

A Teaching Methodology for Primary Education through the Erasmus+ Project “Supporting Inclusion and Diversity in Teaching / SIDiT”– Goals, Methodology, Implementation and Outcomes

Ourania Gikopoulou¹, Vasiliki Katsomaliari²

¹National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

²Goethe-Institut Athen, Greece

Abstract

The successful inclusion of all children in the school is a vital first step for their integration into society. However, while schools in Europe become more diverse and welcome children with different socio-economic, cultural, religious, language backgrounds, their inclusion in the classroom remains a challenge. To this end, a strategic partnership was created in 2020 to set up the Erasmus+ project Supporting Inclusion and Diversity in Teaching (SIDiT). SIDiT has developed a teaching methodology for children aged 8 to 14 years, which combines existing teaching approaches to enhance the transversal skills of students that are vital to social inclusion, such as learning to learn, critical thinking, media and digital literacy, entrepreneurship and languages. This paper aims to present the SIDiT teaching methodology, the goals and expected results of the students' and teachers' skills and competences, as well as review the outcomes of its implementation in schools. Our findings are encouraging, showing that 78% of the students would like to participate again in SIDiT and 70% of the teachers would recommend it to their colleagues.

Keywords: *inclusive education, migrant education, diversity, teaching, methodology, primary education*

1. Introduction

In the 2016 Communication “Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals,” the European Commission recognized the vital role of schools in ensuring that migrant children are successfully integrated in society and become engaged citizens, but highlighted that inclusive education should be supported [1]. Building on this, the 2018 Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching stressed the importance of ensuring effective and equal access to quality inclusive education with the necessary support for all learners, including those from migrant backgrounds [2]. UNHCR / UNICEF / IOM echoed the calls for

additional support to educators in September 2019 [3].

In response to these developments, nine organizations from six different European countries (Germany, Greece, Belgium, Ireland, Italy and Croatia) joined efforts in a project that aims to provide resources and training opportunities to primary school teachers in Europe, so that they engage in more inclusive teaching. The organisations forming the consortium under the leadership of the Goethe-Institut Athen (DE) are the following: 1. two schools [GO! Lagere Toverfluit (BE) and GO! Unescoschool Koegelberg (BE)], 2. two Training Institutes [Marino Institute of Education (IE) and Par University College (HR)], 3. two organisations active in the field of education and entrepreneurship [Bantani Education (BE) and Materahub Consorzio (IT)], 4. one specialist in educational software [CCS Digital Education (IE)], and 5. the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (GR).

The 3-year project Supporting Inclusion and Diversity in Teaching – SIDiT [4], funded by the Erasmus+ programme, proposes a teaching and learning approach that promotes the integration of all children in the classroom, including migrant and refugee children. The premise of the project is that children's successful inclusion in the classroom is a vital first step for them to acquire the mindset and skills they will need to successfully integrate in society. According to the OECD [5]: “[...] absorbing the youngest immigrant children into the school system is certainly the most effective way of integrating them – linguistically and culturally – into their new communities”.

The project promotes the social inclusion of students in the long run, through the production of three Intellectual Outputs:

A. Teaching Methodology (Intellectual Output 1)

The project helps teachers respond to the challenge of classroom inclusion by providing them with a teaching methodology that is predicated on the concepts of inclusion, participation, interaction and

communication, while focusing on the acquisition of transversal skills. The SIDiT methodology is developed, tested and validated with teachers -linked to the schools involved in this project- who work in diverse classrooms including in classrooms with high proportions of migrant children.

B. Teacher Training Course (Intellectual Output 2)

The SIDiT methodology is delivered together with a Teacher Training Course designed to help primary school teachers implement the methodology in their classrooms. The Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs) and universities that are partners of this project deliver this Course, and make it available to other TTIs for teachers to train themselves.

C. Policy Recommendations (Intellectual Output 3)

Following the evaluation of the efficacy and impact of the SIDiT methodology, the Policy Recommendations support the promotion and further exploitation of the SIDiT methodology as standard practice in primary schools in Europe.

This paper focuses on the first output, namely the development of a new methodology for primary school education teachers. It aims to: (1) present the SIDiT teaching methodology, the learning outcomes and competences students and teachers are expected to acquire, and (2) review the outcomes of the pilot implementation of the SIDiT teaching methodology.

2. The SIDiT Teaching Methodology

The development of an innovative teaching approach -intended to offer learning tools that can foster inclusivity- which can be taught in different courses and with children of different ages stands as one of the main goals of the SIDiT project.

To achieve this, SIDiT combines existing teaching approaches that promote cross-curricular, activity-based, children-centred, exploratory teaching and learning. It also emphasizes accessibility, collaboration, and enjoyment; thus meeting learners' needs more effectively.

The SIDiT teaching methodology is suitable for children aged 8 to 14 years and provided in the form of a teaching handbook with annexed sample lesson scenarios. Its concept is partly inspired by the CRADLE Project [6] and its learning process, which allows teachers to monitor children's progress and ensure that children have meaningful learning experiences. The DigComp [7] and EntreComp [8] frameworks, created by the European Commission to support actions to improve the digital and entrepreneurial capacity of European citizens have also served as inspiration for its conceptualisation.

The SIDiT teaching methodology underpins principles of inclusive and intercultural education, such as human/children's rights education, culturally

responsive pedagogy and anti-bias education. It combines Design-Based Learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and Universal Design Learning (UDL) principles and strategies. These principles provide the solid basis upon which the handbook and sixteen (16) lesson scenarios are formed, which are annexed to the methodology and serve as samples. The handbook also proposes preparation tasks and techniques that help teachers and children prepare for authentic and holistic inclusive education (e.g. agreeing core values in the classroom, thinking/feeling box, family wall).

The SIDiT teaching methodology is designed to be integrated within existing curricular units or programs across all disciplines-not as a stand alone course. It can be applied in a variety of school subjects, among others: Social Studies, Languages, Geography, Mathematics, Religious Education, Art.

The themes of the lesson scenarios revolve around the concepts of culture, social justice, religion and identity, with each lesson falling under one of the following four cross-curricular strands: A. Identity and belonging, B. Religion and beliefs, C. Social justice, D. Culturally responsive mathematics. Namely, the 16 lesson scenarios are the following:

Strand A: Identity and belonging

Lesson 1: The 'ME BOX' Project. Lesson 2: Individual and Group Identity. Lesson 3: Me and The Wider World. Lesson 4: What is gender? Lesson 5: Peer Pressure. Lesson 6: A song for my special person.

Strand B: Religion and beliefs

Lesson 7: Important Places. Lesson 8: Belief Dialogue. Lesson 9: Creating a Nature Mandala.

Strand C: Social justice

Lesson 10: Learning about children's rights. Lesson 11: A bully-free school. Lesson 12: Food Distribution. Lesson 13: Committed Art.

Strand D: Culturally responsive maths

Lesson 14: Teaching positive and negative numbers using the student's personal mathematics histories. Lesson 15: Using Venn Diagrams to Promote Cultural Awareness and Understanding. Lesson 16: Food Waste.

The lesson scenarios prompt students to explore topics of family, community, respect, rights, beliefs, fairness, discrimination, inequity, bullying, peer-pressure, diversity, value, individual differences, individual actions and responsibility for self and others. Students benefit from opportunities to build relationships, to learn about their own culture, heritage or religion and those of others, and to recognize the connection between their own actions

and the wider world. They also develop an understanding of the gender, ethnicity, and race as they construct their theories about groups and differences.

The lesson scenarios follow a student-centered way of applying the methodology in the classroom, through collaborative project work. Students are encouraged to explore each of the topics offered and develop projects in relation to them, working in pairs, small groups or as a whole class. To achieve this, they engage with digital content and information and utilise it to support their learning; they browse, search and filter information and data relating to each topic and use this data to inform their learning. Furthermore, they collaborate with their peers across settings with technologies, managing and developing further their digital identity. Inspired by the topics of the lesson scenarios, they produce their own projects and present them on their preferred media, including podcasts, Microsoft office applications, digital collages, videos, audio files etc.

Once finished with each lesson, students and teachers upload their work to an ePortfolio, an online platform which can be shared virtually with other classes, parents and schools (in the same or other country/ies). Teachers and children capture their learning through online and offline media such as drawings, photographs, reflective journals, video, podcasts, padlets, blogs etc. The ePortfolios enable children to gather their work and reflect on their learning in order to create an ePortfolio. Their artifacts can thus be a topic of discussion for their peers, school community and students' families.

3. The implementation

The project was carried out over a three-year period, from 1/9/2020 to 31/8/2023. The SIDiT teaching methodology was applied at the two primary schools in Brussels, Belgium –namely GO! Lagere Toverfluit, GO! Unescoschool Koegelberg—who are partners of this project.

The pilot implementation of the SIDiT teaching methodology started amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, during the school year 2020-2021 with 5 teachers and 107 students in over 5 different classes (3rd, 5th, 6th grades). During the 2021-2022 school year, its implementation continued with 10 teachers and 216 students in 13 different classes (3rd, 5th, 6th grades). During the last year of implementation 10 teachers and 219 students of 10 different classes (3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th grades) were involved. Consequently, more than 540 students from 4 grades (3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th) from 26 classes and 25 teachers were involved in the implementation of SIDiT.

4. The Goals and the Expected Results

The overall learning process through SIDiT as

described above- aspires to enable students to create values, to set goals; to make decisions and problem-solve; to develop creative ideas and to be curious; to learn actively and think critically. It intends that students foster their digital and media competences, as well as other competences that are of essence: personal responsibility, social responsibility, communication and cooperation. Hence, the SIDiT teaching methodology can be used by all teachers who want to focus on the development of the transversal competences of their students, to promote their inclusion into society.

The Marino Institute of Education (IE) undertook the development of the framework of the SIDiT teaching methodology, working in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Athen (DE) and the partner schools GO! Lagere Toverfluit (BE) GO! Unescoschool Koegelberg (BE) (Intellectual Output 1). The aforementioned partner schools were also responsible for the pilot teaching and testing of the lesson scenarios in the class.

The efficacy and effectiveness of SIDiT was evaluated both in quantitative and qualitative terms in accordance with the projects' expected results.

With respect to the students, we anticipated that they would: show greater interest and involvement in the subject-matter they are discovering; show greater levels of awareness, responsibility and sense of initiative in their own learning processes; acquire language skills and increase their achievements, interest and attitudes for FL; develop greater levels of transversal skills such as critical thinking, learning to learn, digital and media literacy and self-efficacy.

With respect to the teachers, we anticipated that they would: enjoy using this innovative methodology and gain increased personal and professional satisfaction; accomplish greater efficacy in the classroom especially with respect to inclusion; strengthen their profiles both by the acquisition of a new teaching methodology, by implementing a range of innovative teaching practices and by acquiring innovative educational skills. Based on the results, we aim to promote the further exploitation and adoption of the SIDiT teaching methodology as standard practice in primary schools (Intellectual Output 3: Policy Recommendations).

5. The Outcomes of the Implementation

The evaluation of the results of the implementation of the SIDiT teaching methodology took place during the first two years of its implementation, 2020-2022. In 2021-2022 teacher participants were a total of 5 and student participants were a total of 107. Among them 81 students of the 3rd and 6th grade filled out both pre and post questionnaires. In 2021-2022, teacher participants were a total of 10 and student participants were a total of 216. Among them 208 students of the 3rd, 5th

and 6th grade filled out both pre and post questionnaires. The majority of the students (73% in 2020-2021 and 86% in 2021-2022) belong to a category of SIDiT's interest (e.g. migrant, refugee, different language/cultural socioeconomic/ religious/ ethnic backgrounds, special educational needs).

5.1. The evaluation methodology and tools

The evaluation was based on our research questions regarding students, teachers, and the overall project framework. With respect to the students: Do they show interest and involvement in the subject-matter as well as greater levels of awareness, responsibility and sense of initiative in their own learning processes? Do they acquire language skills and increase their performance, interest and attitudes for FL? Do they develop transversal skills such as critical thought, learning to learn, digital and media literacy and self- efficacy? With respect to the teachers: Do they find their classes more interesting, fulfilling and motivating? Do they accomplish greater efficacy in the classroom especially with respect to inclusion? Are their profiles strengthened by the acquisition of a new teaching methodology, by implementing innovative teaching practices and by acquiring innovative educational skills?

With respect to the project in general: Is the project's methodology feasible and implementable in primary schools? Is this methodology effective, useful and successful? Is it feasible to implement SIDiT methodology in more schools promoting the greater adoption of the SIDiT methodology?

In order to find answers to all these questions, we designed an evaluation strategy, both quantitative and qualitative, to evaluate the students' inclusion into the lesson activities, as well as their skills acquisition, learning outcomes, changes in levels of interest, students' and teachers' perceptions of, and satisfaction with, the methodology, using as tools questionnaires, interviews and on-site observations. More specifically, to evaluate the students' performance and the skills obtained we used an assessment by their teachers in the form of questionnaires, as well as the students' self-assessment, and we compared their performance before and after the implementation of the SIDiT teaching.

To evaluate students' and teachers' attitudes, motivation and interest as well as their satisfaction with the methodology, we compiled questionnaires focusing on 13 factors for students: interest/enjoyment, involvement/participation, tension, inclusion, foreign language perceived competence, SIDiT lesson perceived competence, self-esteem, resilience, working with others, taking initiative, critical thinking, learning to learn/ metacognition and digital/media literacy and 5 factors for teachers: interest/enjoyment, competence, tension,

methodology implementation and strategies enhancing students' skills and methodology implementation and strategies enhancing teachers' skills.

Regarding the students, the pre-questionnaire consisted of 70 questions and the post-questionnaire consisted of 88. For the teachers the pre-questionnaire consisted of 30 questions and the post-questionnaire consisted of 62. In the students' questionnaires (both pre- and post-) we added also 20 questions that were answered by their teachers. The participants completed the questionnaires at the beginning and near the end of the implementation of the SIDiT teaching and then, we compared their answers.

Additional qualitative data was collected through interviews of a limited number of students and teachers as well as during the in situ observations in both participating schools. The in situ observations took place during the second year of the piloting, on 19-20 May 2022. During the first year of the piloting, the in situ observation could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. In situ observations were also performed during the last year of implementation. The overall project evaluation will be completed at the end of the project with the evaluation of its outputs and the analysis of the data collected from teachers and students during all three years of the project.

5.2. The results

The results of the implementation of SIDiT arise from the students' and teachers' questionnaires, the students interviews and the in situ observations.

i. The questionnaires

Regarding students' attitudes, motivation and interest we compared participants' answers before and after the implementation of SIDiT and the paired samples T-tests (performed by IBM SPSS Statistics version 20) showed statistically significant differences in almost all factors in favor of the post-tests revealing improvement in their attitudes after the implementation, as shown below at Figure 1.

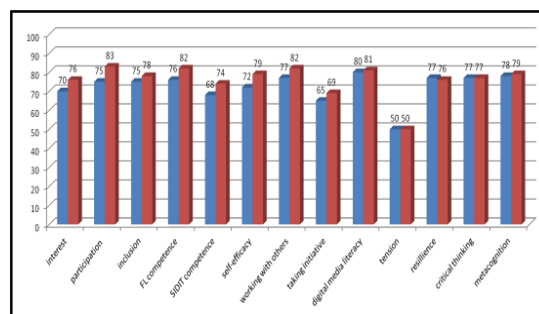


Figure 1. Comparison of students' performance before and after SIDiT implementation (%)

Interest/Enjoyment: $t=-5,357$, $p<0,001$;
 Involvement/Participation: $t=-2,364$, $p=0,19$;
 Inclusion: $t=-2,333$, $p=0,021$; Language Perceived Competence: $t=-3,290$, $p=0,001$; SIDiT Perceived Competence: $t=-3,557$, $p<0,001$; Self-esteem: $t=-2,535$, $p=0,012$; Working with others: $t=-2,931$, $p=0,004$; Taking Initiative: $t=-3,277$, $p=0,001$; Digital Media Literacy ns; Tension ns; Critical Thinking ns; Learning to learn/Metacognition ns.

To evaluate participants' satisfaction with the methodology and their assessment of the project, we examined their answers to the additional questions of the post-questionnaires. Some indicative results are that the students:

- found SIDiT lesson very interesting (72%),
- liked that they worked together with their classmates (89%),
- had the chance to participate in all SIDiTactivities (91%),
- felt welcomed in their schools (85%),
- felt that their teacher listened to their ideas (85%),
- got help from their teacher when faced difficulties (87%),
- felt that their teachers treated equally all children during SIDiT (93%) and
- participated in the decision about class activities during SIDiT (77%).

The most important result, as shown at figure 2, is that 78% of students want to participate in the project again.

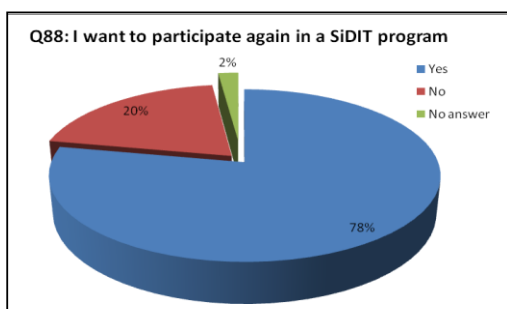


Figure 2. Percentage of participants' answers to the question:
 "I want to participate again in this program"

Regarding the assessment of students' skills and progress of learning outcomes the results showed that students felt more confident after the implementation of the program and they improved their performance. Some indicative results based on students' answers (self-assessment) were that:

- 73% took responsibilities during the activities of SIDiT,
- 86% enjoyed working out new ways of solving problems,
- 75% were able to actively solve problems and seize opportunities,
- 82% enjoyed working out new ways of solving problems.

These results were confirmed by the students' assessment by teachers since the Paired-Samples T-tests performed showed statistically significant improvement after the implementation in all areas measured (as shown below at Figures 3, 4, 5).

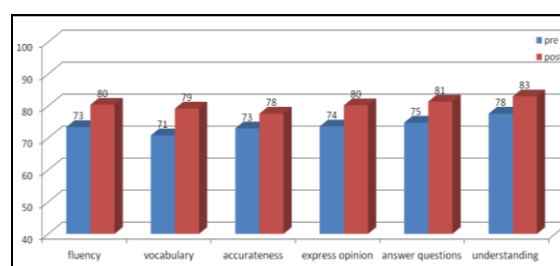


Figure 3. Comparison of students' FL performance before and after SIDiT implementation (%)

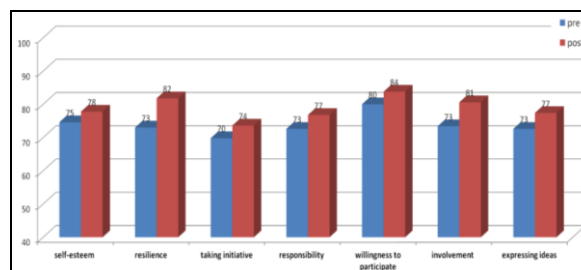


Figure 4. Comparison of students' skills before and after SIDiT implementation (%)

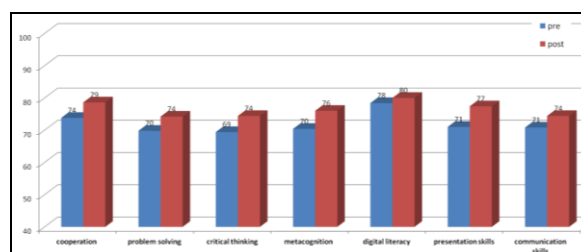


Figure 5. Comparison of students' skills before and after SIDiT implementation (%)

Fluency: $t=-4,244$, $p<0,000$; Vocabulary: $t=-6,055$, $p<0,001$; Accurateness in speaking: $t=-3,503$, $p=0,001$; Ability to express opinion: $t=-4,613$,

$p < 0,001$; Ability to answer questions: $t = -5,514$, $p < 0,001$; Ability to understand instructions: $t = -4,596$, $p < 0,001$; Self-esteem: $t = -2,203$, $p = 0,029$; Resilience: $t = -2,237$, $p = 0,026$; Taking initiative: $t = -2,640$, $p = 0,009$; Responsibility: $t = -3,009$, $p = 0,003$; Willingness to participate in class activities: $t = -2,606$, $p = 0,010$; Involvement/Participation: $t = -4,672$, $p < 0,001$; Expressing ideas: $t = -3,091$, $p = 0,002$; Cooperating: $t = -3,149$, $p = 0,002$; Problem solving: $t = -2,722$, $p = 0,007$; Critical thinking: $t = -3,295$, $p = 0,001$; Metacognition: $t = -4,149$, $p < 0,001$; Presentation skills: $t = -4,353$, $p < 0,001$; Communication skills: $t = -2,612$, $p = 0,010$; Digital literacy: $t = -1,288$, ns.

With regard to teachers, the majority is satisfied with the methodology of the project, finds the lessons more fun and fulfilling would recommend this methodology to other colleagues (70%) and would like to participate in the SIDI^T project again. Some indicative answers are:

- This way of teaching increased students' interest (90%).
- With SIDI^T I managed to do the lesson more fun (80%).
- I can produce inclusive activities for students of different backgrounds (90%).
- I can design activities that give space of expression to different identities and enhance interaction (100%).
- I applied the methodology satisfactorily (80%).
- I treated all my students equally during SIDI^T (90%).
- After the implementation of SIDI^T I can be more effective in teaching in mixed composition classes (70%).
- I would recommend to other colleagues SIDI^T project (70%).
- I use different strategies to support the development of targeted skills (100%).
- I encourage all my students to participate actively in class (100%).

Concerning their students, teachers stated that SIDI^T:

- Gave students the opportunity to take initiatives (90%).
- Increased students' participation in the classroom activities (80%).
- Improved students' cooperation (80%).
- Enhanced students' self-confidence (70%).
- Gave students the opportunity to come up with

new ideas (100%).

- Gave students the opportunity to design strategies to achieve their goals (70%).
- Gave students the opportunity to participate when deciding about class activities (70%).

ii. The interviews

A representative number of students from each class of each school was interviewed (total $N = 30$). The questions referred to their likes, dislikes and difficulties during the implementation of SIDI^T as well as to their suggestions for additions or changes to the project: a) What is SIDI^T? How would you describe it to someone who knows nothing about it? b) What do you like most about SIDI^T? c) What do you dislike about SIDI^T? d) Which part of SIDI^T is difficult for you? e) What would you suggest to add or change at SIDI^T? f) Would you like to participate again in SIDI^T next year? Why? Some indicative answers are presented below.

Concerning the description of SIDI^T the most characteristic answers were:

"The SIDI^T lessons are about culture, religion and the world. The idea is to get to know other people better and we talk about how we can make the world a better place". "SIDI^T is completely different from Math and Dutch lessons. You talk about other people and their religion. You are allowed to express your opinion more. The lessons are very easy to understand". "You can be yourself in the SIDI^T classes". "You open yourself up in class and you can voice your opinion. We talked about class rules and about our own limits". "You learn to have more self-confidence. You learn to show your feelings and talk about yourself". "It is a project where the children are listened to. I don't really experience it as a 'teaching moment' but as fun activities and conversations". "These are lessons in which you can show talents, tell information about yourself and give your opinion on various topics". "During the SIDI^T class we get to know each other better, for example about our countries. We work a lot in groups to learn better Dutch". "Learning about kids from our class. But also about children in other places in the world. Learning about children's rights, about countries and our religion. Here in our class we also have different religions". "Learning in a fun way. We look for information on the internet ourselves and work together with other children. We also learn a lot about ourselves".

With regard to their likes, the students answer:

"The most fun was the nature mandala. We went outside to make the mandala and worked in groups". "I liked working with other children and talking about other cultures". "I enjoyed getting to know the

religions of other students". "I like talking about myself and getting to know the other students better. I understand the feelings of other pupils better now". "I found the lessons fun and creative". "The activities are fun. We get to work together a lot". "I liked the fact that teachers think it is important that we feel good about ourselves". "I enjoyed getting to know the different cultures and languages in the classroom better and seeing that not everyone is the same but still equal". "I liked that everyone was allowed to have their own opinion and that we were allowed to work together". "I liked being allowed to say what I thought and felt".

As for their dislikes, most students couldn't find anything negative. The other answered:

"I liked everything". "I did not like the long questionnaires". "Sometimes I do not like to give my own opinion. There are some things I prefer not to talk about". "Sometimes there was not enough time, I would have liked to talk some more about the subjects I found interesting". "I was sorry there wasn't enough time to finish things". "Sometimes the children in my group don't want to follow my idea. I find that a pity". "I didn't like the fact that in some countries children can't go to school, like here with us".

The difficulties during the implementation of SIDiT according to the students were:

"I don't always find it easy to cooperate with everyone. Everyone had a different opinion. You had to make compromises". "I find it difficult to always find the right words for my feelings". "You were obliged to work together. Sometimes I prefer to work alone". "Sometimes it is difficult to talk about yourself". "Some things are difficult to talk about, or at least to speak openly about because we are ashamed of how we feel about certain things". "I sometimes found it difficult to creatively shape my feelings". "It was very difficult to hear that some children live in difficult circumstances and are struggling at home". "It was sometimes difficult to speak openly about personal things".

Concerning what the students would add or change at SIDiT many students answered that they would not add or change anything, while some gave the following answers:

"I would provide more time for the lessons". "Fewer questions on the questionnaires". "I would use examples or videos in the explanation, then it becomes clearer". "I would add more activities and provide more variety". "Cooperate more with the other classes, so that I can get to know the pupils from the other classes better". "It could be more

active". "I think it would also be fun to do this with other classes. I miss my friends from last year". "Doing a project together with another grade".

Most students answered that they would like to participate again in SIDiT next year because a SIDiT lesson is interesting/fun, it develops their way of thinking, they learn interesting things about each other. Some indicative answers are:

"you never know enough about each other", "it's nice to talk about these topics". "It is important to understand each other as well as possible because it can prevent many conflicts". "It is important to know and understand the similarities and differences between cultures in order to avoid conflicts". "It's fun". "I still want to participate so we can find out a bit more about everyone in the class". "I enjoyed working together". "I have learned to talk about my feelings more calmly". "It helps me understand my friends better and to get to know other friends". "The activities were fun. I made new friends". "Yes, it helps me have more confidence in myself". "It is nice to get to know other children better".

iii. The in situ observations

Finally, the on-site visits made to both schools gave us the opportunity to observe the implementation of the methodology in situ and receive feedback directly from the teachers and students.

Our basic observations are: Students show interest and participate willingly. They respond successfully to the activities of the lessons. They show enthusiasm and rejoice throughout the lesson. They can work harmoniously in group work activities. They seem to understand the instructions they receive in Dutch and have no particular difficulty in using that language.

With regard to the teachers, apart from the careful preparation of the course, they also show enthusiasm for the lesson and commitment to their work. Finally, they incorporate activities that allow students to take initiatives, formulate and support their ideas, collaborate and communicate in different languages. More analytically, according to the teachers:

- The lessons are enjoyable for the students and interesting for them.
- The lessons promote inclusion and diversity. They allow interaction and group work.
- They were able to speak more openly with the students, learn from them and gain a better perspective about their personalities and interests.
- Through the discussion and the activities, students and teachers break the stereotypes and knowledge considered as granted.
- The students have developed skills such as: Language competence, Cultural Openness and tolerance, Creativity, Team work and social skills,

Self-acceptance: being kind to themselves, Different ways of learning, ICT skills.

- Through SIDiT they gain a lot of knowledge and insight about each student individually which then helps them in their daily work.
- Students feel safe, open up with each other even for the ‘bad things in life’. They learn to respect, understand and know each other better. As a result, their tolerance and openness is enhanced.

As main difficulties during the implementation they mentioned the time required for the detailed completion of the lessons plans and the reporting process. Especially the e-portfolio was sometimes difficult for some students due to the language barrier.

As for the students, what they liked during SIDiT lessons was working in groups, working on the iPads (i.e. searching information), the art aspect and the friends that they gained. They mentioned that SIDiT “ was more fun, cool, more dynamic than they expected “, “they learned about different countries and did presentations” and “they feel that they are not alone”. They disliked the lack of attention of some of the kids sometimes and the fact that sometimes ‘to feel’ is sad and expressing feelings is difficult because some things are more private and are difficult to share.

6. Discussion

The evaluation results showed that the SIDiT project has been implemented successfully.

The SIDiT teaching methodology increases teacher and learner satisfaction and ensures that all students are included in the classroom activities, regardless of their background or abilities. Moreover, the teachers’ profiles are strengthened through the development and testing of a new teaching methodology.

The methodology seems to be feasible, useful, and successful. The lessons seem to be interesting and fun for the students and the teachers and seem to promote the inclusion of all students into the classroom activities.

Participating students significantly improved their attitudes / motivation / interest in almost all factors after the implementation. We also observed improvement in their skills’ acquisition, especially in the enhancement of their digital and entrepreneurial competences, such as: self-esteem, resilience, taking initiative, expressing ideas, cooperation, problem solving, critical thinking, digital literacy, and communication skills.

Finally, participating teachers and students seem to be satisfied with the SIDiT teaching methodology and feel more self-confident. These results are quite encouraging and predispose us positively for the

continuation of the program and the optimization of the results.

7. Conclusions

Our results are quite encouraging, urging us to promote the adoption of the SIDiT teaching methodology to public education authorities and its implementation in more schools. Our work adds to previous studies exploring the ways of improving the learning process by motivating students and promoting the successful integration in the classroom of all children, regardless of their socio-economic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds, or their abilities.

The SIDiT Project and its methodology seems to enable students to create values, set goals, make decisions and find solutions to problems, develop creative ideas, be curious and active and think critically.

Therefore, the SIDiT teaching methodology and toolkit can be used by teachers in different countries who want to focus on the development of the transversal skills of their students, as a means of integrating students into society.

8. References

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Ethics statement

Ethical review and approval were not required for the participation of teachers and students in the research, in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. Parents of the students provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

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