have less topics and concentrate just on things that matter the most like typing on a keyboard and working with emails.

## POLAND

The group of Poland trainers that took part in the program was satisfied overall with the project, but they highlighted a few points, such as:

- some difficulties in maintaining discipline with regard to time and staying on topic.

The learners didn't really enjoy some activities such as the translation of their biographies and the creation of a personal blog, and initially it was hard for them to exchange experiences with each other.

The most interesting topics that excited the senior learners were speaking of the English language, getting new computer skills (for example, making photos with their phones, editing and sending them on the web), and also talking about their experiences and the "emotional intelligence" theme.

The guidance given during the workshop was helpful and even though the learners had different levels of computer knowledge and English proficiency, it appeared to be irrelevant during the course and everyone was able to accomplish the tasks.

**What to do to improve the product?** The workshops should last longer and there should be some sort of advisory activities for blogs creation and maybe provision of more games and fun activities.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

Finally here are some useful hints and tips that teachers/trainers should take account of when teaching older people:

- **Older learners often face:**
- **Vision problems so making sure that for all the presentations, handouts and workshop material** an easy-to-read font and a type size no smaller than 12 points is used so the material can be comfortably read. Be also aware that older people might need a bright light in the classroom therefore position the learners so that light does not hit the reading material directly, causing glare.
- **Hearing problems** To teach a patient who is hard of hearing, sit facing her so that your mouth is about even with her eyes. Position yourself close to the stronger ear. Speak clearly and at a moderate pace. Older people often lip-read as a substitute for diminished hearing. Avoid letting the volume of your voice fall off at the end of sentences or phrases, but don't shout. Also, eliminate distractions and background noise as much as possible. To determine if the learner has understood your key points, ask her questions about what you just taught. If you don't get an answer just repeat slowly.
- **Allow ample time for processing.** Older people may need more time to process what the teacher says, so don't hurry and don't launch into long lists. It's important to divide what the teacher wants to say into several smaller, discrete messages.
- Before starting the course, the teacher should be conscious of the learners' **levels of anxiety, fatigue, and pain** – all of which can impair learning.
- Finally bear in mind that **having a teacher's assistant can be very useful** (or even necessary) both for the teacher and for the learners as most of the time older people need a one-to-one assistance when studying new topics and doing exercises.



## LEARNING IN OLD AGE TO DEVELOP COMPETENCES - RESULTS OF A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

BARBARA BASCHIERA

University Ca' Foscari of Venice (Italy)

**barbara-baschiera@unive.it**

**barbara.baschiera@um.edu.mt**

That older adults might be priority groups for organised learning, inside and outside the formal education system, goes strongly against the social convention governed by the idea that education is something reserved for the young. It also goes strongly against the fact that education is seen in terms of economic discourse, as 'consumption', as 'investment', and the calculation of associated 'returns' Desjardins.

Our key programme was designed taking into account the fact that seniors actively learn when aiming at reaching greater autonomy, at developing skills for empowerment EUBIA (2010), at learning about health and ageing, learning about the changing society and environment, coming back to missed education, passing time constructively, keeping the mind and body active, increasing social contacts and networks, understanding life's meaning, sharing knowledge and experience, tutoring fellow seniors, self-expression and creativity, learning as an enjoyable activity in its own right, and social and political engagement (Istance, 2015).

The learning challenge for our programme was that to meet many of these, offering older adults participants three face-to-face workshops, aimed at developing KC2 Communication in foreign languages, KC4 Digital competence, KC6 Social and civic competences.

This chapter describes and evaluates the effects of this training program for senior citizens.

### PARTICIPANTS AND INSTRUMENTS

The University of Third Age - Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica based in Wroclaw, the "AGORA' - Laboratorio Terza Età Protagonista" Association and the "London based Italian community centre for older people" accepted our proposal to carry out the recruiting among their members during the month of February 2015. They

informed their seniors about the key project through newsletter, posters inside the centres, personal invitations and word of mouth.

The criteria for the inclusion of the participants in the project were as follows: (a) being 60 or more, b) regarding ITC skills, the ability of logging on to their e-mail account, c) regarding English level, they would have been able to tell something about themselves and explain why they wanted to take part in Key project, d) willingness to commit to full participation in the training program (three sessions, distributed over 30 weekly sessions of two hours each), e) having signed an Informed Consent form.

In Poland 16 seniors were selected out of 20; in Italy 25 out of 40; in England 16.

During the selection, the participants were asked to fill in a pre-test (Table 1.) aimed at collecting data that would have been compared with the results post the test.

A pilot study was conducted with a questionnaire among 15 seniors, who were excluded from the main study. For both the pilot and the main studies, participants were told the intention of the questionnaire by their trainers, and they could choose whether or not they wished to participate. The trainers explained its instructions and contents to the participants, so that they felt comfortable while filling it in.

The questionnaire was developed for the purposes of this research and consisted of questions relating to participants' age, gender, level of educational attainment, employment experiences, personal goals for the training (**REQUIRED SKILLS**), experience with a range of technology, English language, social skills (**REAL and PERCEIVED SKILLS**).

In this way the researchers could determine seniors' current strengths, weaknesses, and areas of knowledge and knowledge gaps and completed a task analysis for seniors' personal goals and "backward chained" the tasks. They did this to discover what skills the seniors currently had and which skills they needed to develop in order to attain their goals. Functionally-based modules were developed for reaching common tasks in the three Countries.

The three groups were heterogeneous in terms of age, gender, education, socio cultural background, level of experience, to test the effectiveness of the training program between different people.

The sessions for all the groups were conducted in a classroom located in centre for senior citizens. The workshops were conducted by different trainers.

To complement the quantitative data with qualitative, they administered a post test (Table 2.) after the end of every workshop and conducted interviews and focus groups that were digitally recorded and then transcribed verbatim for coding purposes.

**Tab. 9.** Structure of the pre - questionnaire.

	<b>a</b> <b>REAL SKILLS</b>	<b>b</b> <b>PERCEIVED SKILLS</b>	<b>c</b> <b>REQUIRED SKILLS</b>
KC2 <b>Communication in foreign languages</b>	What I know with respect to the English language I've learnt	When I hear the English language being spoken I am	At the end of this course, I'd like to
KC4 <b>Digital competence</b>	What information and communication technologies do I know best  I learned to use it mainly	Seeing a child 8-10 years old (his/her nephew) easily using a PC / tablet	At the end of this course, I'd like to
KC6 <b>Social and civic competences</b>	I learnt to be comfortable with others	When I stay with people I know I like to  When I stay with strangers I like to:	At the end of this course, I'd like to

Sources: Own compilation.

**Tab. 10.** Structure of the post - questionnaire.

	<b>a</b> <b>REAL SKILLS</b>	<b>b</b> <b>PERCEIVED SKILLS</b>	<b>c</b> <b>REQUIRED SKILLS</b>
KC2 <b>Communication in foreign languages</b>		Thanks to the Key course, when I hear the English language being spoken I am...	Thanks to the Key course, I'm now able to:
KC4 <b>Digital competence</b>	Thanks to the Key course, I know best the following information and communication technologies  I learned to use these information and communication technologies mainly	Now, seeing a child 8-10 years old (his nephew) easily using a PC / tablet ...	Thanks to the Key course,:
KC6 <b>Social and civic competences</b>		Thanks to the Key course, when I meet people that I know I've learnt to  Thanks to the Key course, when I meet strangers I've learnt to:	Having attended the interpersonal workshop I am now able to:

Sources: Own compilation.

A common denominator of the key project was that of considering education as a transformative process. Mezirow (1991) affirms that the objective of education is to help learners to become more imaginative, intuitive, and critically reflective of assumptions; to become more rational through effective participation in critical discourse; and to acquire meaning perspectives that are more inclusive, integrative, and open to alternative points of view. By doing this we may help others, and perhaps ourselves, move toward a fuller and more dependable understanding of the meaning of our mutual experience.

This notion of shared experiences became the key concept in the design and development of the three workshops.

## RESULTS

### **Social and civic competences**

Active ageing depends on various factors, including interpersonal relationships and, more specifically, the quality of social interactions. In the case of the elderly, interpersonal relationships can contribute to good health, since involvement in social activities facilitate the increase of attachments to others and the extension of the social support network. These interpersonal relationships can help when dealing with various interpersonal demands and the improvement of self-esteem, personal effectiveness and positive identity.

Accessing the social environment may require a repertoire of effective social skills, especially assertive ones. Jakubowski and Lange (1978) consider assertiveness as the manifestation of a person's rights, thoughts, feelings and beliefs directly, honestly and adequately in a way that does not violate the rights of others.

Socially competent assertiveness includes the performance of social skills such as refusing unreasonable requests, expressing aversion or irritation, making requests, expressing opinions on various problems, expressing disagreement, making compliments, asking for a change in behaviour, and dealing with criticism (Ana C. Braz, Zilda A. P. Del Prette, and Almir Del Prette, 2011).

Falcone (2000), considers an assertive reply to be more effective when it is combined with empathy. Thus, in order to develop social competences and a fruitful relationship with alterity, the key project trained the seniors to look for authentic communication and to establishing positive interdependence between individuals.

The participants were required to define where they learnt to be comfortable with others. The family, the group of friends, the professional activity appeared to be common places of social interaction for all the three groups.

If for the Polish the most familiar context for learning social skills was at school, the Italian learnt a lot doing volunteering (Figure 1a, 1b, 1c.). It seems that those who are regularly involved in their voluntary activities enjoy better health and live longer thanks to the stimulating environments and sense of purpose engendered by their activities. Zedlewski and Butrica (2007), analysing the association between volunteer activity, mortality and depression, recognised a positive rela-

tion and many benefits, such as improved health and strength, greater happiness, and enhanced cognitive ability.

According to the results of the pre-test, the seniors liked to spend time with people, exchanging their views with others, sharing their experiences, listening to others' stories and discussing different opinions.

Both in relation with foreign people and people they knew, they didn't like to give space to their emotions, to get emotional listening to other people's stories and to share their emotions with others (Figures 2a - 3a - 5a- 6a- 8a - 9a).

At the end of the course (Figures 4a - 7a - 10a) they would like to understand others better, learn how compare their ideas with others' (Polish seniors), learn to listen to others better (English), learn to negotiate (Polish), share positive emotions (Italian).

The key programme aimed at developing reflective and empathic abilities. Learning to "connect" or listen to ourselves (reflective capacities) and others (empathic capacities), represents the foundation for social-emotional competency (Cohen, 2007). This capacity involves learning to "listen" actively to verbal and non-verbal messages and to think about what they mean. It provides the social-emotional information needed to make decisions, solve conflicts non-violently, cooperate, communicate and form friendships.

On the other side, the workshop was designed for increasing communicative capacities (the ability to use refusal skills and assertiveness), for improving cooperative capacities (being able to listen, to take turns and develop collaborative goals) and for forming friendships.

The post test highlighted some interesting results: Polish older adults confirmed that they learnt many different skills, without choosing one particular; the Italians felt to be more able to tell personal stories, to share their experiences with others and to listen to opinions expressed by others. The English learnt to listen to others telling their personal stories, to accept others' ideas, and to give space to their emotions (Figures 2b - 3b - 5b- 6b- 8b - 9b).

The fact that the seniors were encouraged to tell their personal stories during the workshop created a truly welcoming learning environment, developing an equal relationship between the learners and between learners and teacher, favorable to sharing and exchanging.

They were taught to show unconditional positive regard, listen accurately and be able to take the perspective of others. According to Rogers (1982), the trainers explained how to avoid judging others, how to accept their peers for who they were, both positive and negative sides.

At the end of the course they reached many goals: understanding and listening to others better, being empathetic towards others, share positive emotions and learn to negotiate (Figures 4b - 7b - 10b).

The most important result was that participants changed their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions. At the core of transformational learning theory (Mezirow 1991), is the process of 'perspective transformation' which has three dimensions: psychological (changes in understanding of the self), convictional (revision of belief systems), and behavioural (changes in lifestyle).

The Key Project facilitated and supported the first two dimensions, by enabling social learning processes as described by Bandura (1977) to take place.

### **Communication in foreign language**

The new social and economic contexts which the world is now facing imply important changes in the educational field. This is due to the competences the new scenarios are demanding of the new millennium citizens in order to meet the challenges posed by complexity. The need of lifelong education, which should objectively stretch up to the old age, has been intensively discussed for a few years, mostly because of the ageing population.

The experience of learning is usually associated with childhood and young adulthood. These are the years that are dedicated to increasing knowledge and to acquiring skills that prepare for adult life. It is a generally accepted view that learning is most effective at these ages and that skills like learning a language, a sport, are best acquired if learning starts early in childhood with a lot of practice. Recent studies, however, have shown that learning is possible at any age (Goldberg, 2005; Doidge, 2007; Baschiera, 2012). It is definitely possible to learn a language, music, and many other new activities requiring complex skills in adulthood, also just for the pleasure of learning and practicing the skill.

Education of seniors has not only become a topic of the day, acquiring ever greater popularity, but also an important element, if not a means, of the building of a knowledge-based society.

Many countries have been supporting the creation of programs for, and approaches to, educational gerontology. They seem, however, to reveal problems that have justified the development of what is called critical educational gerontology, such as the tendency of educational programs to adopt a pessimistic view of ageing; the belief that just any type of education is helpful for older adults; the perception of these individuals as a homogeneous group (Formosa, 2012; Ramírez Gómez, 2016).

As participants of lifelong education in the area of foreign languages, seniors enter the educational process with certain expectations (acquiring communication competence and cultural knowledge), specific purposes and motivations, for instance not to be dependent on others communicating in a foreign language, or to prove to others that they are also able to progress.

An analysis was conducted at the beginning of the Key course in order to identify the learners' needs, help set a framework and organise the course accordingly.

It was clear that some interior motivations encouraged seniors to attend the language course: refresh their memory (Polish older adults), travel abroad and feel more aware of current affairs (Italian participants). Others stimulus were to strengthen their family relationship, communicating with foreign friends (Polish and Italian) and feeling closer to their grandchildren (English seniors). The most common purpose was that of understanding the customs of other people; the English group aimed also at socialising with foreigners (Figures 13a - 15a - 17a). The Italian participants gave the need to learn English because it is used a lot in today's world, because it was necessary for their social life.

The notions of enrichment, self-satisfaction, and a sense of accomplishment were really important in elderly learners' general learning motivation.

Their main experience with a second language was at a level of formal education (school), and of non formal education (language schools, language programs/courses at universities of the third age, academies of the third age, in daily centers). The Polish participants experienced a level of informal education through communication in foreign language environments (Figure 11.).

The older adults were not willing to tolerate boring or irrelevant content, or lessons that stressed the learning of grammar rules out of context. During the course the trainer observed that seniors needed materials designed to present structures and vocabulary connected to real life experiences, in a context which reflected the situations and functions they would have encountered when using the new language.

The teaching materials were developed according to topics. They focused on everyday communication through dialogues, pictures, role-plays, and pair activities examining related vocabulary, idiomatic and/or fixed expressions presented as language chunks in order to promote fluency.

As they had already developed learning strategies that served them well in other contexts, seniors used these strategies to their advantage in language learning, too.

Their attitude towards the study of a foreign language was really positive (Figures 12a - 14a - 16a): they felt interested, desirous to learn and curious. If the English group, composed by Italian immigrants, felt comfortable, the Polish and Italian experienced a sense of inadequacy in starting studying a language not used in their living environment.

Difficulties they faced in the language course were overcome especially by the elimination of affective barriers (mostly fear), adaptation of learning environment, preparation of relevant teaching materials, and, naturally, application of effective teaching methods strengthening learning patterns and strategies of seniors. Providing opportunities for learners to work together, focusing on understanding rather than producing language, and reducing the focus on error correction built learners' self-confidence and promoted language learning.

According to the learners' strategies, the trainers did repetitions of the concepts and helped the participants creating associations between new words and personal experiences and imagery.

Trainers emphasized the positive focus on the good progress of the learners and provided opportunities for them to be successful. The Italian trainer worked to sustain older learners' attitudes toward their learning potential, to enhance their individual self-images and empowerment.

The older adults participated in whole class discussion and completed self-evaluation questionnaires at the end of the final workshop, in order to become actively engaged in their learning process and reflect on their progress, thus, raising their awareness.

All three groups declared that, thanks to the key course, when they heard the English language being spoken they were interested and desirous to learn (Fig-



res 12b – 14b – 16b). The Polish and the Italian participants felt more involved and less overcome by a sense of inadequacy. They weren't detached, bored, apathetic, or frustrated. The Italian seniors affirmed feeling comfortable and that learning a foreign language contributed to their cognitive, emotional, and social well being. Some of them said that learning could also help them create new international social networks. Thank to the interpersonal and language workshops they felt capable to generate a fruitful relationships with others coming from a different cultural background, to travel abroad, to be more aware of current affairs and closer to their grandchildren (Figures 13b – 15b – 17b).

Their self-directedness, life experiences, independence as learners, and motivation to learn provided them with advantages in language learning.

The program met the needs of the adult learners leading them to a basic language acquisition.

Whether the improvements of the students' conversational skills are a sign of learning, or are due to increased student confidence, to a more relaxed atmosphere and/or to increased familiarity and empathy between the interlocutors, or to a combination of these factors cannot be determined from the data and remains a question to be pursued.

### **Digital competence**

Computer technology has become integral to communication, social interaction, information retrieval, and daily living tasks for a great number of older adults.

Seniors find that computer use promotes a sense of personal control over life, the ability to learn new things, and actively engage with others; these are benefits considered to be key components of successful ageing. The meaning that older adults attribute to computer use goes beyond the ability to perform daily tasks to impact both self-esteem and self-respect (Sanders et al., 2013).

However literature related to seniors and technology (Hernandez-Encuentra et al., 2009; Olson et al. 2011) demonstrates that, also if many older adults are using ICT on a regular basis, the vast majority still value their technology skills as poor, reflecting their low usage of less-familiar items, such as tablets and computers. The reasons inspiring such use (Perkinson, 2013) and associated benefits (Winstead et al. 2013) are numerous.

Rather than just contributing to a sense of well-being and empowerment (Robertson-Lang et al., 2011), the use of ICT supports one's adjustment to ageing, provides mental stimulation, improves self-confidence, cognitive abilities and social connectedness, and reduces isolation (Blaschke et al., 2009). Many seniors want to engage and communicate with friends and family, to research medical matters; for those older adults who often do not want to travel or may have limited mobility, an on-line community of learners can prove to be a lifeline of social contact.

Woodward et al. (2011) discovered that seniors specifically trained in use of the World Wide Web experienced greater self-efficacy, greater social support from friends, significantly higher quality of life. Without ICT the older generations do



not have access to information and other services. This lack of information usually increases dependence. Learning how to use digital technology, communication tools, or networks to locate, evaluate, use, and create information may partly solve this problem.

Our key project's Italian participants declared they learned to use ICT in a formal learning context, the Polish learned on their own, the English became skilled by attending a course and supporting their knowledge studying on their own (Figure 19).

They were able (**REAL SKILLS**) to use a computer and some of them could navigate on the Internet, but they couldn't use tablet, smartphone, modem, router, wifi (Figure 18a).

Their main objectives (**REQUIRED SKILLS**) were to acquire new skills, share new ways of communicating, feel more adequate for living in today's world and exchange of information and knowledge (Figures 21a - 23a - 25a).

They seemed less interested in keeping in touch with people they would have met at the course and in exchanging information and knowledge.

Literature consistently shows that older adults continue to lag behind younger generations in ICT adoption and use (Rainie, 2015), are more reluctant to adopt digital tools, and when online, they engage in fewer online activities, such as searching and banking, than younger adults.

Generally the potential barriers that discourage seniors from using ICT can be categorised into four distinct areas: issues of training and support, impediments arising due to the unique characteristics of the internet medium, attitudinal impediments, and age-related complications. (Morrison, 2015).

Only the English seniors felt inadequate in comparison with the younger generations (**PERCEIVED SKILLS**); almost all older adults felt the need for learning, of staying in touch with others young and recognized the fact that thanks to ICT the young will have more chances in the future (Figures 20a - 22a - 24a).

A wide range of program designs exist for training older adults to use ICTs. Our training program taught basic computer "literacy" and operations (mouse, computer hardware, word processing), e-mail, and Internet use, among other applications, the use of smartphone and tablet. The program focused on achieving a certain level of fluency in computer skills and the ability to access information.

The ICT workshop was developed during ten sessions (2 hours each session), in classes of 18 to 25 participants with two seniors sharing a computer, through the use of tutors leading class sessions and training that focused on the desired needs of the seniors, as well as having a designated location to answer questions, concerns, and comments on an ongoing basis.

Due to the fact that some elderly were more skilled than others, some sessions were co-tutored by senior mentors. This approach has been successful with older adult participants by showing them that their peers could achieve digital independence.

It is known that technologies have the potential to help older adults create new relationships through direct contact and social network support in a very efficient and effective way.

Senior participants benefited from ICT courses also because they were taught the basics in the field, respecting their own times.

The projects run have highlighted obvious benefits for all the three groups, including improved digital and interpersonal skills.

The questionnaires applied at the end of the workshop showed that older people were encouraged to learn to use the computer, the tablet, the smartphone and take up the Internet (Figure 18b).

They revealed that seniors were motivated to use ICT by a number of reasons that only in part appeared in the pretest (Figures 21b – 23b – 25b):

- Socialization (maintain contact with friends they met at the course with whom they had something in common, such as work, hobbies or common experiences);
- Learning new skills;
- Exchanging information and knowledge;
- Sharing new ways of communication
- Feeling more adequate for living in today's world.

The feedback obtained at the end of the projects displayed several nuances. Seniors revealed a positive change in attitudes towards computers and the Internet, and a gain in confidence in their own proficiency with technology (Figures 22b – 24b – 26b).

They appreciated the internet and the computer because they enabled them to seek information, particularly news and health information and to prevent social isolation and loneliness: they felt able to stay in touch with other generations and understood the value of the ICT. All seniors participating in the Key project stated that they felt “worthwhile”; it was social interaction that was responsible for such an answer. E-mail, Facebook and Skype allowed them to talk with friends and relatives. These communication means provided support, involvement and encouragement.

As this programme was delivered within a rather low number of participants (about 65 seniors), the results cannot be generalized to other groups of seniors.

This programme was nonrandomized, performed at three senior centers, without a control group. The participants may have been a self-selected group who were more motivated to learn about computers than other adults.

However, according to Winstead et al. (2013), we can affirm that these older adults increased the ways in which they communicated and demonstrated a further sense of connectedness after participating in the ten-week training course on ICT use.

It remains to be seen if these positive side-effects resulting from ICT use will continue after the completion of the project, investigating how seniors are taking an initiative to adopt ICTs that fit with their lifestyles and needs.

Due to its benefit effects, this programme may serve as a model for both skill and resource development for seniors.

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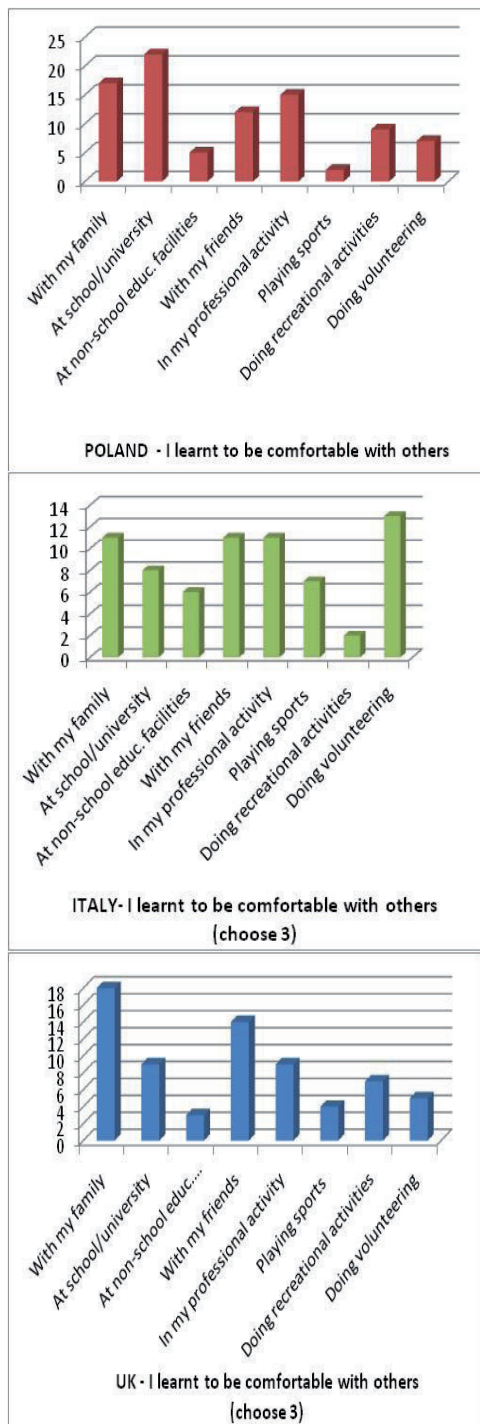


Figure 1. Social and interpersonal competence

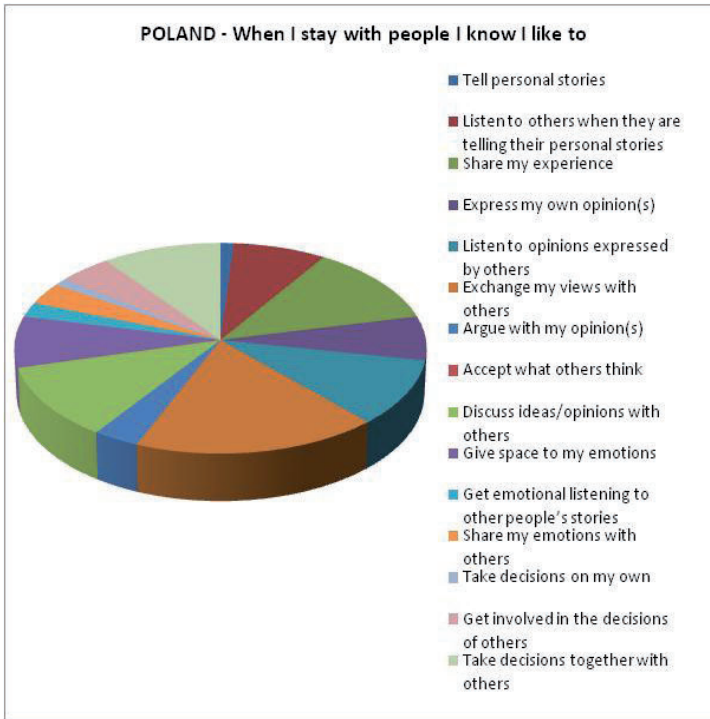


Figure 2a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

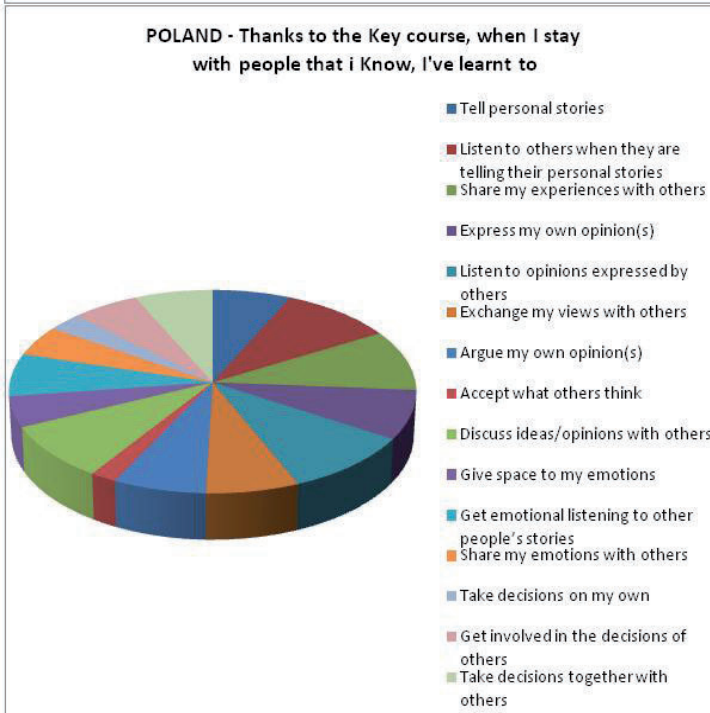


Figure 2b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test

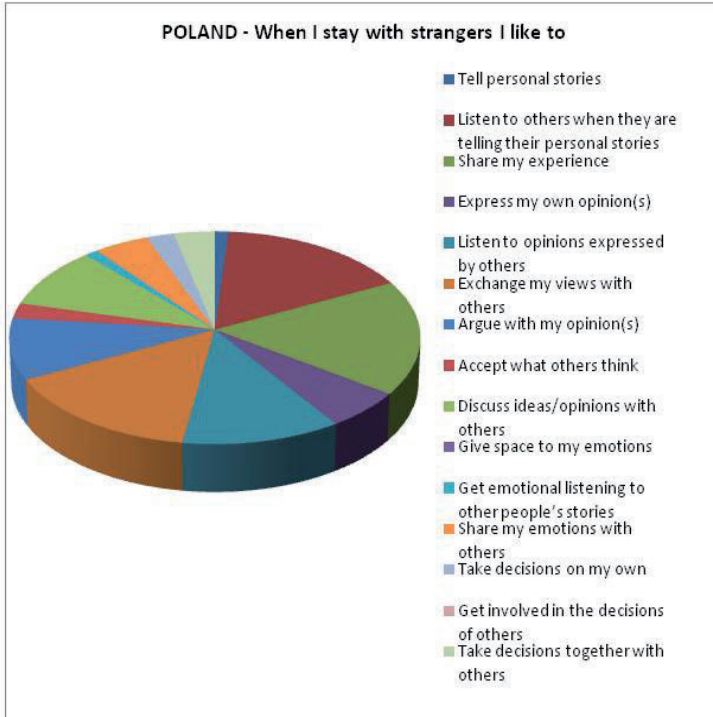


Figure 3a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

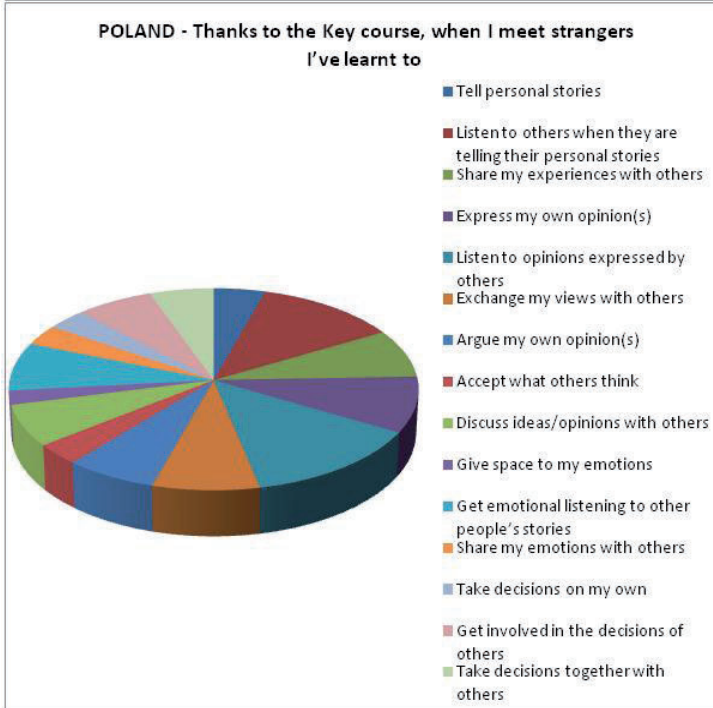


Figure 3b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test



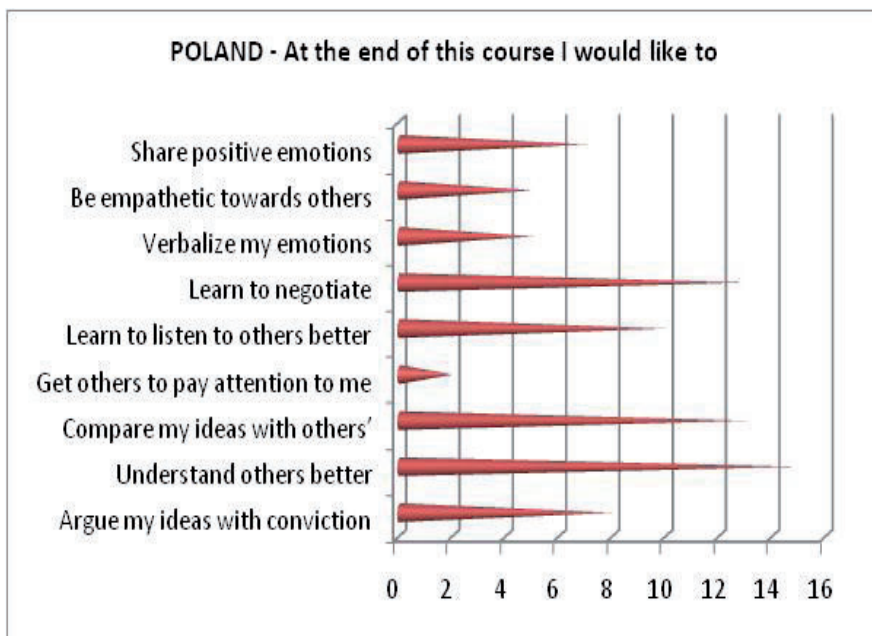


Figure 4a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

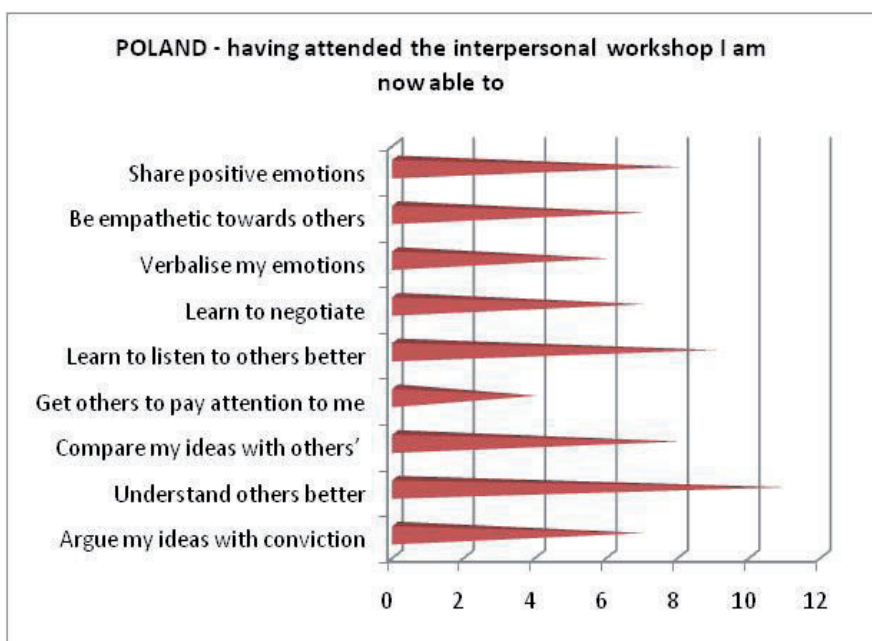


Figure 4b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test



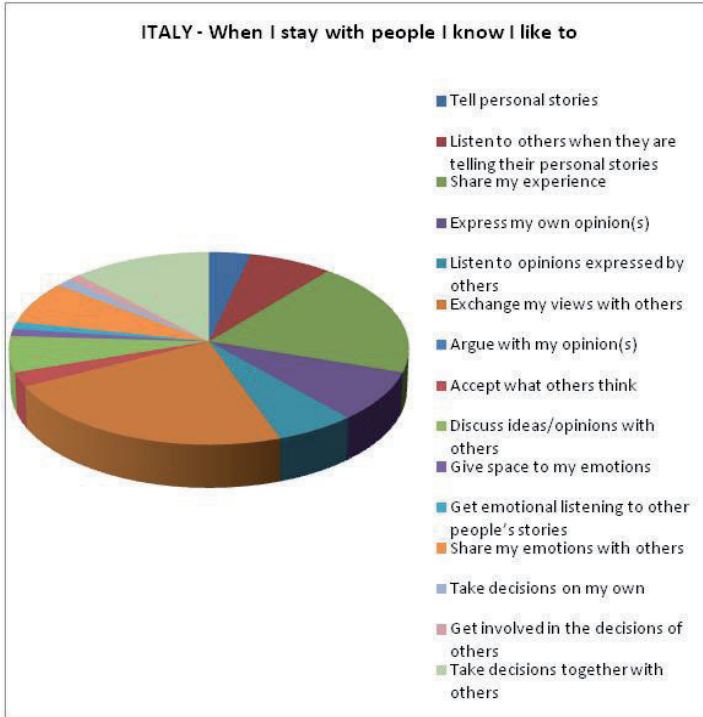


Figure 5a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

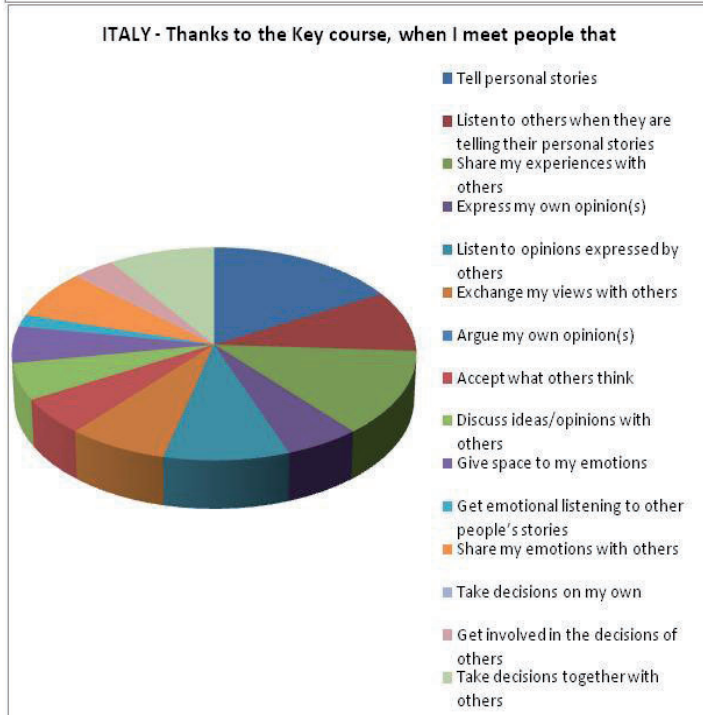


Figure 5b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test

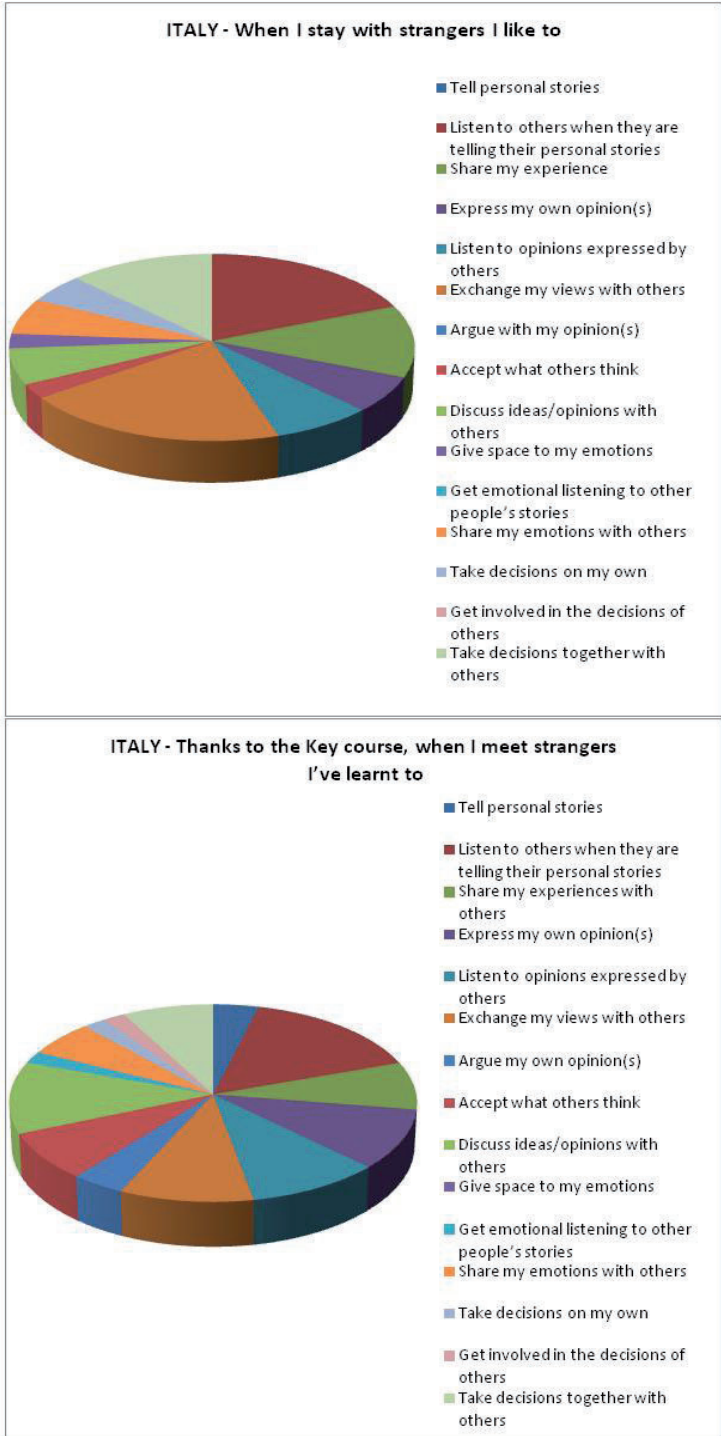


Figure 6a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

Figure 6b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test

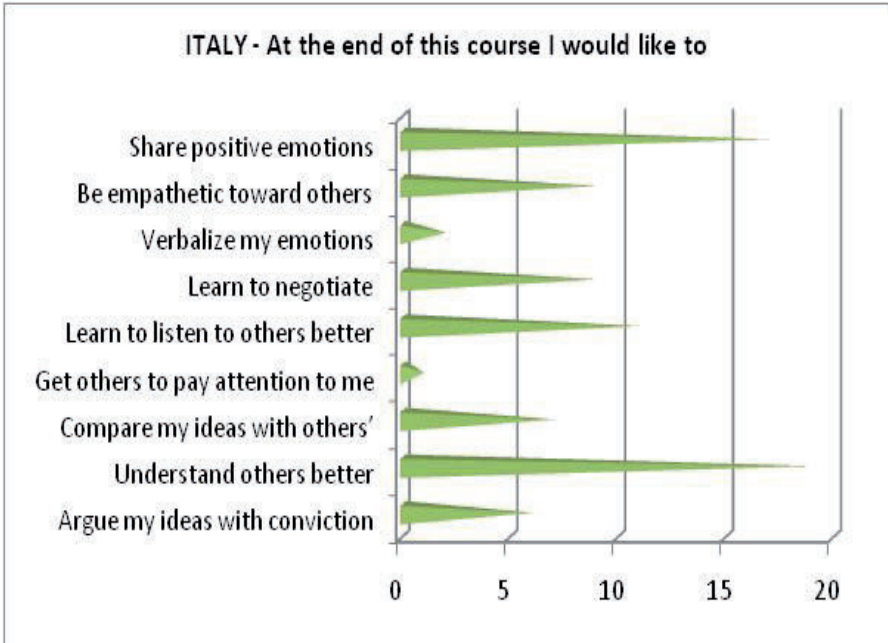


Figure 7a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

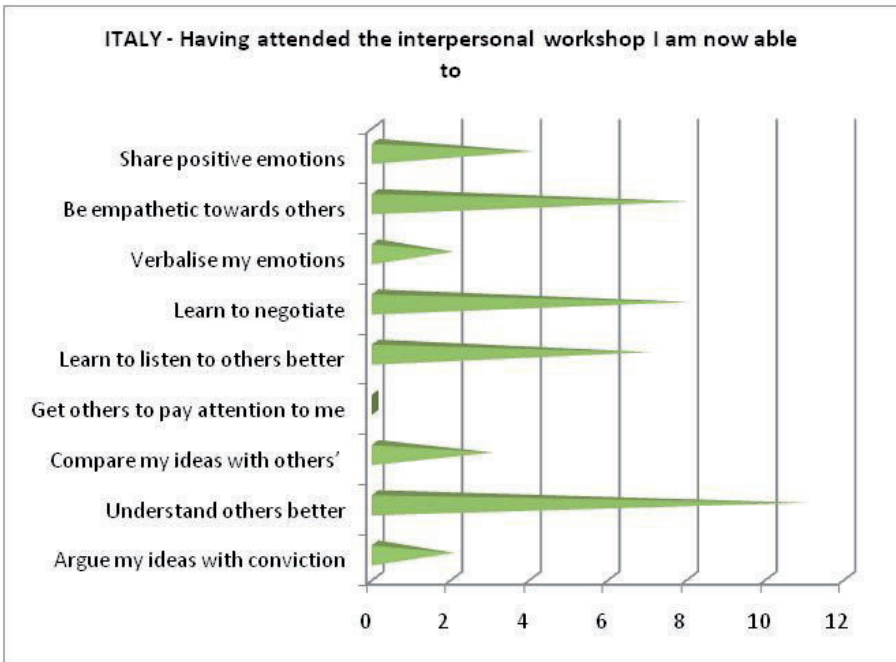


Figure 7b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test

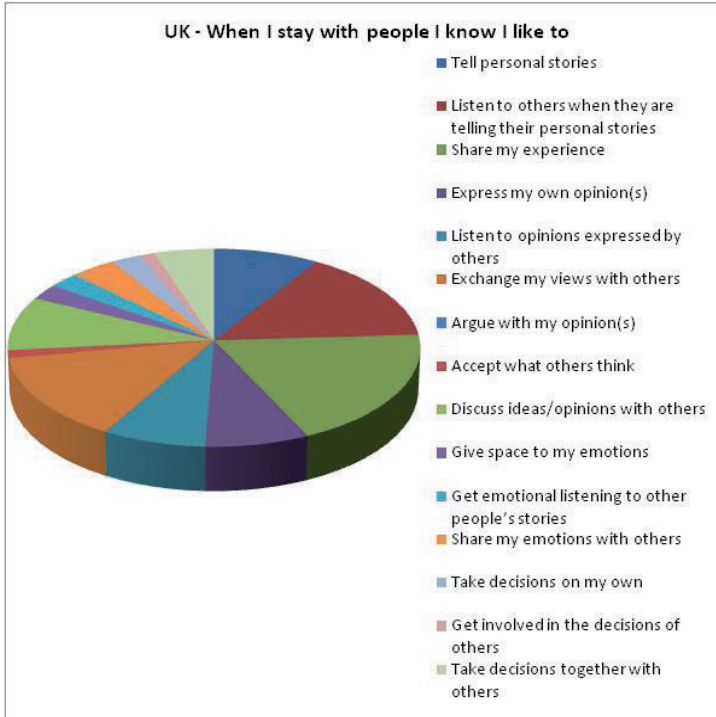


Figure 8a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

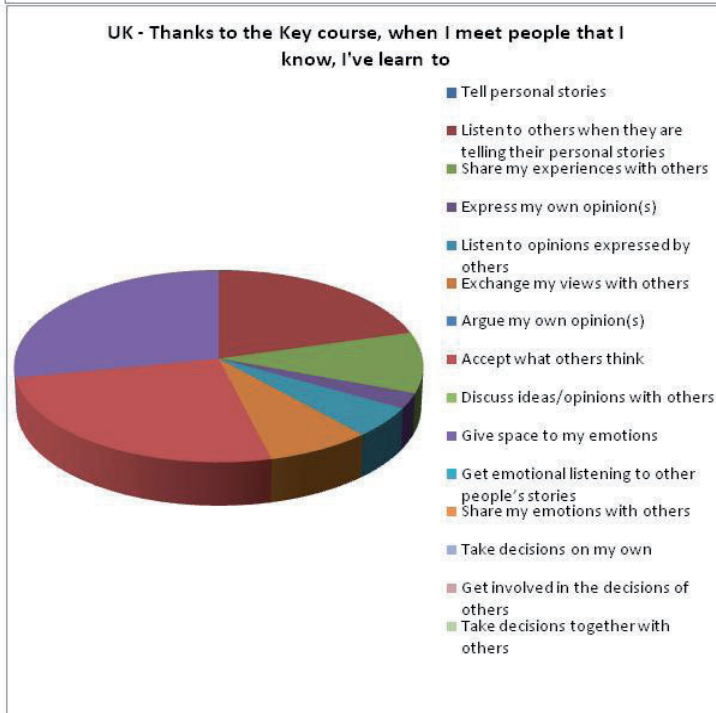


Figure 8B. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

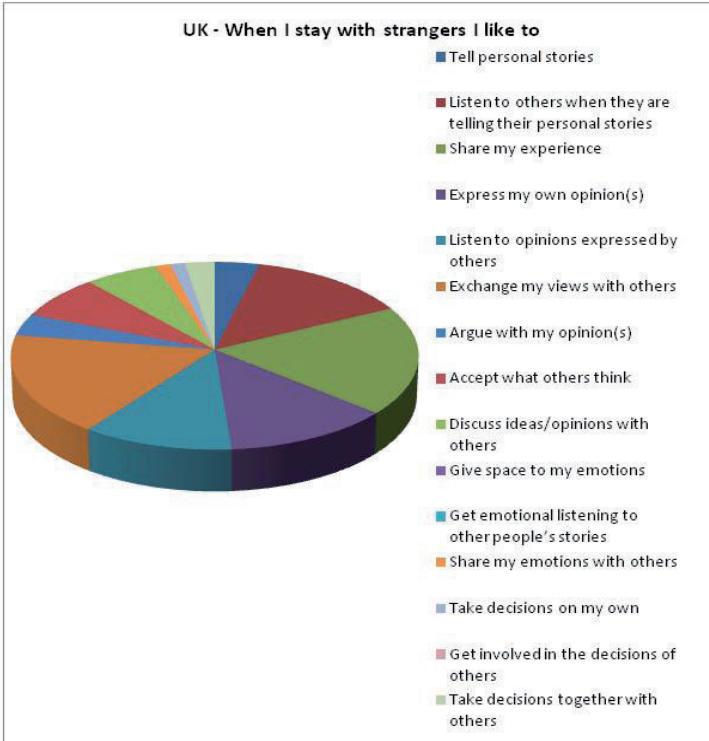


Figure 9a. Social and interpersonal competence – pre test

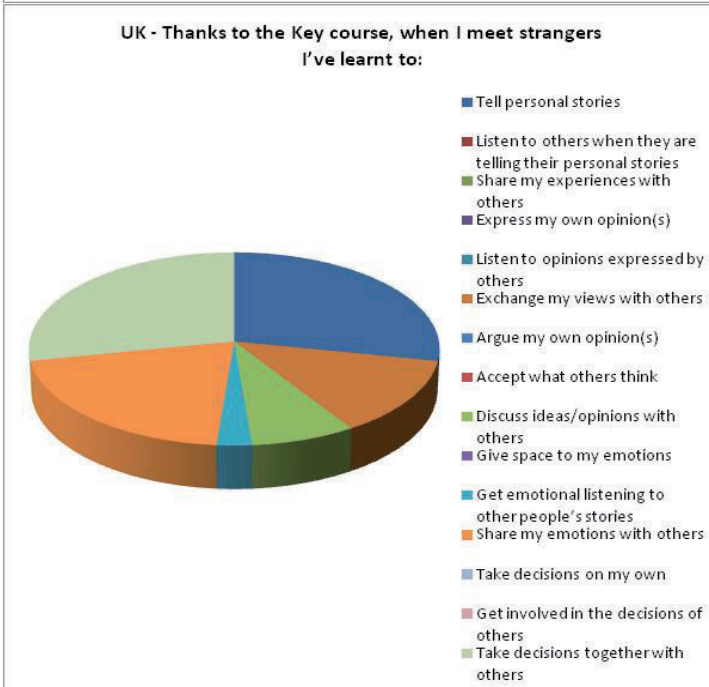


Figure 9b. Social and interpersonal competence – post test

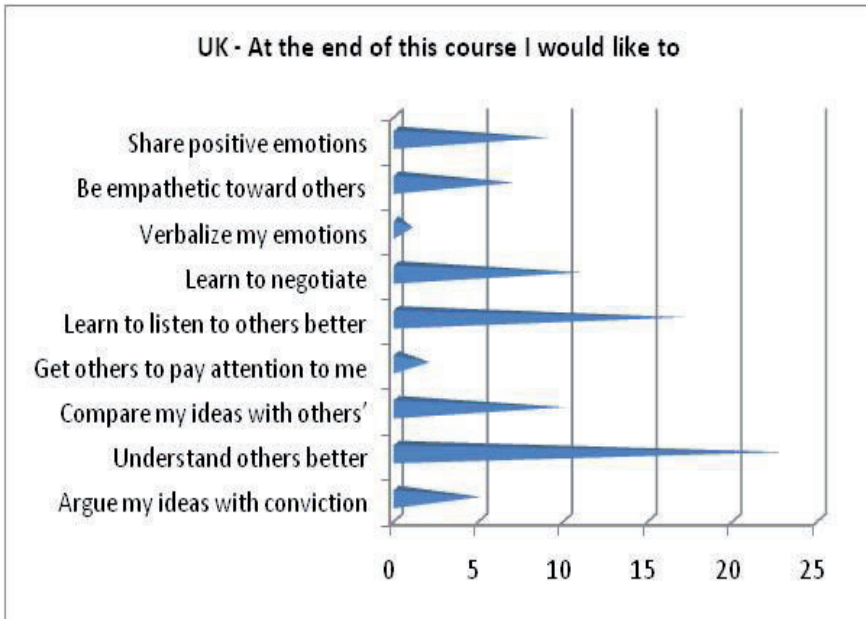


Figure 10a. Social and interpersonal competence- pre test

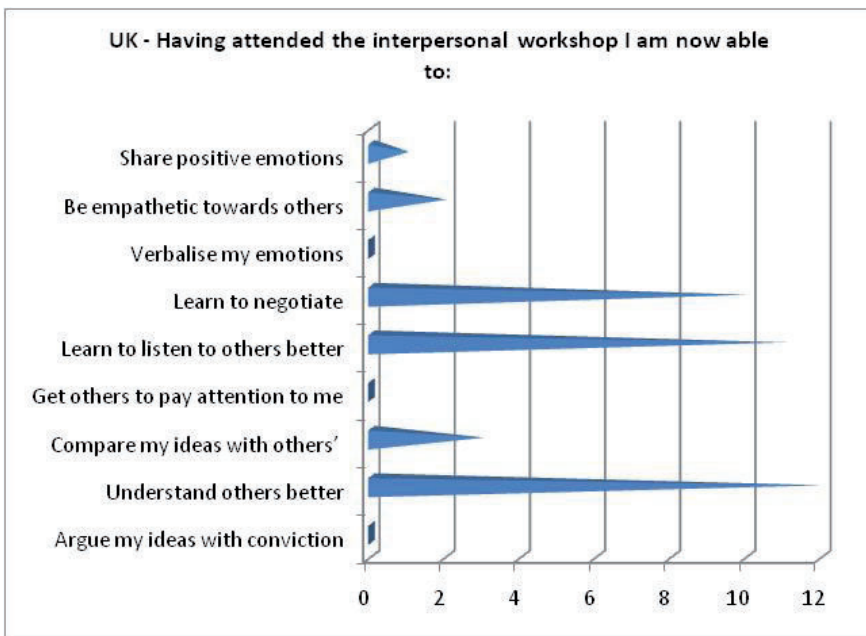


Figure 10b. Social and interpersonal competence - post test

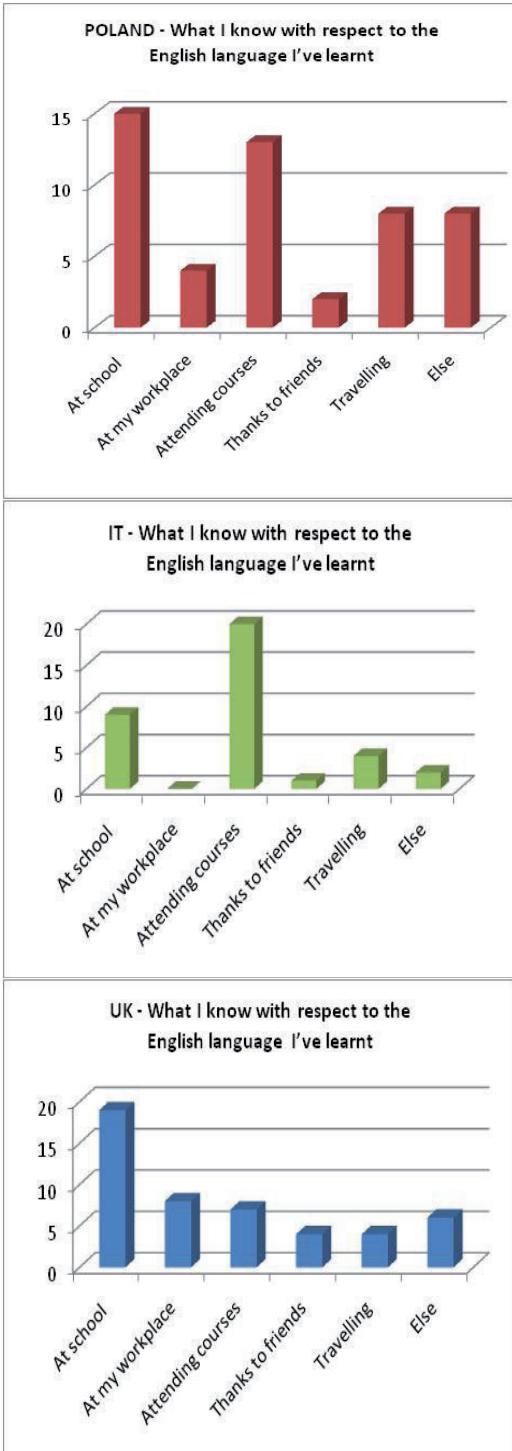


Figure 11. Language competence-pre test



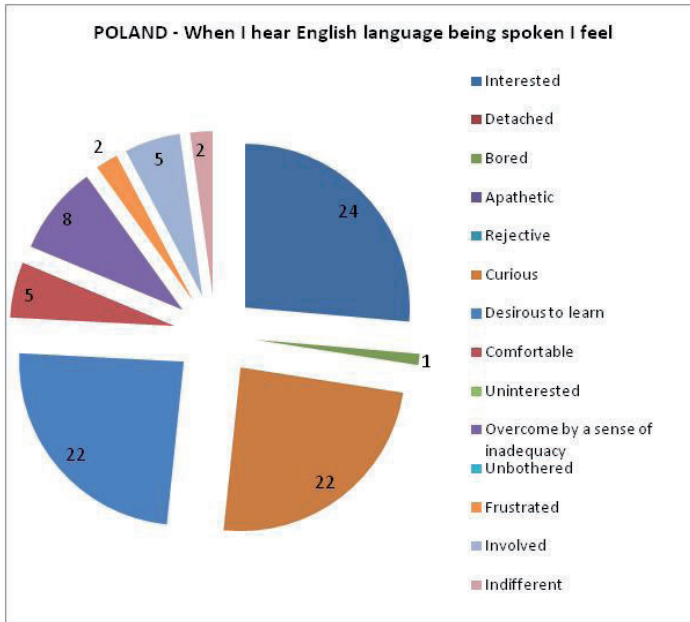


Figure 12a. Language competence- pre test

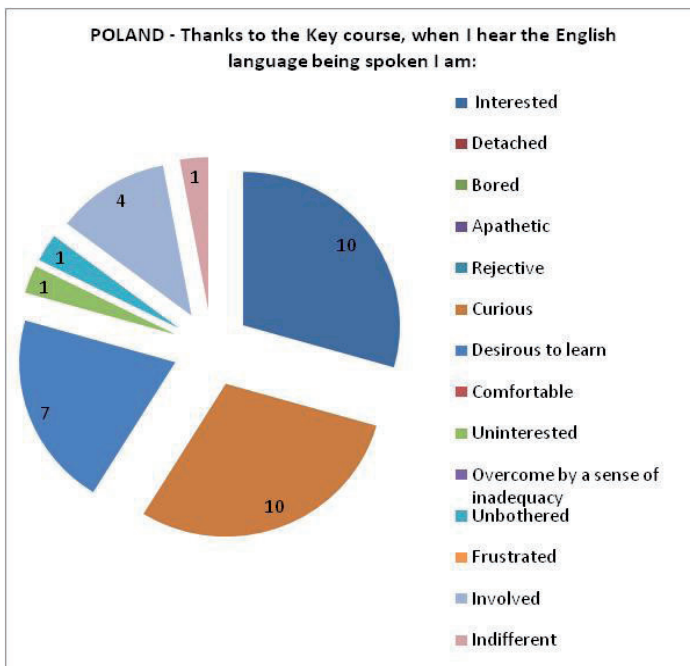


Figure 12b. Language competence- post test



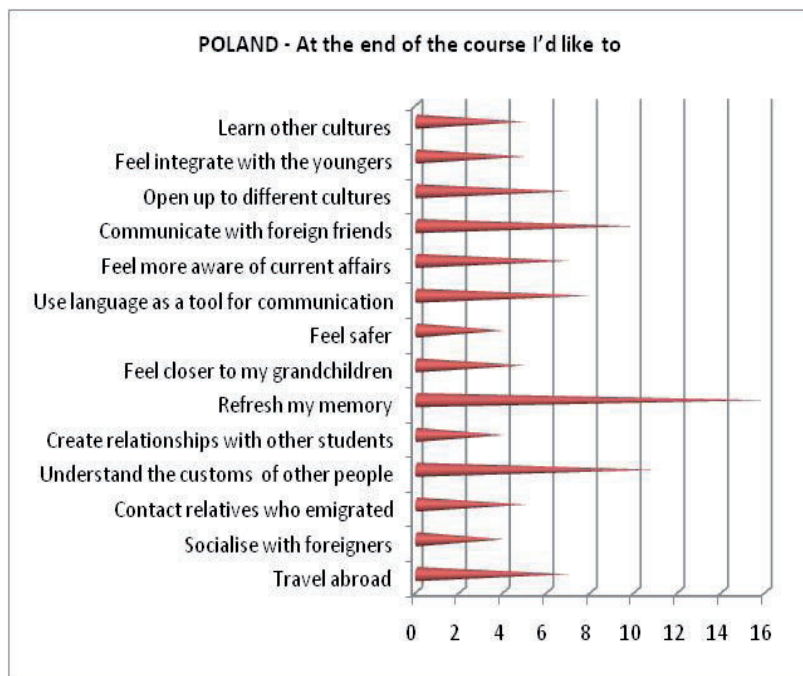


Figure 13a. Language competence- pre test



Figure 13b. Language competence- post test

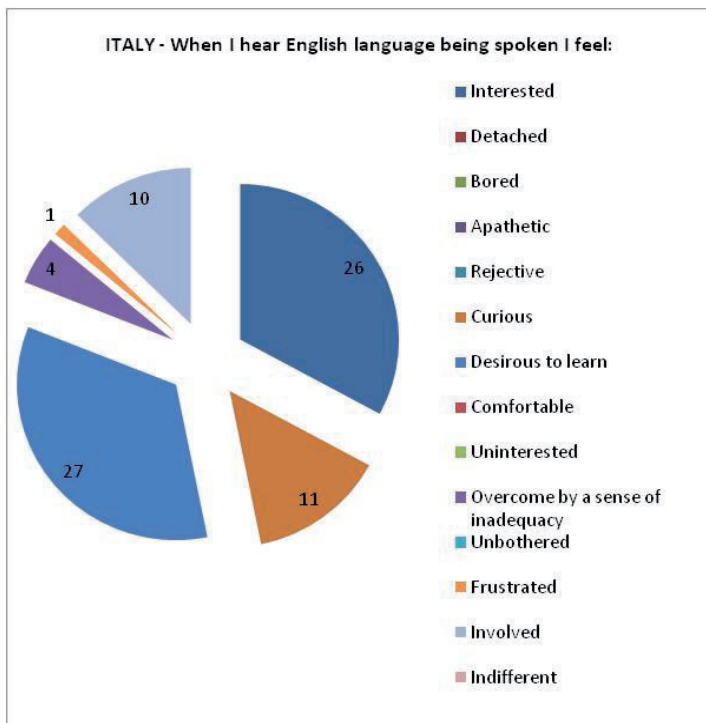


Figure 14a. Language competence- pre test

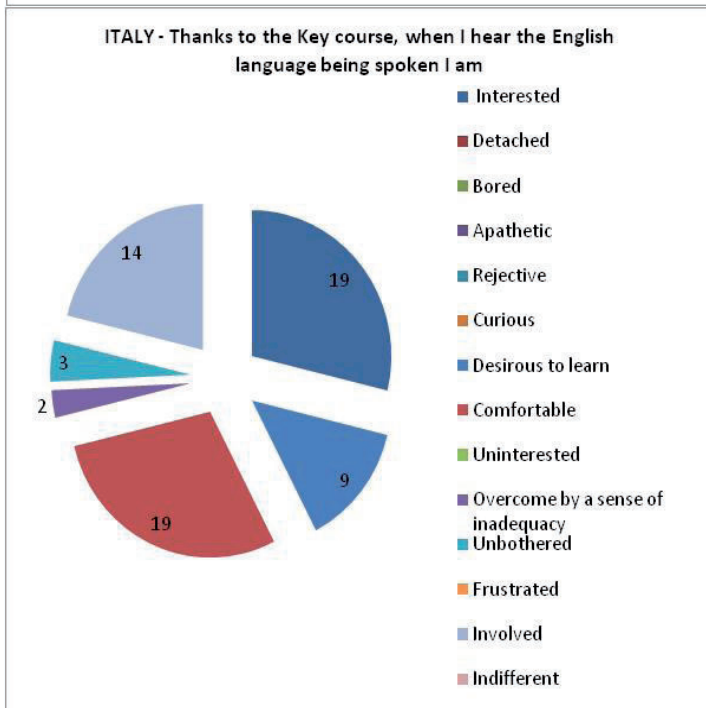


Figure 14b. Language competence- post test

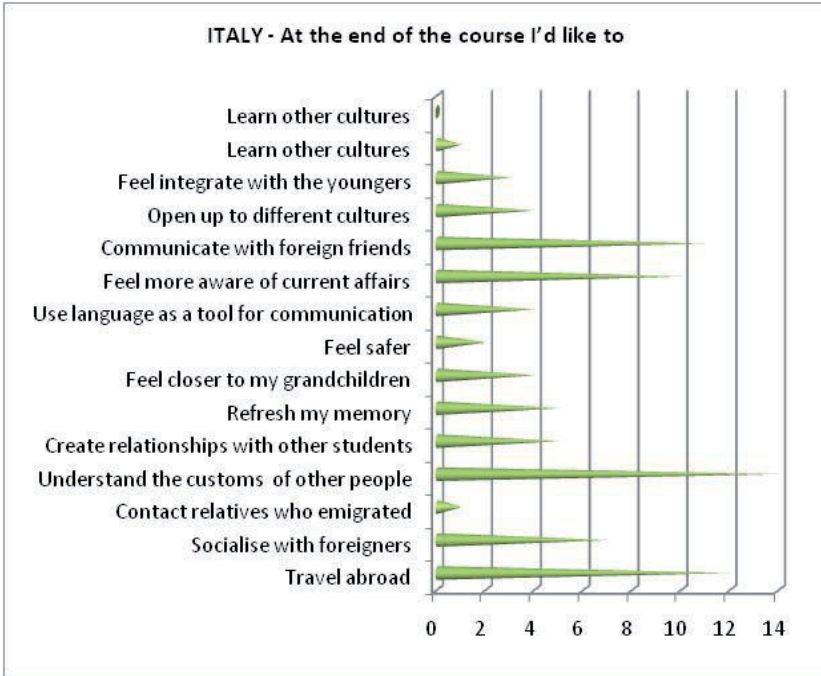


Figure 15a. Language competence- pre test

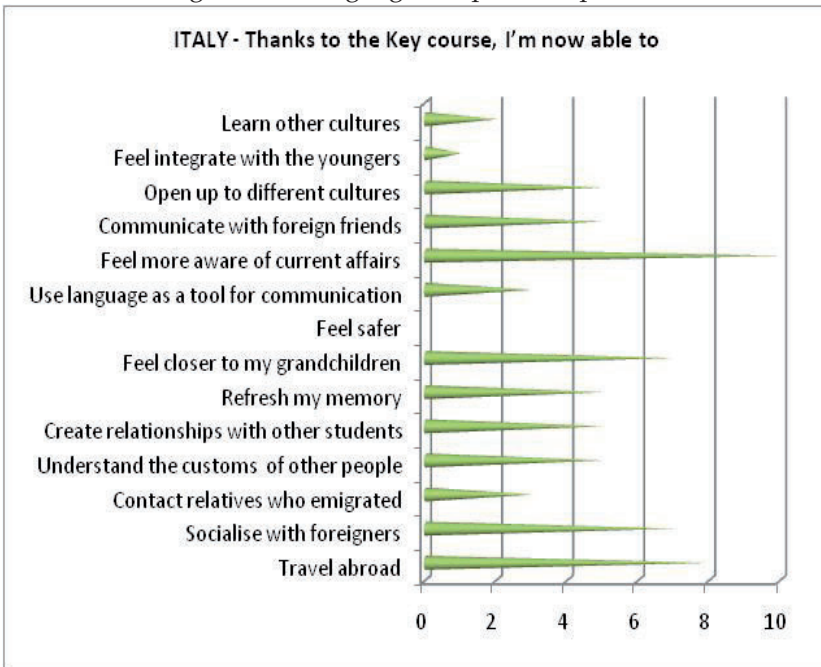


Figure 15b. Language competence- post test

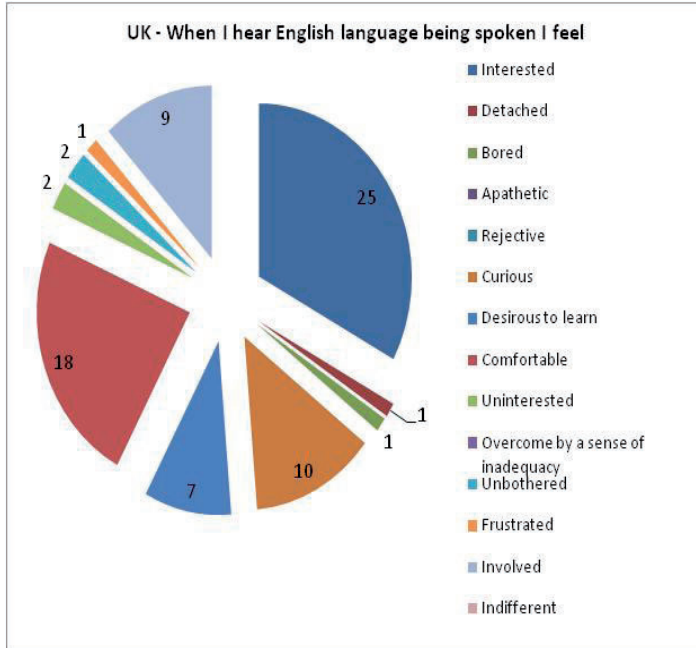


Figure 16a. Language competence- pre test

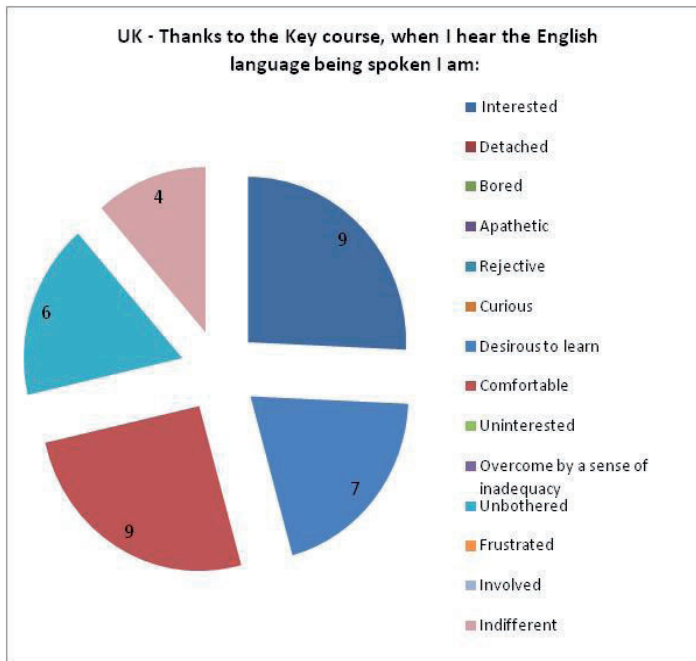


Figure 16b. Language competence- post test

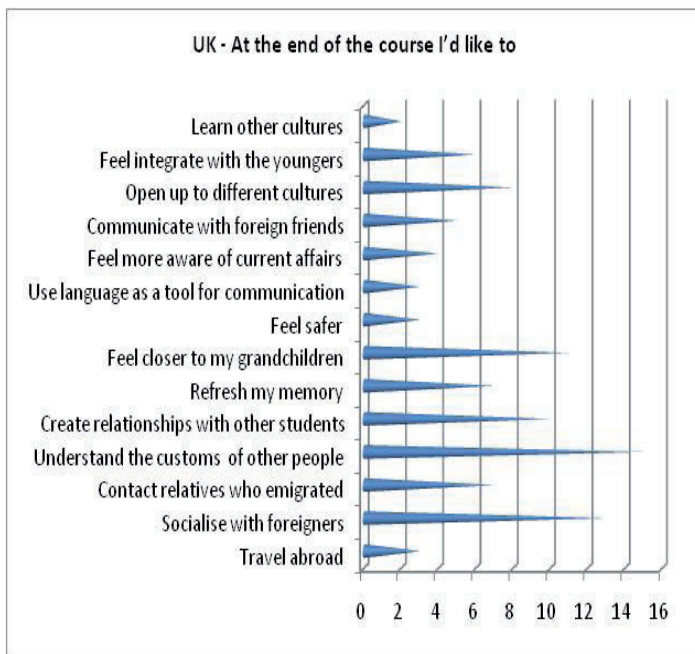


Figure 17a. Language competence- pre test

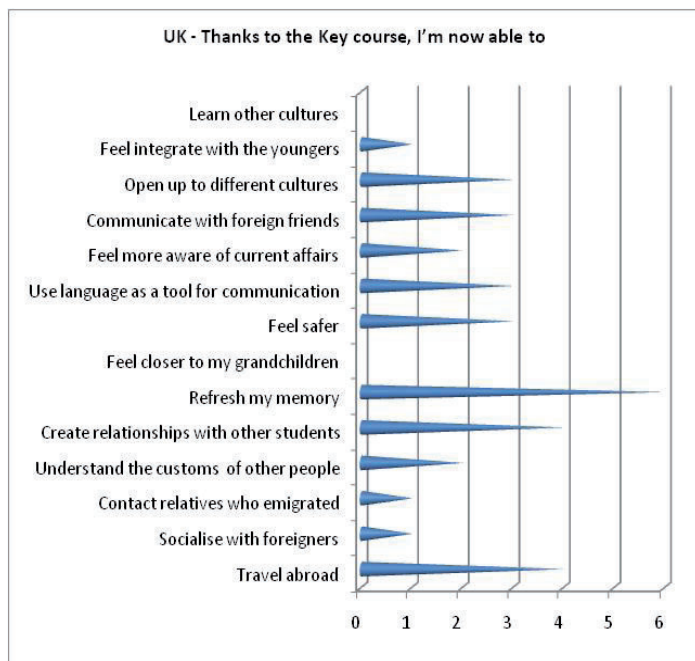


Figure 17b. Language competence- post test

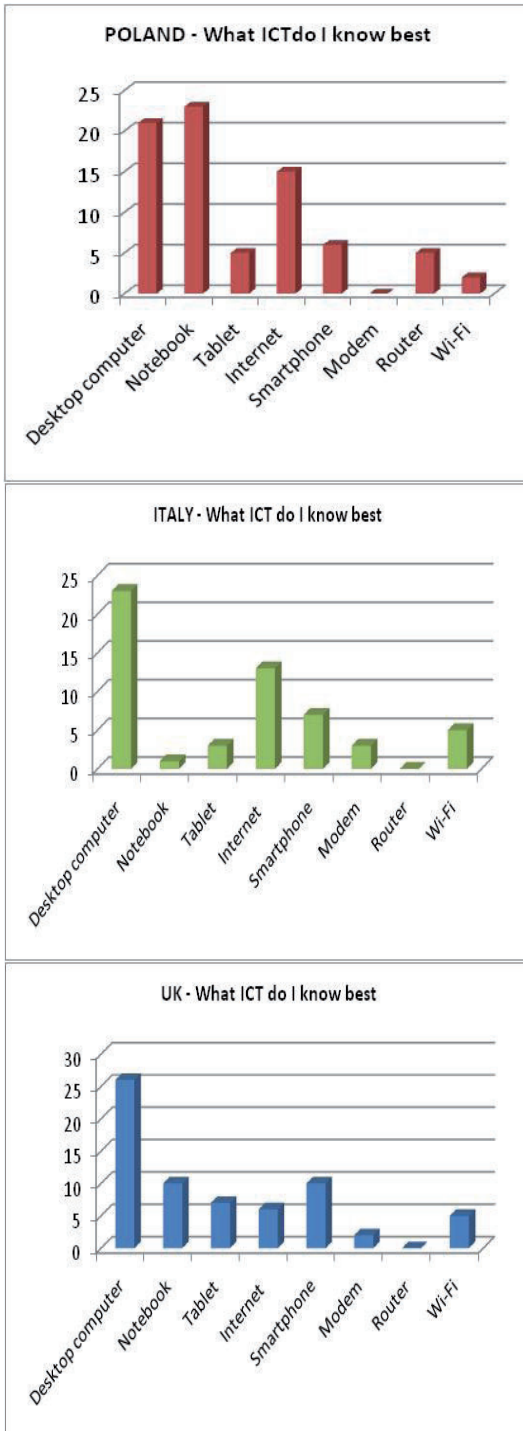


Figure 18a. Digital competence – pre test

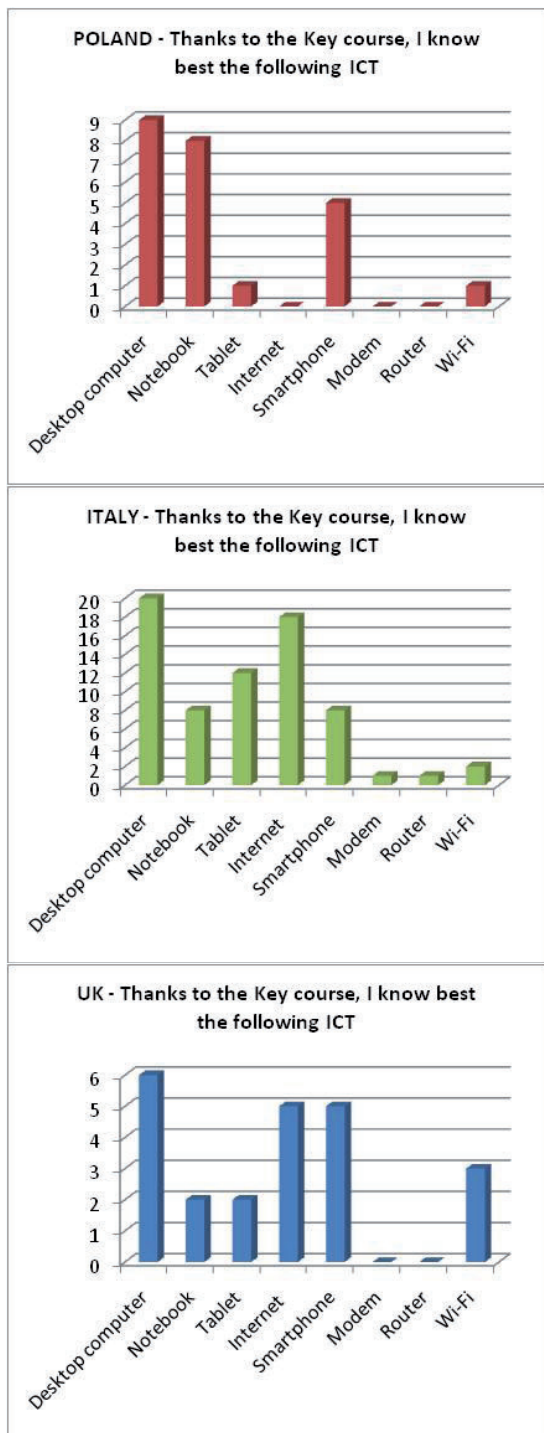


Figure 18b. Digital competence – post test

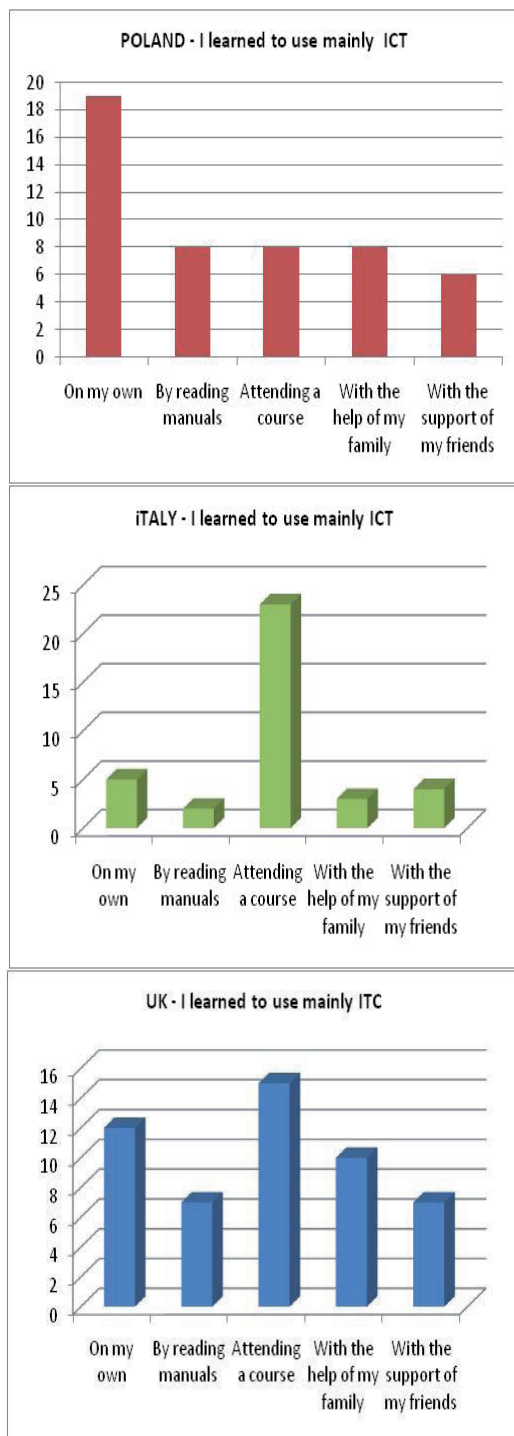


Figure 19. Digital competence – pre test



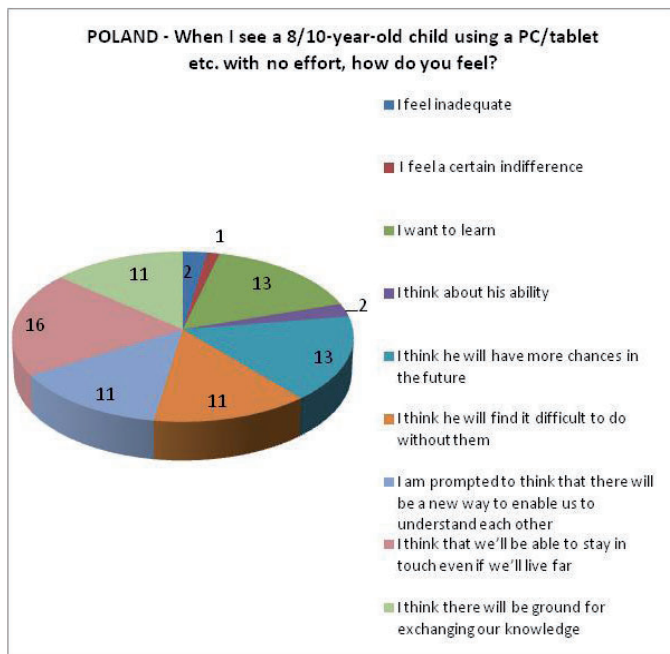


Figure 20a. Digital competence – pre test

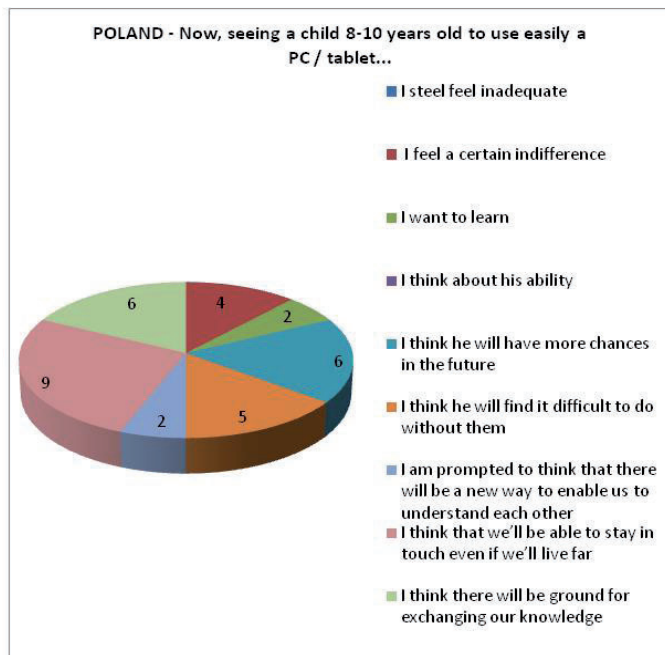


Figure 20b. Digital competence – post test

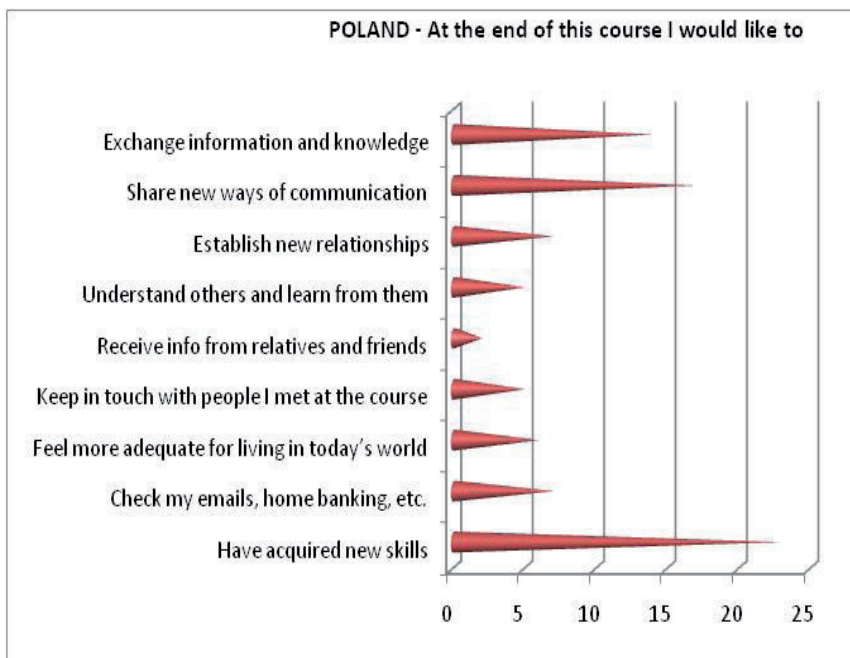


Figure 21a. Digital competence – pre test

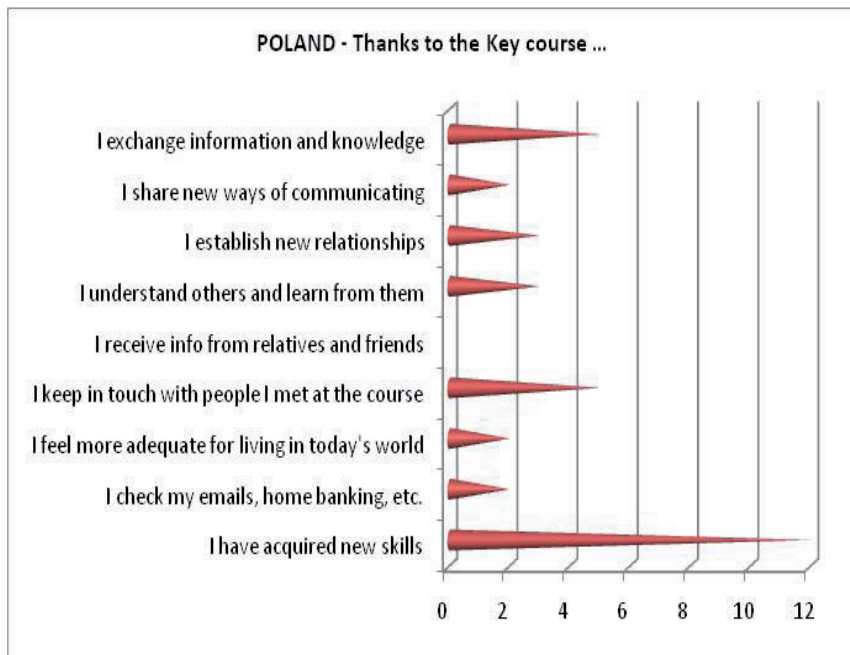


Figure 21b. Digital competence – post test

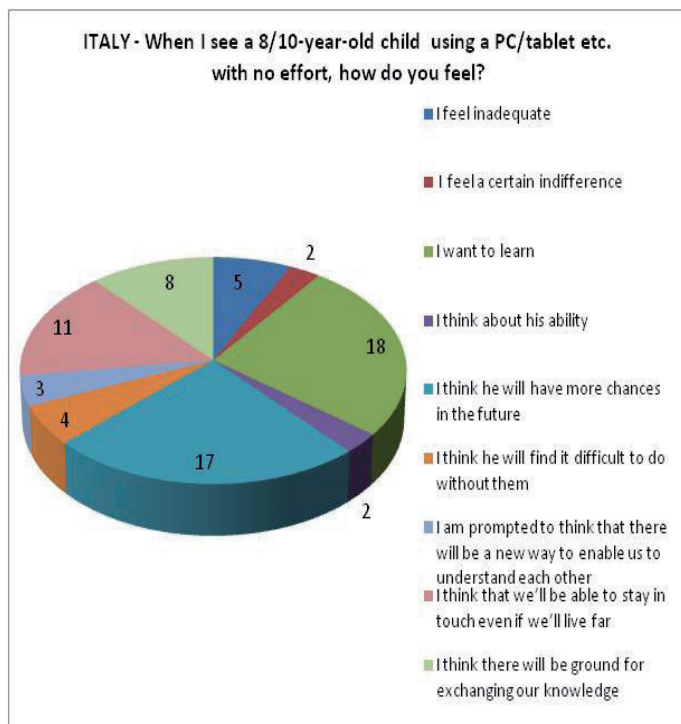


Figure 22a. Digital competence – pre test

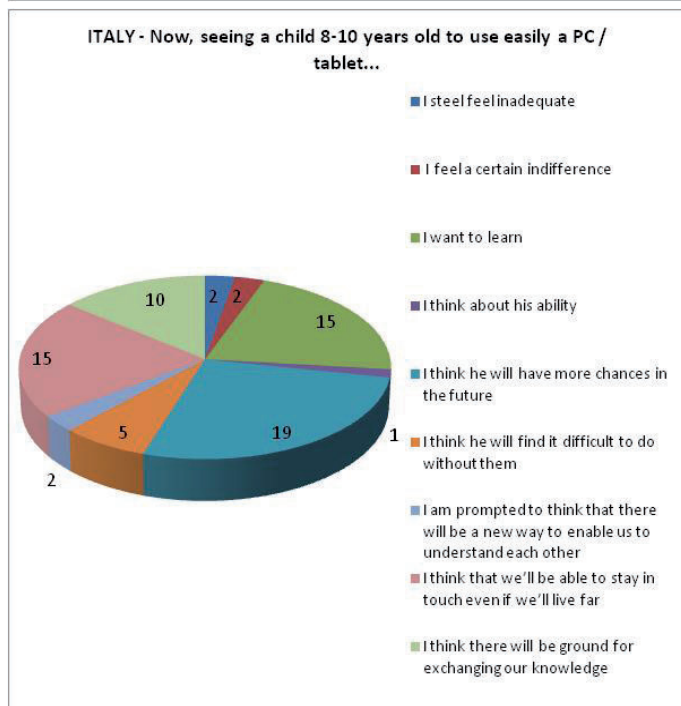


Figure 22b. Digital competence – post test

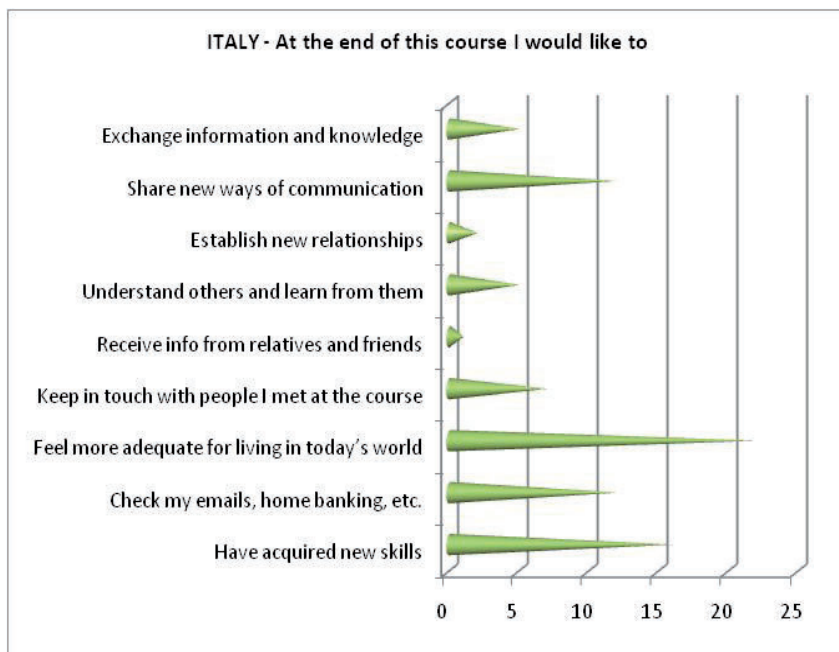


Figure 23a. Digital competence – pre test

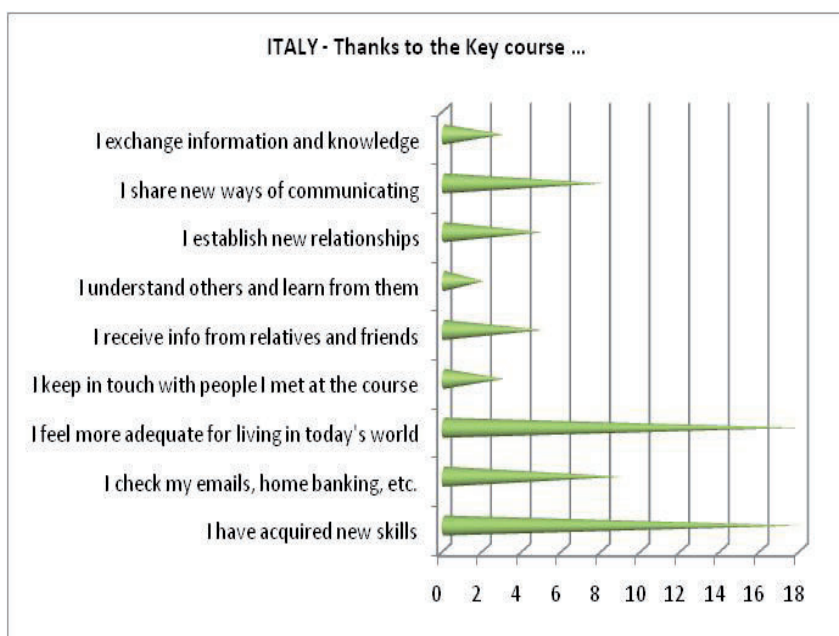


Figure 23b. Digital competence – post test

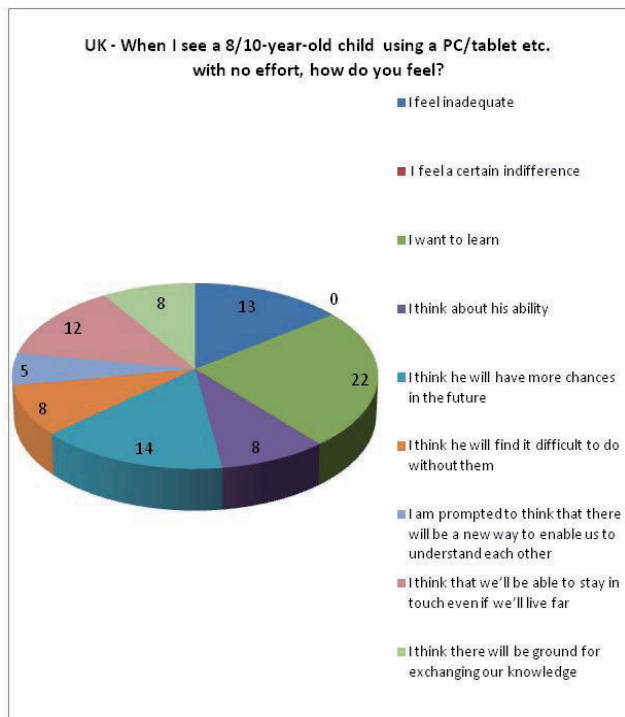


Figure 24a. Digital competence – pre test

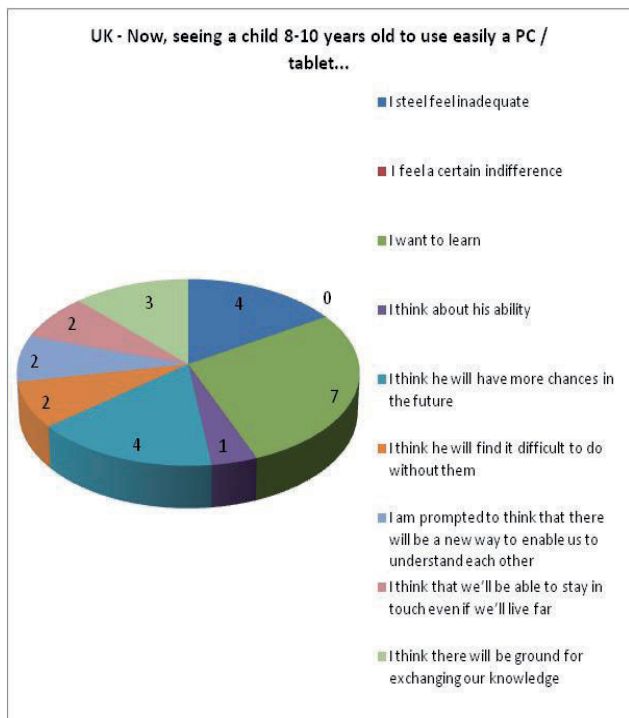


Figure 24b. Digital competence – post test

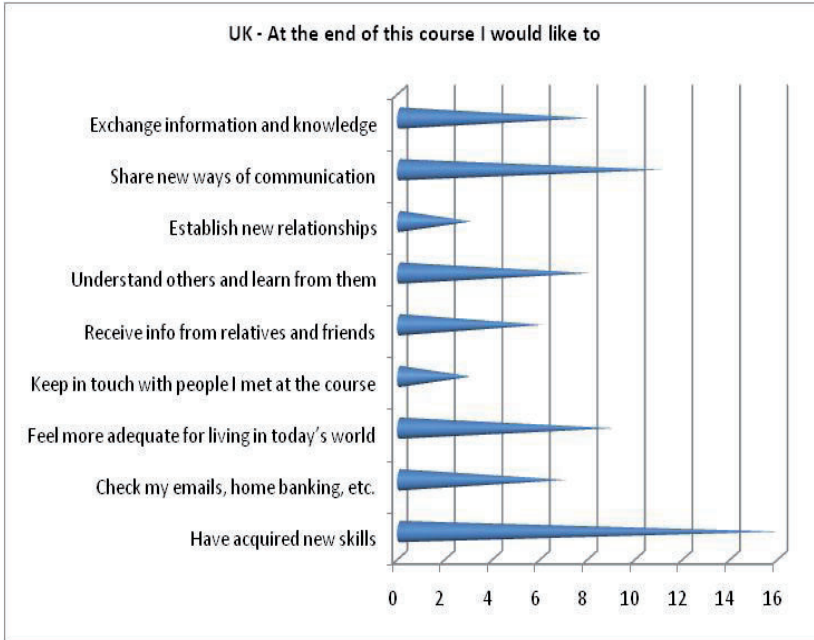


Figure 25a. Digital competence – pre test

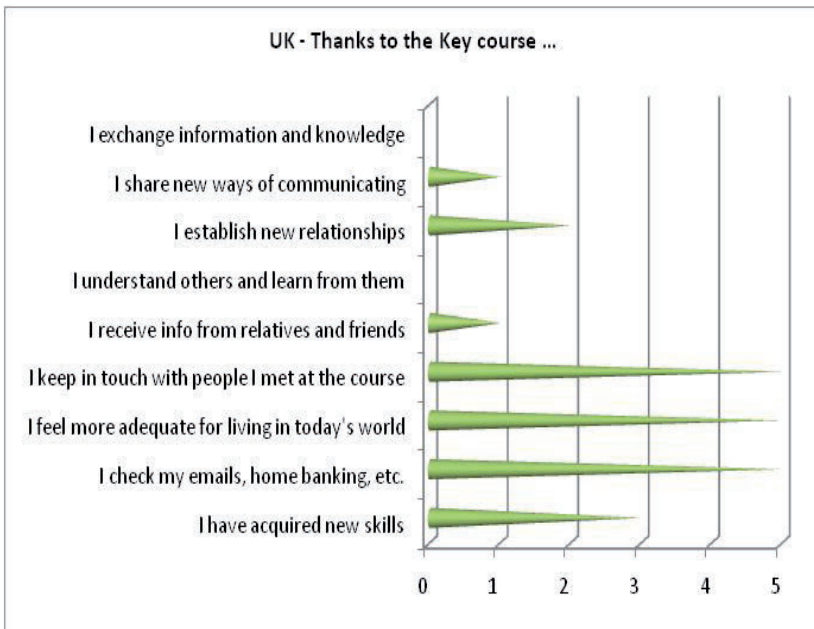


Figure 25b. Digital competence – post test

## ELDERLY PEOPLE IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IN THE LIGHT OF THE RESULTS OF NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

ALEKSANDRA MARCINKIEWICZ-WILK

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
aleksandra.marcinkiewicz@uwr.edu.pl

MAGDALENA KASPRZAK

University of Wrocław (Poland)  
magdalenakasprzak@onet.eu

### AN ELDERLY PERSON IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

The information society is characterized by a high rate of changes associated with the rapid development of new technologies. For this reason knowledge quickly becomes outdated which forces people to constantly update the information they know. In a society based on information, education becomes a strategic factor for social development and lifelong learning is essential to achieve this goal.

These days, man is an individual seeking for the meaning of life through knowledge, and learning is an essential element of the life of the information era (Dubas, 2002, pp. 150-151). Learning is thus the only method which enables a person to keep up with the changes and consequently to go about in the social reality.

Keeping up with the rapid changes which the information society entails is a challenge for a modern man (Dzięgielewska, 2002, p. 55). The reality in which he comes to live is unstable and deprived of predictability so familiar role models do not work in new situations. This forces the man to take non-standard decisions without certainty of their effectiveness. The information society is often called a society of young people because due to the rate of changes and technological progress only young people from an early age are able to keep up with new technologies. Older people who grew up and were raised in completely different conditions are in a more difficult situation. The lack of crucial skills in the information society and lesser adaptability to changing conditions can lead to marginalization and consequently social exclusion from the group.

This issue is very important because parallel to the changes associated with the formation of the information society we are dealing with a progressive aging of the population in rapidly developing countries. Amid the growing number of



seniors in the population the threat of marginalization of older people in the information society is becoming a huge problem and its solution is one of the priorities of European countries .

It should be noted that the problem is significant because the elderly people are considered as a specific social group which is vulnerable to cyber exclusion. As noted by Ewa Frąckowicz, information and communication technologies (ICT) can have a positive impact on improving the performance of existing operations which will contribute to avoiding the problems of seniors such as stress or saving money. Moreover, ICT will enable older people to carry out new tasks, not staying behind the development of society thus reducing the risk of digital exclusion. As a result, implementing ICT in the lives of older people will improve the quality of life, better health behaviour and can be used to counteract the problems associated with hearing, vision, mobility and fosters greater independence in late adulthood (Frąckiewicz, 2009, p. 31-39). The problem of digital exclusion of older people has been recognized by the European Union which is reflected in the document *i2010 - A European Information Society for growth and employment* which raises the issue of seniors living in a digital world (Frąckiewicz, 2009, p. 31-39). In this context there is a need to develop institutions that execute the idea of lifelong learning, and avoid e-exclusion among seniors.

The inadequacy of the competences of the elderly people to the conditions of modern reality may be due to the fact that with age the adaptability is reduced. On the other hand it is important to remember that these people were brought up in a time when technology development did not proceed rapidly. Older people have yet to learn these technology skills that the young generation learns through education .

Analysis of the literature in this area can extend the claim that the problem of marginalization of the social group is due to the competence gap in the use of tele - information technology. Learning is therefore seen as an important element incorporating seniors into society.

Regarding the position of older people in the information society researchers make a diagnosis that this social group is the most vulnerable to e - exclusion (*digital divide*). However, it should be noted that an objective assessment of the state of things may not always be identical to the assessment of the representatives of that group . The fact that older people use less technologies does not mean that they see it the same way. For this reason it is worth looking at the issue not only from an objective observer but also from the perspective of seniors who are embedded in an information society.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study was to gain knowledge of how the elderly people perceive the information society. It was important for researchers to get to know the individual perspective in the context of civilization changes. Considering that, the research has been carried out in the interpretative paradigm. This choice is justified by



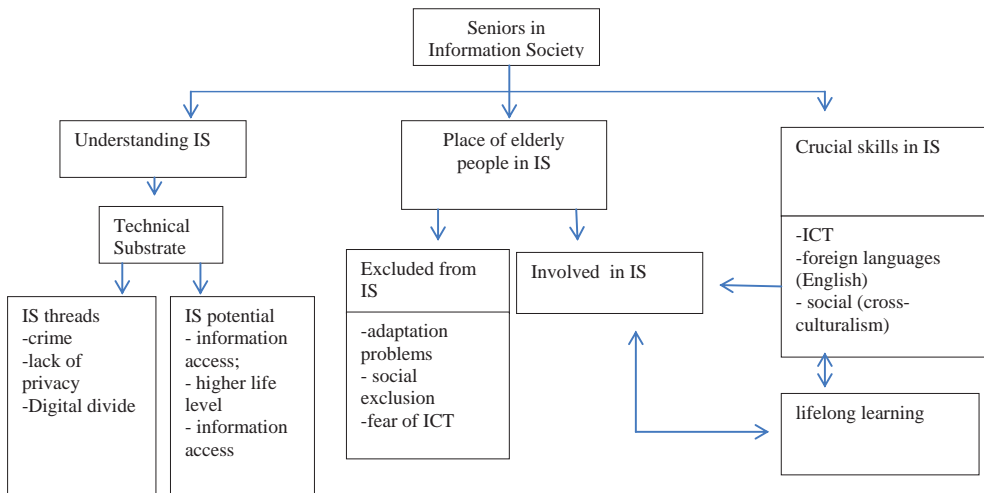
the fact that the proponents of this trend assume that the objectivist conception of "bare facts" and the objectivism contribute to a deadlock of human rich existence in specific and rigid framework of laws and assumptions. Acting according to these demands will provoke - according to M. Malewski - natural destruction of the object of knowledge (1998, p. 28). The interpretative paradigm of scientific knowledge emphasizes the natural ability of the knowing subject. Giving a credit for these capacities allows slackening the mandatory requirements, embarrassing valid scientific method and giving it subjectivity. The methodological postulate of understanding which expresses the permission to explore the interpretation, creates a situation of cognitive freedom.

The method which was used in the study was an open interview. The purpose of the interview is to get information of the course of events, processes of change, behaviour and reports at *first-hand* (Teusz, 2002, pp. 92-93). This type of interview is usually based on the acceptance of the surveyed people taking into account the fact that these opinions are constructed in a certain situation. This method enables us to create the meaning of creating interpretation of life which is subjective so it makes sense for the one who is telling a story and is situated in a cultural context (Olsen, 2004, p. 34). In the present studies the context of the subject of experiment was the information society.

Research was carried out in three organizations involved in the project KEY: Proscientia Publica (Poland), Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy) and Kairos Europe (United Kingdom). In every organization open interviews were held (non-standardized) with project participants in their native language. 27 people aged over 60 years (10 men and 17 women) were interviewed. This was followed by transcription of the interviews. The method of analysis of the collected empirical material was qualitative content analysis. The interviews were conducted during the project KEY from March to November 2015.

When making a qualitative analysis of the data it is necessary in the first place to collect and prepare the data for research then extract the individual of analysis. The next step is to determine the categories and coding scheme according to which the entire text will be coded. The last stage of the research is to interpret the data and draw conclusions (Zhang, Wildemuth). Earl Babbie as one of the procedures of qualitative content analysis, recommends the creation of conceptual maps which is a graphical form showing the relationship between concepts (2013, pp. 343-435).

The analysis unit in this study was the whole narrative of a subject. Coding was carried out independently by two researchers. Then the codes were compared and a common code was developed. The next step was to create a category for all empirical material and to indicate the relationship between the different categories as shown in the diagram below.



**Diagram 1.** Seniors in the information society – relations between categories.

Source: own research.

## THE RESULTS OF OWN RESEARCH

Qualitative analysis of the study reveals an interesting picture of the information society from the perspective of the surveyed people. It is worth noting that despite the research in three different countries the subjects spoke up often in a similar manner and pointed to the similar aspects.

The subjects defining the term “information society” pointed to the technical substrate in the first place. According to the respondents new technologies are the key element of the new reality. On the other hand what characterizes the people is the fact that they can use these technologies.

*By information society I understand a society that is already using media such as Internet, modern ways to communicate, access to information. It is such a society that can benefit from this and can get this information and use it (Barbara, Poland).*

*Globalization is a critical aspect of our society. Using a personal computer is very important, but it has removed the physical contact between people (Vitaliano, Italy).*

These statements indicate that the dominant factor in the new reality is new technology. Moreover, it is noted that the use of ICT changes the current way of life especially in terms of communicating with each other. Older people when defining the term “information society” often pointed to its pros and cons. The bad parts can be described as risk and some of them are:

- **lack of privacy:**

*(...) I don't like social networks, because I prefer the direct contact with people. I like my privacy, so I don't use Facebook (Gabriella, Italy);*

- **cybernet crime:**

*I find it quite difficult to engage with online transactions involving security, such as banking and shopping. One of my main concerns is trusting sites and not knowing enough about online security. I fear that as a senior I am the easy target of various internet frauds, from identity theft to having my bank account (Franco, UK);*

- **excluding people who do not know how to use a computer:**

*There are just a few elderly people who want to develop their skills. Courses like that provide a basic knowledge.. Some of my friends do not have access to a computer and they do not miss that. What is more they say that they do not need that. I believe they tried to learn how to use the computer but something went wrong. They stay at home and sit in front of the TV which keeps them away from the activity. There is a big group of people like that. (Elzbieta, Poland).*

*You have to know how to use new technologies. Even older adults should use them, otherwise they will remain isolated. Even in the world of politics blogging is used. To enroll children in school, you have to use a PC. Even languages are important (Paul, Italy).*

As can be noted the respondents are aware of the danger that the Internet may bring. They also notice a kind of exhibitionism in the social media which is seen negatively. However, the biggest challenge of the new reality is marginalization of people who do not know how to use new technology.

It is also important to notice that the respondents pointed to many opportunities that the development of cybernization brings. Such as:

- Possible contact with relatives who live far away:

*I keep my transaction to emailing friends who live abroad on birthdays and such (Avis, UK).*

*I couldn't imagine that I would talk with my nephew in Boston on skype (...). There are some innovations that should be known by older adults (Giovanni).*

- **Technological development improves life quality:**

*Progress helps the elderly, in the fields of medicine and technology. It's important to continue to learn because it keeps the brain alive (Antonio).*

- **Access to information:**

*Information is pervasive. When I get up in the morning I turn on the computer on TVN24 to find out what's new, I check my e-mails right away, unfortunately I check them habitually 3-4 times a day to check if there are new feeds from family or friends on facebook or other social media. Thanks to that I have an easy access to the information. (Urszula, Poland).*

Elderly people who took part in the study indicate thoughtfulness of the challenges of the information society. As mentioned before they do appreciate its opportunities but also see some limitations or even danger. What is interesting is that opportunities were highlighted more often than drawbacks.

It is worth noticing that in many dialogues the respondents pointed that in the information society there are two groups of seniors. The first group are the people who cannot catch up with the changes and they feel flustered. They sceptically watch changes that surround them and they do not want to learn to use new technologies or they find it difficult. One of the examples of this group is Carla from Great Britain:

*I have a problem with using computers mainly as my eyesight is not very good these days. Reading in general is getting harder and so I struggle quite a lot to read from a computer screen. It helps when the tutor changes the size on the display screen, but I would not know how to do that myself. I also find it hard to remember information, so I have to make sure to note everything down from email addresses, passwords and each step is hard. I don't really have a practical use for computers in my everyday life.*

The dialogues show that the older people are the more difficulties they have to keep up with changes and with assimilating new information.

The second group includes seniors who actively participate in the information society. These people notice the opportunities offered by the development of technology. They are open to the acquisition of knowledge and skills which are essential in the information society.

Respondents show three crucial competences that are important in the information society. The first one is the ability to use new technologies. In the responses this category appears most often and is regarded as the most important. The statements below confirm that claim:

*I wish that more and more people faced computers. I consider the Internet as another great discovery such as Gutenberg's. That's why I think that everyone should have access to it and everyone should be interested in it because it is interesting and it gives a lot of opportunities (Elżbieta, Polska).*

The second most frequent competence is speaking foreign languages. Respondents think that the most important language in the information society is English which helps us to communicate worldwide. Respondents also notice that today's European society is a multicultural society and speaking foreign languages facilitates getting to know and understand other cultures. Learning English also helps to master the computer and Internet skills. It is an interesting fact that the participants of the projects believe that learning a foreign language exercises your brain. It can therefore be considered as part of gerontological prevention.

The last category mentioned which appears quite common in responses is related to social skills. The respondents understand it as the ability to enter into interpersonal relationships. They note that many older people have problems with making friends, expressing their opinions on a forum or solving conflicts. The respondents assess themselves as people who have interpersonal skills. According to the people who participated in the study not having this skill significantly impedes participation in social life for elderly people.

Social skills help seniors to overcome the fear of getting into relationships, making friends. The ability to create a network of informal contacts is particularly important in the context of the problem of isolation of seniors. Social skills seemed to be very important for elderly people in current Europe which is the place where many cultures meet. The respondents want to understand other cultures and interact with their representatives. This is illustrated by the following statements:

*Social skills are very important. It's important to know how to listen, how to accommodate, to be able to relate to the others (Maria, Italy).*

*It's important to communicate with foreign people. So it is significant, for me, to improve my social skills to better understand the others, to use empathy. I love languages and I do refresher courses. I do not like staying at home (Gabriella, Italy).*

*Dialogical skills, to better understand people. Social skills are essential to make your own life more rich and to be connected with other people (Quintino, Italy).*

Respondents emphasize that if they want to get to know other cultures speaking foreign languages is essential:

*You have to know languages, so you can travel and learn more about the others (Grazilla, Italy).*

*You have to know the languages to be updated. Learning about other cultures is important too (Giancarlo, Italy).*

When analyzing the study it was noticed that people recognize that ICT competences and the knowledge of foreign languages are the essential skills. Using new technologies allow you to access the technological benefits of society and speaking foreign languages helps to interact with other cultures and understand them. In contrast the social skills complement the other skills and allow full participation in the knowledge society.

It should be noted that respondents consider learning to be very important. Seniors admitted that nowadays a person who does not learn is doomed to social marginalization. Seniors realize that keeping up with the changes is possible thanks to educational activity. Continual learning helps to master the above-mentioned competencies. However it should be mentioned that in the study there were some statements which pointed out problems with learning arising from old age. Learning in the information society should be tailored to age, which means it should be flexible and well planned. Seniors should receive knowledge step by step so that they are able to remember it. It is important to repeat each exercise (e.g. using computer) because it increases the efficiency of learning. It is often pointed that grandchildren or younger people help seniors with new technologies. There is a reference to pre-figurative culture by Margaret Mead where younger generations teach older.

*I think that elderly people are lost and as they have no grandchildren who can help them they are excluded from society (Barbara, Poland).*

*(...) there are so called lighthouse keepers. They are young people who are willing to help seniors at any time. You can call them or write an e-mail and they answer with instructions. This proves that young people can help (Urszula, Poland).*

Seniors expect to be included in the information society and educational activity should ensure that. Elderly people want to feel needed, which is why volunteering is very important in this aspect:

*Society can hardly meet the needs of the elderly; we will be more and more a high number and this will be a problem. Of course training could help the elderly. We must create the group, help each other. Society could provide opportunities so that older adults could give their own resources, for example in volunteering (Gabriella, Italy).*

Moreover they expect that the society itself should make an effort to integrate seniors in the mainstream of social life:

*Society should place the elderly in a circuit, so they can feel more involved in society, which evolves continuously, even regarding human relationships (Giovanni).*

*Society should engage them socially, not leave them alone (Vitaliano).*

The way to incorporate seniors in the information society is education. Respondents postulated organization of more educational activities which will teach new skills with the note that that they should be tailored to the capabilities of older people:

*To meet the needs of the elderly, it is important to keep them engaged. Volunteering, for example, allows elderly people to be involved in society. It's important to continue to learn, to acquire new knowledge. I have always studied, I have always updated my knowledge. Now I try to keep the memory coached, as I don't want to lose my mental functions (Lucia 2).*

*To meet the needs of the elderly, society could foster intergenerational exchanges. It would be nice to be more stimulated, especially continuing to learn in a fun way (Lucia).*

The obvious conclusion follows that older people want to participate in the information society and they are expecting that the society itself will. They realize that learning is the way to master the crucial skills which in turn will allow them to fully participate in the society.

## CONCLUSIONS

The surveyed people define society through the prism of technological development. Seniors proved to be reflective observers of the new reality. The greatest risk which was identified by the respondents is related to the high pace of changes of the new reality and regarding the adaptation difficulties of elderly people. Seniors themselves claim that only through continuous learning is it possible to keep up with the changes. Besides the issues related to the dynamics of change and the necessity to adapt to them, seniors pointed to the threat of losing privacy in the Internet or problems with interpersonal communication which has now mediated character. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the respondents noted lots of benefits that the information society provides. These include the possibility to stay in touch with the loved ones etc.

The study shows that seniors are a homogenous group in the information society. They can be divided into those who do not keep up with the changes and remain outside the mainstream of social life and those who are seeking to stay up to date with their knowledge and skills, and fully participate in society. In this context the educational activity is of great importance. Seniors who learn adapt better to the changes and they take advantage of the information society to develop themselves.

In this context we can point to three areas of educational interactions which are the most significant in the society dominated by information connected



to new technologies (ICT), foreign languages and interpersonal skills. Those three areas should be particularly taken into account in designing educational processes directed to elderly people because they refer to the challenges which information society implies. Other crucial skills should not be omitted in the planning of educational process however the respondents emphasized the importance of these three areas.

Analysis of the data also indicates that when preparing the educational proposal for elderly people, the specific learning skills of this group should be considered. To sum up, the research has shown that educational activity plays an important role in adaptation to the information society. Seniors who are learning see the changes resulting from a society based on the information in the positive light. They are aware of challenges of the new reality and through education they try to mitigate the negative effects of the social development but also as far as possible benefit from its positive side.

It is also worth noting that for the respondents the main reason to take up educational activity is participating in social life. Those people through learning want to be useful in society. It is also an important factor counteracting the feeling of loneliness and social exclusion.

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**OUTLINES OF WORKSHOPS  
CONDUCTED IN THE KEY PROJECT**



## **INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP - OUTLINES**

**BEATA DZIAŁA**

University of Wrocław (Poland)

**beatadziala@gmail.com**

- Workshop 1 – What does the (my) learning process look like?
- Workshop 2 – Historical moments of the background of my life
- Workshop 3 – Verbal communication
- Workshop 4 – Non-verbal communication
- Workshop 5 – Conflict resolution strategies
- Workshop 6 – Negotiations and conflict resolution techniques
- Workshop 7 – Assertiveness
- Workshop 8 – Emotional intelligence
- Workshop 9 – Self-presentation
- Workshop 10 – Information society

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP / WORKSHOP No. 1

**Topic:** *What does the (my) learning process look like?*

**Time:** 90 min.

### Goals of education:

Sharing their own experiences

Development of the ability to talk about their experiences

Development of empathy

Reflection on their own process of learning

Introduction to creating the education biography

**Key competences:** empathy, ability to discuss in a group

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Getting to know each other	Each participant is presented and gives some information characteristics specific for him.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to know each other by participants integration</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
2.	Educationally important moments in life - discussion	Question to the group: What are important moments of learning in our lives? Conclusions trainer shows as a graph on the board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to biographical learning</li> <li>• Reflection on important moments in life</li> </ul>	10 min.	Board/ flipchart, chalk/ marker
3.	Educationally important moments in my life - work in groups	Participants in groups (3 or 4 persons) talk about important educational moments in their lives. Then the whole group talk about this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing skills in a group discussion</li> <li>• Sharing their own experiences</li> </ul>	25 min.	---

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
4.	Drawing a graph of the learning process – task	Each participant draws a graph of their learning process, selecting the most important moments. Then the whole group talk about this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on their own process of learning</li> <li>• Introduction to creating the educational biography</li> </ul>	10 min.	Sheets of paper, pens
5.	Educational contexts – discussion	Questions to the group: In which contexts can we talk about learning? If we learn only in institutions? When we learn the most?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on the ways of learning, important educational moments</li> <li>• Stimulate reflection on non-formal education</li> </ul>	15 min.	---
6.	Types of education – lecture	Lecture about types of education we can find in pedagogical literature: formal, informal, non-formal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of types of education</li> <li>• Using this knowledge in the educational biography</li> </ul>	10 min.	Board/flipchart
7.	Closing, evaluation	Each participant says what was most important to him for these classes. Each participant is asked to propose a subject related to revolutionary event in his life, for the next workshop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Reflection of the content of the workshop.</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP / WORKSHOP No. 2

**Topic:** *Historical moments of the background of my life.*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Sharing their own experiences
- Developing the ability to talk about their experiences
- Location of their educational process in a wider social context
- Developing empathy
- Reflection on their own process of learning
- Promoting history through the prism of their own experience

**Key competencies:** empathy, ability to discuss in group, ability to share their own experiences

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	The story of the objects, which everyone had to bring.	Participants sit in a circle. Each in turn tells what object he brought and why? With which revolutionary event in their life is it connected? What was the influence of this event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on their own important life experiences</li> <li>• Develop the ability to share their own experiences</li> </ul>	30 min.	Material objects, which everyone had to bring.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
2.	If the revolutionary events in the life of the participants had some connection with the revolutionary events for the whole society in your country? What is the historical background? – discussion	Question to the group: If the revolutionary events in the life of the participants had some connection with the revolutionary events for the whole society in your country? What is the historical background?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of connection their own experiences with historical context</li> <li>• Develop ability to discuss in a group</li> </ul>	20 min.	---
3.	Important historical events that could affect our lives – task	Participants in small groups (3 or 4 persons) write about historical events that might affect their lives. Then we talk together about whether they actually affected them and how.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the ability to share their own experiences</li> <li>• Development of reflexivity</li> </ul>	20 min.	Sheets of paper, pens
4.	What is the connection between those experiences and education? – task	Participants reflect and answer questions: What is the connection between those experiences and education? Which experiences taught me the most? Which kind of education is it (according to first classes). Then those participants who want to tell answers to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of their education in a wider social context</li> <li>• Reflection on the factors affecting learning</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens.
5.	Closing, evaluation	Participants answer the question: Were you able to connect today's facts of your life to education, and had you thought about it that way? Each participant is asked to create his education biography at home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of workshop</li> </ul>	5 min.	---



## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No. 3

**Topic:** *Verbal communication*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

Learning the basic types of communication

Development of skills in verbal communication

Development of knowledge of interpersonal communication

**Key competencies:** interpersonal (verbal) communication

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Communication – „brainstorm“ – task	Participants in small groups (3 or 4 persons) write everything they link to interpersonal communication. Then the whole group talking about this and trainer saves it as a “mind map” <sup>3</sup> on the board or flipchart.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To obtain information on the participants' knowledge on communication</li> <li>• Comparison of the information with the rest of the group</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens, board/ flipchart.
2.	“Reporter” – task	Participants work in pairs. Person A asks person B questions about her life and trying to remember as many details as possible. After 5 min. they change roles. Then the participants introduce their partners. Discussion: What in our daily communication is fact and what is added by our opinion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the ability to listen to others and exchange of information</li> </ul>	20 min.	---

<sup>3</sup> A “mind map” is a diagram used to visually organize information. A mind map is often created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the center of a blank landscape page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words are added. Major ideas are connected directly to the central concept, and other ideas branch out from those. How to make a “mind map”: <http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Mind-Map>.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
3.	"I-messages" – task	Trainer explains what the "I-message" <sup>4</sup> in everyday communication is and how it can be used to develop groups (2 or 3 persons) get a task: to create a given situation "I-messages". Then these small groups presents their work and the whole group discuss it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge about the type of communication – "I-messages"</li> <li>• Developing communication effectiveness</li> </ul>	30 min.	Cards with examples (annex – 3 version), pens.
4.	"One – and two-way communication" – task	We divide the group into two teams. Teams draw the figures without seeing it, only one person sees it and tells other what to do. In the first part, participants can not ask questions to the person. In the second part, they can talk to each other. We measure time in the first and in the second part. The winner is the group which most precisely and quickly will have drawn the figure. Discussion: We compare time of work and figures. We talk about "one – and two-way communication" and which one is better?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge the type of communication: "one – and two-way communication"</li> <li>• reflection on ways to communicate</li> <li>• develop competences in communication</li> </ul>	20 min.	Figure drawing (annex), sheets of paper, pens, stopwatch.
5.	Closing, evaluation	Each participant says what he had or had not liked during the classes with "I-message".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Remembering the discussed contents</li> </ul>	5 min.	---

<sup>4</sup> In interpersonal communication, an 'I-message' or 'I-statement' is an assertion about the feelings, beliefs, values etc. of the person speaking, generally expressed as a sentence beginning with the word „I“, and is contrasted with a „you-message“ or „you-statement“, which often begins with the word „you“ and focuses on the person spoken to. While the underlying rationale and approach to I-messages is similar in various systems, there are both three-part and four-part models for constructing I-messages. A three-part model is proposed by the University of Tennessee Family & Consumer Sciences for improving communication with children:

1. I feel... (Insert feeling word)
2. when... (tell what caused the feeling).
3. I would like... (tell what you want to happen instead).

**Annex: Task 3.1**

Create messages that should be used in such situations, following the scheme:

1. I feel... (your feelings)
2. when... (description of the situation)
3. I would like...

1. Your friend did not come to the meeting.

2. A colleague tells you that he has no time and you need to do the job yourself although you both had to do it together.

**Annex: Task 3.2**

Create messages that should be used in such situations, following the scheme:

1. I feel... (your feelings)
2. when... (description of the situation)
3. I would like...

1. Your friend wants to go shopping although he/she knows that you feel bad.

2. Your colleague picks up your phone and starts to view its contents.

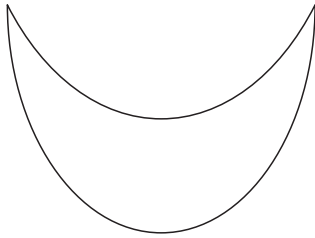
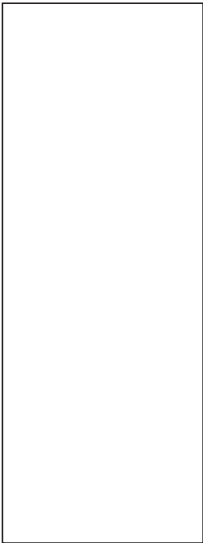
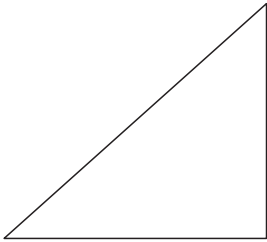
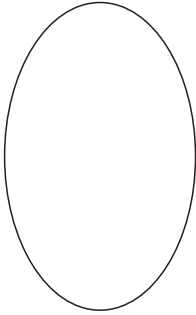
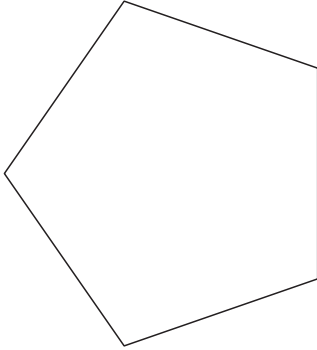
**Annex: Task 3.3**

Create messages that should be used in such situations, following the scheme:

1. I feel... (your feelings)
2. when... (description of the situation)
3. I would like...

1. A friend for the third time this month canceled a meeting with you at the last minute.

2. You are punished by your boss for the delay, which is not the result of your fault.



## **COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No. 4**

**Topic:** *Non-verbal communication*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

Development of knowledge in the field of non-verbal communication

Development of skills in non-verbal communication

Development of the ability to work in groups and sharing experiences/thoughts

**Key competencies:** Non-verbal communication, interpersonal communication

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	„Add your move“ – exercise	Group sits in the circle. A person (it could be a trainer) stands up and shows some gesture specific for him/her. Next person repeats the gesture and adds a new one. The game takes place without word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the ability to observe non-verbal language of others</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
2.	What is the non-verbal communication? – discussion	Questions to the group: What is the non-verbal communication? How it affects our daily life? Do we appreciate how important is it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of knowledge about non-verbal communication</li> <li>• To realize the importance of everyday non-verbal communication</li> </ul>	20 min.	---
3.	Types of emotions, discussion	Each participant gets a piece of paper and writes on it as many names of emotions as possible. Discussion: How do we show emotions? Do we always realize how we show emotions and how the others would see them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of an awareness of the emotional expression</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
4.	"Puns" - exercise	The group is divided into two teams. Each team in turn chooses one person, who gets from trainer cards with proverbs. Then he or she has to present the meaning in front of them without a word. The winner will be the group that will guess the highest number of proverbs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relaxation of the group</li> <li>Development of the skills in non-verbal communication</li> </ul>	20 min.	Cards with proverbs (annex).
5.	What types of non-verbal communication we recognize? - exercise, discussion	Question to the group: What types of non-verbal communication we recognize? Trainer completes answers to the following: looking and exchange glances, gestures, mimicry, posture and body movements, touch and physical contact, body position during a conversation, voice, appearance, the distance between interlocutors. Then participants in groups (3 or 4 persons) have to answer to the question: How those types of non-verbal communication will look like when the other person is positively and negatively oriented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of knowledge about non-verbal communication</li> <li>Development of skills in non-verbal communication</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens.
6.	Closing, evaluation	Every participant is asked about elements of non-verbal communication she/ he has learned..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation</li> <li>Reflection on own way of communication</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

**Annex: Task 4**

1. A BAD WORKMAN BLAMES HIS TOOLS.
2. ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS.
3. A DROWNING MAN WILL CLUTCH AT A STRAW.
4. A LIE HAS NO LEGS.
5. A ROOM WITHOUT BOOKS IS A BODY WITHOUT A SOUL.
6. ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME.
7. ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR.
8. AS YOU MAKE YOUR BED, SO YOU MUST LIE UPON IT.
9. CLOTHES DO NOT MAKE THE MAN.
10. DON'T BURN YOUR BRIDGES BEHIND YOU.
11. DON'T CRY OVER SPILT MILK.
12. FORBIDDEN FRUIT IS SWEETEST.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP / WORKSHOP No. 5

**Topic:** *Conflict resolution strategies*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Learning basic conflict resolution strategies
- Practicing ways of solving conflicts
- Developing ability to share their own experiences
- Reflection on their own ways of solving conflicts

**Key competencies:** the ability to resolve conflicts

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	What is the conflict? – discussion	Trainer asks the group: What conflict is? What types of conflicts we can have?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining concepts of “conflict”</li> <li>• To obtain information on the participants’ knowledge on conflicts</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
2.	What styles of conflict resolution we can identify? – task	Participants work in groups (3, 4 persons). They get a cards with the types of conflict resolution (avoidance, conformity, competition, compromise, cooperation). Then they ascribe to each kind of resolving conflicts, a situation from everyday life which could be resolved like that. Discussion: Are there worse and better methods of conflict resolution? Or does it depend on the situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning about basic types of solving conflicts</li> <li>• Reflection on types of solving conflicts</li> </ul>	30 min.	Cards with types of conflicts (annex), pens

3.	Resolving conflict situations – task	Participants in groups (3 or 4 persons) get the card with conflict situations (one for a group). The task is to prepare the role play with the best way in their opinion to resolve that conflict situation. Discussion: How did you feel in those roles? Which role was better and worst for you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practicing conflict resolutions</li> <li>• Practicing the selection of conflict resolution strategies</li> </ul>	20 min.	Cards with description of the situations (annex)
4.	Conflict situations in my life, that were best solved – work in groups, discussion	Participants in groups (3, 4 persons) talk about important conflict situations in their life, that were best solved in their opinion and why they think so. Discussion in group about ways of solving problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the ability to share their own experiences</li> <li>• Reflection on own ways of solving conflicts</li> </ul>	20 min.	---
5.	Closing, evaluation	Each participant says what today on classes was: 1. Positive, 2. Negative, 3. Interesting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Developing the ability to talk about their own feelings</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

### Annex: Task 2

1. AVOIDANCE
2. CONFORMITY
3. COMPETITION
4. COMPROMISE
5. COOPERATION



**Annex: Task 3**

1. Your husband/wife/partner wants to go for a holiday to a place you don't like and you don't want to go there. You would like to visit your family who live near but he/she don't want to. Suggest a solution.
2. Your friend borrowed from you your favorite book in the collector's edition. She/he had to return it to you a few months ago, but all this time she/he didn't. Accidentally you meet her/him in the store. What do you do?
3. You really want to get to the photography course organized for free in your city. You found out that there is only one vacancy. Moreover, colleague who also wants to get on this course, tells you that he know the decisive person in commission. What are you doing?
4. Your child tells you that he/she wants to move out in this month to another country, to boyfriend / girlfriend he/she just met. You don't trust the new partner of your child and you don't want your child to emigrate. What are you doing?

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP/ / WORKSHOP No. 6

**Topic:** *Negotiations and conflict resolution techniques*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

Knowing negotiation tactics and styles

Developing negotiation skills

Developing conflict resolution skills

Reflection on negotiation techniques in everyday life

**Key competences:** negotiation skills, the ability to resolve conflicts

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	What negotiations are? – discussion	Questions to the group: What negotiations are? When do we negotiate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the group's knowledge on negotiations</li> <li>• Reflection on the concept of negotiations</li> </ul>	15 min.	---
2.	What are the styles of negotiation and how are they characterized? – lecture	Trainer talks about styles of negotiation and what characteristics they relates to 1. Hard 2. Soft 3. Principled <sup>5</sup> Then he/ she writes it on a table. Question to the group: Which style in your opinion is the most constructive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning basic negotiation styles</li> <li>• Reflection on the negotiation styles</li> </ul>	15 min.	Board/flipchart, chalk/pen

<sup>5</sup> **Soft.** These people see negotiation as too close to competition, so they choose a gentle style of bargaining. They offers they make are not in their best interests, they yield to others' demands, avoid confrontation, and they maintain good relations with fellow negotiators. Their perception of others is one of friendship, and their goal is agreement. They do not separate the people from the problem, but are soft on both. They avoid contests of wills and will insist on agreement, offering solutions and easily trusting others and changing their opinions.

3.	Negotiation tactics* - task	Participants in groups get the cards with negotiation tactics and with their descriptions. The question is: Which tactics we use most often in everyday life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning negotiation tactics</li> <li>• Reflection on their own methods of negotiations</li> </ul>	20 min.	Cards with tactics, pens
4.	"Eggs from Hong" - exercise	Trainer divides the group into two teams. One is from the organization "Save Africa" and another from "Happy World". Each group gets the instruction and must keep it to themselves. Participants negotiate and have to decide who will get eggs from Hong. (According to the instructions one organization wants to get eggshells and one egg yolk, but most groups do not come to the point that they need different parts of eggs. They are more focused on maintaining secrecy and winning. - the resolution in fact is to share the eggs). Discussion: Each group tells what has been achieved during the negotiations. What negotiation tactics or strategies were the best?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing negotiation skills</li> <li>• Using the knowledge about strategies and negotiation techniques</li> </ul>	30 min.	Instructions for two groups
5.	Evaluation	Each participant tells whether and how he/she will use the knowledge from the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Reflection on the content of classes</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

**Hard.** These people use contentious strategies to influence, utilizing phrases such as „this is my final offer“ and „take it or leave it.“ They make threats, are distrustful of others, insist on their position, and apply pressure to negotiate. They see others as adversaries and their ultimate goal is victory. Additionally, they will search for one single answer, and insist you agree on it. They do not separate the people from the problem (as with soft bargainers), but they are hard on both the people involved and the problem.

**Principled.** Individuals who bargain this way seek integrative solutions, and do so by sidestepping commitment to specific positions. They focus on the problem rather than the intentions, motives, and needs of the people involved. They separate the people from the problem, explore interests, avoid bottom lines, and reach results based on standards (which are independent of personal will). They base their choices on objective criteria rather than power, pressure, self-interest, or an arbitrary decisional procedure. These criteria may be drawn from moral standards, principles of fairness, professional standards, tradition, etc.

**Annex to the task 3:**

\* Negotiation tactics:

1. Competitive – leading to the advantage, achieves more than the other person/ group.
2. Cooperative – leading to develop common conditions, with benefits for any persons/ groups negotiating.
3. Creative – consisting in inventing new solutions, creative proposals, has to increase the interest of the parties to the agreement. Do not have to give equal benefits, or be connected with the same costs.

**Annex to the task 4:**

Instructions 1- “Save Africa”

Imagine that you are working in an international organization “Save Africa”. Recently an unusual type of fertilizer has been invented. With it you can grow crops in the Sahara and other deserts. It will eliminate the problem of hunger in Africa. However, the production of this fertilizer needs a substance found in eggs of one species of birds, inhabiting only the Island Hong. It is obtained after processing the egg yolks. Those birds, unfortunately do not live anywhere outside the island Hong. Also attempts at artificial breeding have failed. To manufacture the fertilizer you need to get as many of the eggs from those that are currently on the island. So, you fly to the Island Hong to buy all the eggs.

However, there is a big problem. You know that a representation of another organization called “Happy World” is going to the Island Hong for the same purpose – wants to buy 100% of the eggs. Although you do not know why they want to buy eggs. You meet them on the plane. Your goal is to get their permission to take out as many eggs as possible (preferably 100%). You have to work it out before plane lands. (You have 10 minutes).

Instruction 2 – “Happy World”

Imagine that you are working in an international organization “Happy World”. Recently it has invented an unusual type a vaccine, that would prevent almost all known forms of cancer. However, the production of this vaccine needs substance found in eggs of one species of birds, inhabiting only the Island Hong. It is obtained after processing eggshells. Those birds, unfortunately do not live anywhere outside the Island Hong. Also attempts at artificial breeding have failed. To manufacture the vaccine you need to get as many of the eggs from those that are currently on the island. So, you’re flying to the Island Hong to buy all the eggs. However, there is a big problem. You know that a representation of another organization called “Save Africa” is going to the Island Hong for the same purpose – wants to buy 100% of the eggs. Although you do not know why they want to buy eggs. You meet them on the plane. Your goal is to get their permission to take out as many eggs as possible (preferably 100%). You have to work it out before plane lands. (You have 10 minutes).

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP / WORKSHOP No. 7

**Topic:** *Assertiveness*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

Learning the ways of assertive communication

Developing assertive communication skills

Developing ability to talk about their own feelings

Reflection on their own level of assertiveness

**Key competence:** assertiveness

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	What assertiveness is? – task	Trainer writes on a board / flipchart slogan “assertiveness”. Then he / her asks participants to tell all connotations they have with this word and writes them around word “assertiveness”. After that trainer explains what assertiveness is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the concept of assertiveness</li> <li>• Getting to know knowledge of the participants on this concept</li> </ul>	10 min.	Board / flipchart, chalk / pen
2.	Personal boundaries - lecture	Trainer says that assertiveness is also connected with our physical sphere. It is important to remember that no one has the right to cross our personal boundaries, and we have to keep in mind knowledge about the boundaries of others <sup>6</sup> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on assertiveness in physical space</li> <li>• Knowing the distance zones in contact with other people</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

<sup>6</sup> 1. Intimate distance ranges from touching to about 18 inches (46 cm) apart, and is reserved for lovers, children, close family members, friends, and pet animals.

2. Personal distance begins about an arm's length away; starting around 18 inches (46 cm) from the person and ending about 4 feet (122 cm) away. This space is used in conversations with friends, to chat with associates, and in group discussions.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
3.	The scale of protection of personal boundaries * – task	Participants in groups (3,4 persons) get “the scale of protection of personal boundaries” and description of the situations. The task is to write the messages for every point of the scale for those situations. Discussion: What do you think about this scale? If it was easy to write those messages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the skills of assertive behavior in difficult situations</li> <li>Learning the ability to respond in difficult situations</li> </ul>	20 min.	Cards with scale and situations (2 versions – annex), pens
4.	Creating assertive statement – lecture	Trainer explains how an assertive message is created, according to the scheme: 1. Refusal 2. Saying what you do not want to do 3. Reason for refusal Then trainer asks participants to give examples of such messages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning the scheme of assertive conversation</li> <li>Developing assertive communication skills</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
5.	When to say “no”? – task	1. Participants recall two situations in which the last time someone asked them for a favor, and they agreed to, but did not want to do it. 2. Each participant divides his card into 4 parts. In the first column describes shortly the situations. In the second – what he/she gained by the fact that he/she didn't refuse. In the third – what he/she lost. In the fourth – what would happen if he/she would refuse. 3. Participants first individually, then in small groups (3 or 4) analyze their balances of “profit and loss”. Thinking if they acted rightly, how would they behave now, if these situations will be repeated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Realizing their rights to refuse</li> <li>Analyze the situation in their lives connected with assertiveness</li> <li>Analysis of their own behavior</li> </ul>	20 min.	Sheets of paper, pens

- Social distance ranges from 4 to 8 feet (1.2 m - 2.4 m) away from the person and is reserved for strangers, newly formed groups, and new acquaintances.
- Public distance includes anything more than 8 feet (2.4 m) away, and is used for speeches, lectures, and theater. Public distance is essentially that range reserved for larger audiences.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
6.	Feedback - lecture	Feedback – assertive return information. Trainer explains what feedback is and how to create that kind of message, according to the scheme: 1. Positive information 2. Negative information 3. Positive information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the ability to create an assertive feedback</li> <li>• Obtaining knowledge of assertive communication</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
7.	Evaluation	Each participant has to create feedback to partner from exercises or to trainer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Practicing feedback messages</li> <li>• Developing ability to talk about their own feelings</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

\* The scale of protection of personal boundaries:

1. Request
2. Feedback
3. Placing the border
4. Announcement of sanctions
5. Enforcement of the sanctions

You argue with a friend on a controversial topic. She/he insists on her/his sentence, not giving you the right to have your own opinion.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No. 8

**Topic:** *Emotional intelligence*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Developing an awareness of their own emotions
- Developing empathy
- Developing the ability to read emotions of other people
- Developing the ability to speak about their own emotions

**Key competencies:** emotional intelligence, ability to speak about their emotions

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	What is the emotional intelligence? – discussion	Trainer asks the group what they link to the concept of emotional intelligence. Then trainer says what emotional intelligence is and its characteristic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the concept of emotional intelligence</li> <li>• Reflection on the concept of emotional intelligence</li> </ul>	15 min.	---
2.	Self-awareness of emotions – task	Participants have to write on sheets of paper in two columns: 1. What emotions they had during the whole of yesterday?; 2. What situations caused those emotions? Questions: What emotions dominate during your day? What provokes such emotions? How can you influence your emotions, e. g. changing them into more positive ones? Discussion: We can deal with emotions in three ways: displacement or suppression, uncontrolled emotional outbursts, self-awareness – the best for us and should be practiced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an awareness of emotions</li> <li>• Developing the ability to recognize their own emotions</li> <li>• Self-reflection</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens



I.p.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
3.	Description of their own emotions – task	Participants in groups (3 or 4 persons) get cards on which everyday situations are described and have to answer questions: How would you feel at that moment? How is the best way to give the other person a message about their own emotions (You can use the knowledge about the “I-messages”)? Discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the ability to speak about their own emotions</li> <li>Developing an awareness of their own emotions</li> </ul>	15 min.	Cards with described situations (annex)
4.	What is active listening? – lecture	Trainer talks about concepts such as active listening, empathy, commitment, paraphrases in the conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the rules relating to active listening</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
5.	Use of paraphrases – task	Participants in pairs tell each other about a situation in their lives, which has recently provoked strong emotions in them. The person who is listening has the task to adhere to the principles of active listening and paraphrases. Questions: How did you feel at one and the other role? Why active listening is so important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development the ability to share their own emotions</li> <li>Development of active listening skills</li> </ul>	20 min.	---
6.	Empathy – task	Participants receive examples of cases written on cards. Person who wants, read them and whole group ask the questions: What do you think this person feels? What can be verbal and non-verbal signs of her/his emotions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the empathy</li> <li>Developing the ability to read emotions in others</li> </ul>	10 min.	Cards with described situations
7.	Evaluation	Each participant answers the question: What feelings will you take away with you today after classes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing an awareness of their own emotions</li> <li>Evaluation</li> </ul>	5 min.	---

**Annex to the task 3:**

1. You find out that your friend gossips about you. You meet her unexpectedly at the bank
2. You are going with your husband/wife/partner on a trip to the mountains. The road is very dangerous. You think he/she is driving too fast.
3. During the a medical examination you are diagnosed with a disease. Unfortunately, the doctor does not talk to you, just silently looks at the results of your test.
4. You are returning home in the evening with heavy shopping bags. The weather is awful, it's raining and you're wet. When you enter the house you see the dirty kitchen which your son/daughter promised to clean up.

**Annex to the task 6:**

You board a tram. There are a lot of people, and you unfortunately you stand on someone's feet.

Your husband/wife/partner won two tickets for a concert for today and he/she is very happy about that. But you don't feel very well today and you don't want to go.

Your friend gave you a gift but you don't like it and you can't hide your emotions.

Your friend has just found out that his dog has a disease. He comes to tell you about it.

Your friend managed to be included in a workshop in which you also wanted to take part. At the same moment as he/she is telling you that they are included in the workshop, you are telling him/her that you weren't.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No. 9

**Topic:** *Self-presentation*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Development of the ability to share their own experiences
- Understanding the concept of self-presentation
- Development the ability to use intentional self-presentation
- Learning the basic characteristic of self-presentation

**Key competencies:** ability to speak about themselves, ability of self-presentation

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Self-presentation - task	Each participant has two minutes to say something about himself/herself. They have to ask the question: How I am? Discussion: What we prefer to talk about ourselves and what not? Why? What is 'self-presentation'? Is it connected only with public speaking?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-presentations of participants inspiring to analyze the concept of 'self-presentation'</li> <li>• Defining the concept of 'self-presentation'</li> </ul>	40 min.	---

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
2.	Self-presentation tactics – lecture	Trainer explains what the most frequently used self-presentation tactics are and for what they are used <sup>7</sup> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanation the most frequently used self-presentation tactics</li> </ul>	15 min.	Board/flip-chart, chalk/pen
3.	Non-verbal behavior while public speaking – task	Participants in groups (3 or 4 persons) have to write about non-verbal behavior of a self-confident and not self-confident person. Discussion: What behavior causes the impression of wrong and the good self-presentation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development the ability to recognize non-verbal communication</li> <li>• Realizing how important non-verbal behavior is in self-presentation</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens

7

Describing yourself	Describing yourself in a such way to cause an expressed impression
The expression of attitudes	Expressing attitudes suggests that a person has certain characteristics (e.g. People most often connect their success with their characteristics and failure with external factors)
Public attributions	Explaining their own behavior in accordance with a specific social image
Memory manipulations	Real or fake remembering or forgetting for a better self-presentation
Non-verbal behavior	Facial expressions, gestures, posture and way of moving
Social contacts	Public speaking about relationships with certain people and not about others
Conformism and compliance	Behavior in accordance with social norms or preferences of other people
The scenery, props and lighting	Using elements of the environment for self-presentation

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
4.	The principles of a good self-presentation - task	Trainer asks the participants to give the principles of good self-presentation (What to do?, How to behave?, How to prepare?, What to remember?) and he/she writes it on the board/flipchart and makes "The principles of good self-presentation".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflecting about their own way of self-presentation</li> <li>• Establishing the rules that could be helpful while making a self-presentation</li> </ul>	10 min.	Board/flip-chart, chalk/pen
5.	Closing, evaluation	Each participant says if he/she would change something (and what) in their self-presentation from the first task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on the information from the course</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul>	10 min.	---

## **COURSE/WORKSHOP: INTERPERSONAL WORKSHOP / WORKSHOP No. 10**

**Topic:** *Information society*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Understanding the concept of information society
- Developing ability to talk about their own experiences
- Developing of self-awareness
- Developing the reflexivity
- Building the self-esteem

**Key competences:** ability to talk about their own experiences, self-awareness, communication

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	What is the "information society"? - discussion	Question to the group: What is the "information society"?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the concept of "information society"</li> </ul>	10 min.	---
2.	Key competences - task	Participants in group (3, 4 persons) have to write about which competencies we were talking about in classes. Discussion: Which competencies are the most important in information society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of knowledge from classes</li> <li>• Reflection on needed competencies in information society</li> </ul>	20 min.	Sheets of paper, pens

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
3.	Which competences should be added? - task	Participants in groups talk about which competencies should be added, apart from those which we were talking about in classes. What other competencies we need in information society?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing reflexivity</li> <li>• Reflection on needed competencies in information society</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper, pens
4	What difficulties I have, living in the information society? - discussion	Question to the group: What difficulties do you have, living in the information society? How can you prevent this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing of self-awareness</li> <li>• Developing the reflexivity</li> <li>• Developing ability to talk about their own experiences</li> </ul>	15 min.	---
5.	"I am - I can - I have" - exercise	Each participant gets a card with sentences: "I am - I can - I have". Then trainer sticks card to his/her back. Participants walk around the room and complement sentences of other people (about person who has the card on his/her back). When all sentences are completed, the exercise stops. Then, everyone can read what another person wrote about them. <b>(The rule is that they must be positive things)</b> Discussion: How do you feel now? If you learn something about yourself?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the self-esteem</li> <li>• Learning about their positive attributes</li> </ul>	15 min.	Sheets of paper with sentences, pens, tape
6.	Evaluation	Participants have to ask the question: What was the most important thing you learned in those workshops?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Developing ability to talk about their own experiences</li> </ul>	15 min.	---

**Annex to Workshop 10**

**I AM**

**I CAN**

**I HAVE**



## ENGLISH WORKSHOPS- OUTLINES

JACEK GULANOWSKI

University of Wroclaw (Poland)  
[jacek.gulanowski@gmail.com](mailto:jacek.gulanowski@gmail.com)

Workshop 1 - Introduction and Small Talk

Workshop 2 - Famous persons: game

Workshop 3 - Languages

Workshop 4 - How to speak better

Workshop 5 - Telling stories

Workshop 6 - Family vocabulary

Workshop 7 - Speaking

Workshop 8 - Translating biographies

Workshop 9 - Translating biographies

Workshop 10 - Translating biographies

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No. 1

**Topic:** *Introduction + Small Talk*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Learning basic communications skills in English

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Getting to know each other	Participants learn how to introduce themselves and have a small talk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to know each other by participants</li> <li>• integration</li> </ul>	10 min.	Whiteboard/ flipchart, markers,
2.	Exercises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher presents the idea of "small talk".</li> <li>2. The participants create a list of topics which are appropriate or inappropriate for small talk. They can also talk about cultural differences in small talk (if they know any).</li> <li>3. Teacher gives the hand outs to student and they browse the useful phrases.</li> <li>4. Participants in pairs try to make "small talk".</li> <li>5. Teacher asks the participants to imagine they are of different occupations, ages, countries then they are from - then they try to make small talk and find out all the information about their partners.</li> <li>6. Participants share and discuss their ideas and remarks.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning basic communications skills in English</li> </ul>	40 min.	Board/ flipchart, chalk/ marker Annex 1. (printed)

**Annex 1:****Small Talk - useful phrases**

- Hello! Nice to meet you/ Nice to meet you too
- What's your name?
- Who are you here with?
- What are you doing here?
- Where are you from?
  - Have you always lived here/there?
  - Why did you move/ didn't you ever move?
  - Is there much to do here/there?
  - What do you like about \_\_\_\_\_ (location)?
- What do you do/ what's your job/ what do you do for a living?
  - How did you get into that/ how did you end up doing that?
  - What does that involve?
  - Is it a difficult job?
  - What are the hours?
  - Do you enjoy it?
- What do you do for fun/ what do you do in your spare time/ what kind of things do you like to do?
  - What is that?
  - How did you get into that?
  - How long have you been doing that for?
  - Where can I find more information about that?
  - Would you mind if I joined/ could you give me the contact details?

- Do you mind if I...
  - Smoke?
  - Listen to music?
  - Borrow your pen/newspaper/phone
  - Take your phone number?
- **Reactions**
  - Really?!/ wow!/great!/nice// interesting/ mmmm/ ah/okay ...
  - That sounds... like fun/ difficult/ interesting/strange/great/ different
  - I have a friend who....Is a/works at/ always/ does.../plays.../likes to...

#### **Closing a conversation**

- Well it was nice to meet you/ it was nice chatting with you/
- I have to go now because.../I had better go because.../
- I hope to see you soon/ speak to you soon
- Goodbye

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No. 2

**Topic:** *Famous persons: game*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Learning to ask and answer questions about yourself

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.		Participants play roles of famous persons and talk about famous persons who inspire them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning to ask and answer questions about yourself</li> </ul>	900 min.	Whiteboard/ flipchart, markers,
2.	Exercises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher needs to prepare the handout – the cards should be cut out.</li> <li>2. Participants discuss different professions that famous persons can occupy and different reasons for being famous.</li> <li>3. Participants draw cards with the names and descriptions of famous persons. They play the “Who am I?” game. Students take turns and become the famous person whose name is printed on the card they have drawn. The other students take turns and ask them questions which they can answer only “yes” or “no”. They try to guess which famous person the other person is.</li> <li>4. Teacher asks participants to talk about famous persons that they find inspiring.</li> </ol>			Board/ flipchart, chalk/ marker Annex 2. (printed)

Annex. 2.

<p>Albert Einstein Born in Germany; theoretical physicist; father of modern physics</p> <p>Sean Connery Born in Scotland film actor first James Bond</p> <p>John Fitzgerald „Jack“ Kennedy President of the United States Youngest president</p> <p>Ludwig van Beethoven German composer and pianist Most prominent romantic composer</p> <p>Henryk Sienkiewicz Polish journalist and novelist Won a Nobel Prize in Literature</p> <p>Louis de Funès French actor Greatest French comedian</p> <p>Pablo Ruiz y Picasso Spanish painter First Cubist</p> <p>Hugh Grant English actor Very handsome</p>	<p>Marie Skłodowska-Curie Polish physicist and chemist, She won the Nobel Prize</p> <p>Sophia Loren Italian actress A true Italian woman</p> <p>Margaret Hilda Thatcher, The only woman prime minister of United Kingdom Iron Lady</p> <p>John Lennon English musician from Liverpool One of the Beatles</p> <p>Agatha Christie British crime writer Most popular writer in the world</p> <p>Charles Spencer „Charlie“ Chaplin English comic actor Silent film star</p> <p>Vincent Willem van Gogh Dutch painter Painted Sunflowers</p> <p>Penélope Cruz Sánchez Spanish actress Very popular</p>
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## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No.3

**Topic:** *Languages*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Revision of fundamental grammar and vocabulary, discussing the problems of language learning.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.		Participants read a text about learning languages, solve the problems and discuss their ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning to ask and answer questions about yourself</li> </ul>	90 min.	
2.	Exercises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher asks the participants to read quotes about learning languages and choose the one they like the most.</li> <li>2. Participants create a list of reasons for learning other languages.</li> <li>3. Participants read the text and try to fill out the gaps with the help of the teacher.</li> </ol>			Annex. 3 (printed)

## Annex. 3

## LEARNING LANGUAGES

<p>“Knowledge of languages is the doorway to wisdom.” -Roger Bacon</p>	<p>“A different language is a different vision of life.” -Federico Fellini</p>	<p>“Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can; there will always come a time when you will be grateful you did.” -Sarah Caldwell</p>
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Why is learning a foreign language important?

Why do people usually learn foreign languages?

**Read the text and fill out the gaps:**

Learning a foreign language takes time and (1) *dedication*, but still millions of people do this every day.

**Work and Career**

More and more businesses need workers who can communicate in different languages and understand other cultures. If your work involves regular contact with (2) \_\_\_\_\_ of foreign languages, being able to talk to them in their own language will help you build direct relationships with them. (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of foreign languages may also increase your chances of finding a new job, getting a (4) \_\_\_\_\_ or a transfer abroad, or of going on foreign business trips. No matter what career you choose, if you've learned a (5) \_\_\_\_\_ language, you'll have a real advantage.

**Study or research**

You may find that information about subjects you are (6) \_\_\_\_\_ in is published mainly in a foreign language. Learning that language will give you access to the material and enable you to communicate with colleagues.



**Studying abroad**

If you plan to study at a foreign university, college or school, you will need a good knowledge of the local language.

**Emigration**

When you move to a different country or region, learning the local language will help you to communicate and integrate with the local community.

**Travel**

Perhaps you are planning to go on holiday abroad. If so, knowledge of the language(s) you are (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to meet will be useful. It is always a good idea to learn some basic language phrases to help you to 'get by', i.e. to order food and drink, find your way around, buy tickets, etc. If you have a more (8) \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge of the language, you can have real conversations with the local people, which can be interesting and will add a new dimension to your holiday.

**Family and friends**

If your partner, in-laws, relatives or friends speak a different language, learning that language will help you to communicate with them (9) \_\_\_\_\_. It is also the most effective way you will learn about and appreciate their culture.

**Culture**

Maybe you are interested in the literature, (10) \_\_\_\_\_, films, TV programs, music or some other aspect of another culture? Studying another language, allows you to have an insider's view, thus to feel closer and more (11) \_\_\_\_\_ to other cultures.

**Whatever the reason, learning a language opens up doors to many opportunities and benefits.**

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No.4

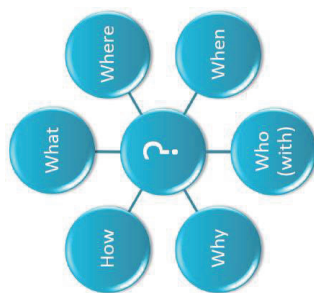
**Topic:** *How to speak better*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Learning to speak about different topics in a more detailed way.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.		Participants discuss things they like and dislike using a model for more detailed speaking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning to speak about different topics in a more detailed way.</li> </ul>	90 min.	Whiteboard/ flipchart, markers, Annex. 4(printed)
2.	Exercises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher asks the participants to talk about one thing they like or do not like.</li> <li>2. Teacher presents the „Let’s talk“ model and the example (see: Handout)</li> <li>3. Participants talk once more about one thing they like or do not like using the model.</li> <li>4. Participants discuss the opportunities and limits of using the model.</li> </ol>			

## Annex. 4

LET'S TALK!  
SPEAK BETTER, SPEAK MORE!

*When you follow this model, it will keep you talking for longer than you think!  
It works with every topic!*

**Example:**

1. What?: I like horse riding. I don't have my own horse but I rent a horse in special stables.
2. Where?: My favourite stables are just outside of my city. I go there by car.
3. When?: I usually go there every weekend and ride a horse for at least three hours.
4. Who with?: I go there with my friend who also loves horse riding. His name is Peter and he we have known each other for 10 years.
5. Why?: I really love horse riding because I feel truly free and relaxed when I am riding a horse.
6. How?: I enjoy my weekend rides very much. It is very exciting.
7. How much?: Renting a horse is not very expensive but you should have at least the basic equipment which costs a little.
8. How many?: I know many other horse riders. I meet them in the stables but I also contact them on the internet and we discuss different problems and ideas.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No.5

**Topic:** *Telling stories*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Learning to tell stories using past tenses.

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.		Revision of past simple and past simple continuous tenses. Then participants create a story together (using those tenses).	Learning to tell stories using past tenses.	90 min.	Whiteboard/flipchart, markers, Annex. 5(printed)
2.	Exercises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher reminds the participants when the tenses Past simple and Past simple continuous are used.</li> <li>2. Participants fill out the Past simple tense test (Handout).</li> <li>3. The teacher writes the first sentence of a story on the board (for instance: „It was a dark and stormy night.“; „I was walking down the street.“). Then the participants take turns and write the next sentence of the story until they decide that the story can end.</li> <li>4. Participants create another story. This time the use of the person which has been used mostly in the first story (usually the first or third singular person) is forbidden.</li> </ol>			

**Annex. 5**

Q: Where \_\_\_\_\_ on vacation last summer?  
did you went  
did you go

Q: They \_\_\_\_\_ until 5 o'clock in the afternoon.  
not arrived  
didn't arrive  
doesn't arrive

Q: We \_\_\_\_\_ a bus to Chicago last week.  
taked  
did took  
took

Q: \_\_\_\_\_ to the party last weekend?  
Did you go  
Went you  
Where went

Q: They \_\_\_\_\_ a swimming pool into their backyard last summer.  
did put  
put  
putted

Q: Where \_\_\_\_\_ this afternoon?  
did go  
did he go

did he went

Q: She \_\_\_\_\_ home early from the party yesterday.  
came  
came  
didn't came

Q: How much \_\_\_\_\_ for it?  
does you pay  
did you pay  
paid you

Q: They \_\_\_\_\_ the play very much.  
didn't enjoys  
didn't enjoyed  
didn't enjoy

Q: When \_\_\_\_\_ that crazy idea?  
did you get  
did you go

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No.6

**Topic:** *Family vocabulary*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Learning family vocabulary.

Ip.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.		Participants learn the basic family vocabulary, then read a text about a family and create a genealogical tree.	Learning family vocabulary.	90 min.	Whiteboard/flipchart, markers, Annex. 6(printed)
2.	Exercises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participants read the quotes about family (see: Handout) and discuss whether they agree with them or not.</li> <li>2. Teacher presents the basic family vocabulary.</li> <li>3. Participants read the short information about Jonathan and his family and draw the genealogical tree of Jonathan. Then, they answer the questions to check if their genealogical trees are correct.</li> </ol>			

## Annex. 6

**BLOOD IS THICKER THAN WATER**

A family (from Latin: *familia*) is a group of people affiliated by kinship.

*Do you agree with the following statements?*

“A man who doesn't spend time with his family can never be a real man”. Don Corleone

“When our relatives are at home, we have to think of all their good points or it would be impossible to endure them”. George Bernard Shaw

Kinship	
Consanguinity	Affinity
Father and son	Husband and wife
Cousins	Brothers-in-law
Parents (father + mother)	Children (son + daughter)
Grandparents (grandfather + grandmother)	Grandchildren (grandson + granddaughter)
Great grandparents (great grandfather + great grandmother)	Great grandchildren (great grandson + great granddaughter)
Siblings (brothers, sisters)	
Marriage (husband, wife)	

Dating -> Engagement -> Marriage (-> Divorce)

**Exercise:** Draw the family tree of Jonathan and answer the questions.

Jonathan is married to Emily. They have a son (Brian) and two daughters (Anne and Rachel). Jonathan has a brother: Joshua. Joshua is married to Hannah and they have a son: John.



Emily has a sister: Juliet. Juliet's husband's name is Charles. Charles and Juliet are the parents of Patricia. Jonathan's father name is Robert and Jonathan's mother name is Mary. Jonathan's maternal grandfather's name is Christopher and his maternal grandmother's name is Janet. Robert's parent names are Thomas and Martha. Robert has two siblings: Gregory and Suzanne. Jonathan's father-in-law is named Matthew and his mother-in-law's name is Jessica.

*Who are the cousins of Brian, Anne and Rachel? Which ones are paternal, which ones maternal?*

*How many nieces and nephews does Jonathan have?*

*Who is the uncle of Jonathan? Who is his aunt?*

*What are the names of Emily's parents?*

*Who is the kin of Jonathan by consanguinity and who is his kin by affinity?*

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOP No.7

**Topic:** *Speaking*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:** Learning to talk about everyday issues.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.		Participants play a printed board game which encourages them to speak about themselves.	Learning to talk about everyday issues.	90 min.	Printed board game, pawns (annex. 7), dice
2.	Exercises	<p>1. Teacher needs to print boards (Annex. 7) and prepare dice and pawns for the participants.</p> <p>2. Participants are divided into smaller groups. Each group gets 1 board, dice and pawns. Teacher explains the rules of the game. Groups play the game, teacher helps in understanding and answering the questions.</p>			

Annex. 7.

Choose anyone and ask them a question of your choice

31. Your ideal job

30. A dream you've had

29. Something you'd like to have

28. An unfortunate experience

27. Your best holidays

26. The house of your dreams

25. Your favourite animal

24. Your best friend's last birthday party

23. The worst day of your life

22. Your favourite actor or actress

21. What you'd do with a million pounds

20. Your most important possession

19. A film you didn't like

18. Your ideal husband/wife

17. Something you hate doing

16. Your favourite actor

15. What you think about smoking

14. The superpower you'd like to have

13. What really makes you laugh

12. Something that scared you

11. Something dangerous

10. Your family

9. Something you have lost

8. A game you love playing

7. Your room

6. What you did last Sunday

5. Your favourite music

4. Your qualities

3. A good book

2. Things you like to do

1. Your best friend

Start

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ENGLISH WORKSHOP/ WORKSHOPS No.8-10

**Topic:** *Translating biographies*

**Time:** 270 min (3x 90 min.)

**Goals of education:** Learning translation skills.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Lesson 1	Participants read their biographies and choose the terms and phrases they don't know how to translate to English. They create a list of those expressions and then translate it together with the teacher.	Learning translation skills.	90 min.	Whiteboard/ flipchart, markers, paper, pens, Annex 8.
2.	Lesson 2	Participants attempt to translate their biographies. They create a list of difficulties they encounter. The teacher supervises the translations. In the case of more complex difficulties the participants should try to find a solution together.		90 min.	
3.	Lesson 3	Participants read each other's biographies in English and share their remarks and reflections. Participants prepare a joint list of difficulties they have encountered during the translation. Then they send it to participants from other countries.		90 min	

**Annex. 8.**

*This class can take up to 3 meetings and should include communication with participants from other countries.*

1. Participants read their biographies and choose the terms and phrases they don't know how to translate into English. They create a list of those expressions and then translate it together with the teacher.
2. Participants attempt to translate their biographies. They create a list of difficulties they encounter. The teacher supervises the translations. In the case of more complex difficulties the participants should try to find a solution together.
3. Participants read each other's biographies in English and share their remarks and reflections.
4. Participants prepare a joint list of difficulties they have encountered during the translation. Then they send it to participants from other countries.
5. Participants read the lists of difficulties sent by participants from other countries and compare them with their list.

## ICT WORKSHOP- OUTLINES

ILONA ZAKOWICZ

University of Wroclaw (Poland)  
ilona.zakowicz@uni.wroc.pl

Workshop 1 – How to create and run a blog? Introductory classes.

Workshop 2 – Gmail e-mail service and tools

Workshop 3 – Blogger – How to start a blog with Google.

Workshop 4 – Writing a blog.

Workshop 5 – Reflecting on the interpersonal workshop and computer literacy course on the blog.

Workshop6 – Edit blog.

Workshop 7 – Photo editing using Picasa software.

Workshop 8 – Editing and publishing images on a blog.

Workshop 9 – Searching for images on the internet and editing them in Picasa software.

Workshop 10 – Biography oriented blog – The summary.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP NO 1

**Topic:** How to create and run a blog? Introductory classes.

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Presentation of the topics and activities' goals.
- Repetition: computer skills.
- Repetition: searching the internet for specific information.
- Repetition/development of searching skills and browsing blogs on the internet.

	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Getting to know each other	Each participant introduces her/himself with a brief speech.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to know each other by participants.</li> <li>• Integration.</li> </ul>	15 min.	---
2.	Presentation of the themes of meetings followed by a discussion about goals and tasks with participants	The teacher discusses topics of meetings. Introduces the target classes in ICT. Participants ask questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants know the target tasks.</li> <li>• Participants know the topics of ICT activities.</li> </ul>	10 min.	A document describing the topics of meetings.
3.	Repetition of information on ICT	Refreshing and solidifying information on computers and internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equalizing the computer literacy of the group.</li> </ul>	15 min.	Computer with Internet access.

	<b>Exercise / task</b>	<b>Description of the task</b>	<b>Goals of task</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Materials</b>
4	Repetition of information on ICT: How to search the web for specific information	Exercises: searching for information on the Internet. Internet search engine and its functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requiring and developing proficiency with searching the internet.</li> </ul>	25 min	Computer with Internet access.
5	Finding appropriate blogs on the internet	Exercises: searching and browsing blogs. Finding blogs devoted to the topics similar to participants' interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to find a blog that contains interesting information.</li> </ul>	25 min	Computer with internet access.



## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP\_NO 2

**Topic:** Gmail e-mail service and tools

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of course:**

- Familiarize the participants with the basic functionality of Gmail.
- Present the rules governing e-mail services.
- Introduce other tools provided by Google like: Blogger and Google translate.

Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Registering and using a Gmail account.	<p>Finding the Gmail website. Detailed explanation of the registration process. Registering for a Gmail account. Explanation of the inbox and its functionality. Sending and receiving e-mails between participants. Including and downloading e-mail attachments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarizing with the registration process of the Gmail service.</li> <li>• Learning the basic functionality of the e-mail; sending and reviewing e-mails.</li> </ul>	50 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Google tools	<p>Introducing the various Google tools. Presentation of services such as: Google Translate, Google+ Blogger, Google Drive. Teaching the ability to find and use specialized tools as needed by the users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants are familiar with the tools made available to them by Google.</li> <li>• Participants are able to choose the tools suited to their needs.</li> </ul>	25 min	Computer with internet access.

	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
3.	Summary	The teacher summarizes the information given throughout the course and explains any unclear issues. The teacher also presents examples of practical application of the skills practiced during the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Solidifying the gained knowledge and skills.</li></ul>	15 min	---

### COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP\_NO 3

**Topic:** Blogger – How to start a blog with Google

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of the course:**

- Learn how to create and maintain a blog.
- Acquire basic text and website editing skills.

Lp.	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Blog: introduction to the concept and basic information.	The teacher explains what a blog is , what are its purposes and what goals it may serve. he/she also indicates what may be published on a blog and what tools are available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquiring basic knowledge of blogging.</li> </ul>	15 min	Computer with internet access.
2.	Blogger	The teacher shows an example blog hosted by Google Blogger, then proceeds to discuss various features and tools provided by the platform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarizing with Blogger's array of features and tools.</li> </ul>	15 min	Computer with internet access.
3.	Creating a blog	The teacher presents a step by step guide to creating a blog. The participants create their own blogs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blog creation skill.</li> </ul>	30 min	Computer with internet access.
4.	Setting up and formatting the blog.	The teacher explains the settings and features of the blogger and also explains the tabs: overview, posts, pages, stats, layout, template. Participants configure the blog to their liking and choose a template and layout.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning the technical aspects of creating a blog.</li> <li>• Using templates and layouts to create a satisfactory outcome.</li> </ul>	30 min	Computer with internet access.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP NO 4

**Topic:** Writing a blog

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of course:**

- Expanding the blog editing skills.
- Adjusting the blog's settings to match its content.
- Writing and publishing posts.

Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Writing a post. Formatting the text	The teacher shows how to write a post, introduces the concept of formatted text and explains the text formatting/ editing tools with examples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining basic competency in writing, formatting and editing text.</li> </ul>	15 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Writing a post. Exercises	The participants write posts while making use of the formatting tools. Participants learn how to change fonts, their size and color and they practice with various formatting tools to find those that work for them. Finally, the participants publish their posts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining posts writing skill</li> <li>• Learning basic text formatting.</li> <li>• Acquiring the ability to publish posts.</li> </ul>	45 min	Computer with internet access.
3. Editing and deleting posts	The teacher explains how to display, edit, publish and delete posts. he/she also shows how to display the blog with the newly published post or how to preview it first.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigating the blog, using the preview option.</li> <li>• Learning how to edit and delete posts.</li> </ul>	20 min	Computer with internet access.
4. Summary	The teacher summarizes the presented topics, explains any issues that are still unclear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solidifying the gained knowledge.</li> </ul>	10 min	---

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP NO 5

**Topic:** Reflecting on the interpersonal workshop and computer literacy course on the blog

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of course:**

- Improving writing, editing and publishing skills.
- Ability to present on the blog the effects of the various activities of interpersonal workshop and English course.

Exercise / task	description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Writing posts regarding the results of the interpersonal workshop and English course	The participants write posts about their experiences during the interpersonal workshop and English course. The participants publish the biographies they have created earlier on their blogs, they share their opinions and thoughts regarding previous courses. The participants improve their text editing and formatting skills. The teacher presents basic information on blogging as a literary genre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving writing and publishing skills.</li> <li>• Improving the ability to describe personal feelings and experiences in relation to interpersonal workshop and English course</li> </ul>	60 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Posting pictures	The teacher introduces the various options to enrich the blog and create more attractive posts. The teacher shows how to post pictures and what is their purpose. The participants publish pictures (choosing from a set already saved on the computer) and adjust the form of their posts to match their content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquiring the ability to improve and enrich the blog.</li> <li>• Learning how to post pictures.</li> </ul>	30 min	

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP 6

**Topic:** Edit blog

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of the course:**

- Learn how to improve the attractiveness of the blog.
- Learn how to find and save pictures.
- Improve writing and editing skills.
- Learn how to post information relevant to other courses, personal biography.

Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Finding pictures on the internet	The teacher shows how to create varied and interesting posts. He/she also explains how to search for and download images from the internet.	1. Learning how to find and download images.	10 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Exercise: Searching for images	The participants learn how to use Google search engine to find interesting images and how to download and save them on their computers.	- Acquiring the ability to use internet search engines. - Learning about downloading and local storage.	25 min	Computer with internet access.
3. Posting the found image on the blog	The teacher provides step by step instruction to attach the image to a post. The teacher presents basic editing options for images.	- Learning how to post an image on the blog, both from local hard drive and found on the internet.	15 min	Computer with internet access.

	Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
4.	Exercises	The participants write posts about themselves, the effects of interpersonal courses and the English course. They edit the text and attach images, for which they search on the internet. The participants also learn how to find downloaded items on the local hard drive and how to prepare them for publishing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Solidifying the knowledge and abilities learnt during the course.</li> <li>- Acquiring the computer literacy level which allows for searching, downloading and posting images.</li> </ul>	40 min	Computer with internet access.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP 7

**Topic:** Photo editing using the Picasa software

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of the course:**

- Acquiring the theoretical knowledge of photo editing process.
- Developing the photo editing competency using the Picasa software.

Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Picasa - the photo editing software.	The teacher explains what Picasa is and what are its purposes. The teacher presents the tools included in Picasa including their practical application. The teacher demonstrates how to load an image into the software and then edit and save it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning about Picasa photo editing software.</li> <li>• Familiarizing with the tools provided by the software.</li> </ul>	20 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Editing images in Picasa.	The participants attempt to edit an image using various tools in order to learn their features and correct usage. The participants learn how to save the edited image.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining competency in usage of Picasa image editor.</li> </ul>	40 min	Computer with internet access.
3. Picture folders.	The teacher explains how to create a folder structure to store data in an orderly fashion. The participants create the folders which they then use to store their edited images.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning how to create folders.</li> <li>• Learning how to organize and orderly store the data.</li> </ul>	25 min	Computer with internet access.
3. Summary	The teacher summarizes the information presented during the course: image editing in Picasa, orderly storage of the data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solidifying the knowledge of Picasa software and folder structures.</li> </ul>	5 min	---



## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP 8

**Topic:** Editing and publishing images on a blog

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of the course:**

- Improving the competency in using the Picasa software.
- Learning how to publish an edited picture on a blog.

	Exercise/task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1.	Exercises using Picasa image editor.	The participants search for images, then edit them using the Picasa software and save them in an appropriate folder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing image editing skills in Picasa software.</li> <li>• Improving the orderly data storage skills.</li> </ul>	20 min	Computer with internet access.
2.	Publishing images on the blog.	The teacher explains how to locate the edited picture in the proper folder and then upload and publish it on the blog.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining competency in locating data stored on the computer.</li> <li>• Learning how to upload and edited picture to the blog.</li> </ul>	20 min	Computer with internet access.
3.	Exercises. Posting pictures on the blog.	The participants continue to develop their blogs – they write new posts which include images edited in Picasa software. They locate images stored locally on their computers and attach them to their posts. They also exercise their image editing skills and publish posts enriched with images.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning to locate image files stored locally.</li> <li>• Learning how to publish pictures on the blog.</li> </ul>	45min	Computer with internet access.
3.	Summary.	The teacher summarizes the presented topics: local hard drive searching and publishing images on the blog.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solidifying the knowledge of local storage.</li> <li>• Consolidating the skills relating to blog development.</li> </ul>	5 min	--

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP 9

**Topic:** *Searching for images on the internet and editing them in Picasa software*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of the course:**

- Improving the ability to find images on the internet.
- Developing the image editing skills using the Picasa software.
- Improving the blog writing and maintenance skills.

Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Exercises. Finding images on the internet and saving them in a local folder.	The participants search for images on the internet and then download and save them in a local folder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the ability to search the internet.</li> <li>• Improving the ability to orderly store data locally.</li> </ul>	15 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Editing images using Picasa.	The participants use the Picasa software to edit the pictures they have previously found on the internet and stored locally. The participants save the changed/edited images in a local folder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving image editing skills using the Picasa software.</li> <li>- The ability to save a file on the local hard drive.</li> </ul>	30 min	Computer with internet access.
3. Exercises. Publishing pictures on a blog.	The participants further develop their blogs. They upload the pictures which they have found on the internet and edited earlier. They manage their locally stored data and improve their image editing skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exercising the ability to find locally stored files.</li> <li>- Exercising the ability to publish the images on the blog.</li> <li>- Developing the ability to attach a relevant image to a post.</li> </ul>	45min	Computer with internet access.

## COURSE/WORKSHOP: ICT COURSE/ WORKSHOP 10

**Topic:** *Biography oriented blog – The summary*

**Time:** 90 min.

**Goals of education:**

- Improving the ability to find images on the internet.
- Developing the image editing skills using the Picasa software.
- Maintaining the locally stored data in an orderly fashion.
- Improving blog writing and developing skills.

Exercise / task	Description of the task	Goals of task	Time	Materials
1. Final updates and formatting of the blog	The participants read and edit their previous posts as required in order to maintain a constant formatting throughout the blog. They add or remove images as needed and execute final changes in order to improve the quality of their blogs. The participants examine each other's blogs, share their thoughts and experiences, exchange advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the ability in writing, formatting and editing text and attach a relevant image to a post.</li> </ul>	40 min	Computer with internet access.
2. Adding additional information: author, project, reflecting on the course	The participants create notes about themselves containing: the blog's author, information about the project, feelings and reflections after the course on their blogs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the skill to write about oneself and publish it on the blog.</li> <li>• Learning how to fill the missing information.</li> </ul>	30 min	Computer with internet access.
3. Summary	The teacher summarizes the course, answers questions and resolves any issues. Graduation ceremony.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solidifying the gained knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Participant's feedback.</li> </ul>	20 min	---

## CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of the KEY project was development of key competences of seniors to lifelong learning. Therefore three kinds of workshops were planned, whose tasks were development of three areas of skills: interpersonal, English (foreign language) and ICT. In the project KEY three organizations took part from Poland (Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica), Italy (University Ca' Foscari of Venice) and from United Kingdom (Kairos Europe). Each of the workshops included 10 lessons (outlines of lesson were the same for all organizations).

During realization of the KEY project qualitative and quantitative research were conducted. Before starting lessons pre- tests were conducted to diagnose the level of competences of participants. Post-test were conducted at the end of the workshops. Moreover, after each workshops seniors took part in the focus group (qualitative research) where they shared their experiences and opinions about workshops. Therefore, it is worth citing the conclusions of each courses.

Beata Działa - author of outlines of the interpersonal workshop analyzed data from the focus groups from three organization. She pointed out that in the development of social and interpersonal skills participants stressed the general strengthening of interpersonal competence, such as increase of openness in relations to each other or increased self-confidence. Seniors noticed growth of assertiveness too, especially in family life. Moreover, analyses of data allowed her to notice strong and weak points of workshops:

Strong points of workshops were:

- subject that was interesting for participants
- different forms of activities at workshops
- tasks which helped participants to use knowledge in practice
- group participating in workshops
- experience of participants
- the atmosphere in the group and during classes
- using skills and knowledge in everyday life
- increased self-confidence of participants
- gaining new knowledge and skills by participants

And also the weak points or things that should be changed:

- workshops should be longer
- there should be more time for the theoretical part and for discussion
- participants should get materials
- working groups should be changed more often

Beata Działa has given more practical recommendations: It is important in work with the elderly to have in mind a few things. It is important to remember to use large print when giving course notes and when writing on the Whiteboard.

Giving simple and clear (many bullet points and in large print), printed notes is equally important. The key is to summarize previous meetings and only introduce one new topic at a time.

Jacek Gulanowski prepared the English course. Data analysing of focus groups were carried out by Jacek Gulanowski and Kamil Błaszczczyński. Their conclusions after the English lessons are as follows:

- In the focus study it was difficult to identify a unified vision of seniors about the language course in which they participated. We can assume on the basis of the analyzed statements, that each educational experience is judged by them as valuable. Although it is also very clear that seniors had great difficulties, when it comes to pointing out any specific exemplifications of practical importance of the conducted course. Maybe because the seniors themselves aren't capable of separating their language life experience from this particular language experience.
- Alas, seniors in their opinions have pointed out such constitutive elements of language learning as the sole importance of vocabulary, language practice, the need for high self-motivation for the purpose of self-learning. They also mentioned the importance of self-limitations (brain structure and efficiency of memory), connected with their age, as well as the importance of personality (openness for new contacts). And lastly, the seniors pointed out the importance of self-awareness of one's lack of knowledge.
- Generally in the narrations about the course, there has been dominating positive opinion about the course. Although in seemingly uniform vision, there have been noticeable different opinions about the most valued elements of the course. Polish interlocutors, because of their focus on their profits and practical orientation for the usage of new knowledge, can be described as egocentric and pragmatic pupils. Italian interlocutors, because they point out the importance of the other learners, can be classified as socially orientated. And lastly, the representatives from the United Kingdom, because they pointed out that they have low lexical and grammatical competences, have been classified as technically orientated.

Ilona Zakowicz is an author of outlines of ICT workshop. The main goal these activities was to show seniors how create a blog on the internet. Data analyzing of focus groups carried out by Ilona Zakowicz allowed the drawing of the following conclusions:

- One of the difficulties encountered and promptly noticed by the seniors was the differentiation of competencies level inside each group, which made the whole learning process more challenging for both the teachers and the participants. The seniors claimed as well that the project and the groups should have been smaller and should have lasted longer. They also suggested that some individual, advisory meetings should be added to the computer classes to help resolve particular problems of each participant.
- The participants appreciated the broad spectrum of skills and competencies they were taught: creation of blog on the web, using smartphones, photo edition and graphic software classes, using of Google Tools and email acco-

unts. The seniors found them very useful in their everyday life – recently gained skills will allow them to use their computers more efficiently, but also communicate with other people, read and comment other blogs and act for the seniors, e.g. in the institutions they work for. The KEY project enabled its participants to meet new people and integrate with their age mates. It was also a platform for knowledge exchange – the seniors could help, motivate and inspire each other. The project verified the computer knowledge of the participants as well. They found out what they had already known and how much was still to be learned. They were inspired and encouraged to further education by joining other workshops, for instance. We may risk an assumption that all the activities and objectives planned for this stage of the KEY project have been met and realized at a satisfactory level.

Moreover, quantitative research (pre- and post- test) conducted in this project complements the conclusions of the focus. The analysis made by Barbara Baschiera shows that:

- Interpersonal course- at the end of the course they would like to understand others better, learn how to compare their ideas with others' (Polish seniors), learn to listen to others better (English), learn to negotiate (Polish), share positive emotions (Italian). Barbara Baschiera pointed out that: the most important result was that participants changed their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions. At the core of transformational learning theory of Merizowa, is the process of 'perspective transformation' which has three dimensions: psychological (changes in understanding of the self), convictional (revision of belief systems), and behavioural (changes in lifestyle). The Key Project facilitated and supported the first two dimensions, by enabling social learning processes as described by Bandura to take place
- English workshop- all three groups declared that, thanks to the key course, when they heard the English language being spoken they were interested and desirous to learn. The Polish and the Italian participants felt more involved and less overcome by a sense of inadequacy. They weren't detached, bored, apathetic, or frustrated. The Italian seniors affirmed feeling comfortable and that learning a foreign language contributed to their cognitive, emotional, and social well being. Some of them said that learning could also help them create new international social networks; Their self-directedness, life experiences, independence as learners, and motivation to learn provided them with advantages in language learning; The program met the needs of the adult learners leading them to a basic language acquisition; Whether the improvements of the students' conversational skills are a sign of learning, or are due to increased student confidence, to a more relaxed atmosphere and/or to increased familiarity and empathy between the interlocutors, or to a combination of these factors cannot be determined from the data and remains a question to be pursued.
- ICT course- The feedback obtained at the end of the projects displayed several nuances. Seniors revealed a positive change in attitudes towards computers and the Internet, and a gain in confidence in their own proficiency with

technology. They appreciated the internet and the computer because they enabled them to seek information, particularly news and health information and to prevent social isolation and loneliness: they felt able to stay in touch with other generations and understood the value of the ICT. All seniors participating in the Key project stated that they felt “worthwhile”; it was social interaction that was responsible for such an answer. E-mail, Facebook and Skype allowed them to talk with friends and relatives. These communication means provided support, involvement and encouragement.

In opinion of Barbara Baschiera this programme may serve as a model for both skill and resource development for seniors.

It should be noted that this project showed that each educational process of seniors must take into account the specificity of this age group. Based on experiences after this project we can point out how workshops should be prepared for developing key competences for seniors:

**Recruitment of seniors-** the participants in respective groups should present similar skills and competencies – it could be verified by conducting preliminary tests concerning personal knowledge about the modern technologies;

- **flexibility of lessons-** we have to remember that seniors as a social group are the most internally diverse. Therefore lessons should be modified to their needs. Moreover seniors have different life experiences which should be included during any conducted workshop.
- **interesting and practical activities** – lesson should be interesting for seniors. Participants should feel that the lessons are worth their effort. If this condition does not exist seniors are not motivated to learning.
- **atmosphere in a group-** Seniors should feel comfortable in the group. Should not be judged and criticized but supported . a good atmosphere is necessary to tell seniors about their biographies which is a very personal and a sensitive issue.
- **Seniors as creators of the educational process** – according to the theory of Knowles – an adult learner should have influence on content and course activities. Participants of workshops should get information about the topic of workshops and goals of the educational process.
- **materials suitable for the elderly** – materials using during workshops should be clear and simple. The text should be written in large font. Seniors should feel that materials could be useful in their further activities.

Summarizing the workshops conducted in this project they can be immediately used in other centers of education of the elderly. Authors of outlines made their evaluation and pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of the programs. Feedback from participants and trainers shows that the curriculum should be longer (not only 10 lessons). Programs with more lessons probably better develop key competences for senior’s lifelong learning . The curriculum presented in this book should be the beginning of a longer process of education. However, as shown by results of this research even workshops including only 10 lessons lead to positive development of key competences of seniors.



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