



# Results and recommendations based on questionnaires

Project result 1



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# Introduction

The first objective of the PR1 in the DIGI-LINGO project was to build a theoretical framework to explain what are the pillars of a comprehensive approach to language teaching and to identify which factors determine successful foreign language teaching. In addition to this, special attention was given to investigating the role of the international dimension and digital tools in foreign language teaching and learning. The second objective focused on collecting data from teachers and students from participant schools. To achieve this objective, a questionnaire was created based on the theoretical framework targeting three main areas: the factors of the PTDL model, the role of the international dimension in the foreign language teaching and learning, and the impact of digital tools and strategies in foreign language lessons. Finally, the last goal of PR1 was to interpret the results to identify main good practices and areas for improvement so that recommendations for improvement could be provided.

A mixed method was implemented during the analysis as most of the data collected required a quantitative analysis but a qualitative interpretation was required to respond to the main research question. Quantitative analysis was applied to find out percentages, mean and median values of the results, and  $X^2$  and T-test were calculated to find statistically significant differences among teachers' and students' perceptions.

The results and recommendations of each country have been divided into three main categories: the four dimensions that form the PTDL model (Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning), digital tools in FL (foreign language) teaching and learning and significant differences among teachers' and students' perspective in each school. Finally, a summary of recommendations for each country is provided.

## General results and recommendations

- 1 Expanding teachers' knowledge on the **Pluriliteracies Teaching for Learning** model, **Cognitive Discourse Functions** and **Deeper Learning**.
- 2 Encouraging the use of **virtual exchange platforms and strategies** such as gamification and flipped-classroom to work on **interculturality** and **linguistic interaction** and engage students.
- 3 **Involving the students in the design** of the FL classroom, including the evaluation criteria.
- 4 Encouraging the use of **authentic and diverse text** (not only narratives) in the FL lessons, selected based on **pupils' interests and identities** and encouraging more **critical thinking**.
- 5 Offering teachers support and professional development opportunities focusing on the use of **digital tools** and **blended learning**.
- 6 Becoming familiar with strategies to work on students' **self-regulation** through clear goal setting and introducing co-evaluation and self evaluation to monitor the process.

# BELGIUM

The results showed that 77.8% of the teacher participants in Belgium are “not familiar” with the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning approach nor with the concept of Deeper Learning and Cognitive Discourse Functions (CDF). The rest of the participants seemed to be just “a bit familiar” with this approach and its main concepts. The result also suggested that Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is not a common approach among the teacher participants as the answers showed that Task Based Learning and Topic Based Learning are mostly used as Foreign Language Teaching approaches. There was a mention of Project Based Learning and no mention of CLIL. In the following lines, recommendations in relation to the 4 pillars of the PTDL model and its factors are given based on the results of the Belgian participants.

## Demonstrating and Communicating Understanding

The main purpose of the FL teachers seems to be to promote communicative competence among learners (development of the ability to communicate meaning in discourse) as 66% of the participants indicated this option. The 33% claimed that their main purpose is to promote language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills (achieving language and conceptual knowledge to communicate meaning in discourse). This result, and the evident unfamiliarity of the teachers with the PTDL approach and its main concepts reported above, suggest the need to assist teachers in becoming more familiar with the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning approach. Training on this approach may likely help teachers build bridges from the well-established Communicative Approach to this newly established model. However, the results also showed that teachers already implement practices considered in the PTDL approach. For instance, most of the teachers seem to be accustomed to discussing the purpose of the FL task with their pupils in the beginning of the FL lesson (66.7%). This practice is fundamental in the PTDL approach, so even though this practice is widely used among the participants, it is recommended to reinforce this among the rest of the participants who claimed discussing objectives in the end of the lesson or providing written objectives to the students. The understanding of the purpose of the FL task will positively influence the rest of the factors of this pillar “Demonstrating and Communicating Understanding.”. Understanding the purpose will help in identifying genre specific characteristics, mode and the language style needed to fulfil the task.

The results also reported that the majority of teachers (88.9%) focus on all the language skills (reception, production, interaction) in their FL lessons, which is favourable to implement the PTDL approach, which aims to promote language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills. In addition to this, teachers also seem to be using a wide range of text genres (narrative, argumentative and expository) and multimodal text to work on students' communications skills (Lyrics, Audio Message, Podcast, Video Clip, Video, Newspaper Article, Magazine Article, Book Excerpt, Audio Interview, Video Interview, TV News).

It is important to remember that in the PTDL approach “text” refers to language manifestations in all modalities (spoken, written, audio, video, graphic or plurimodal) and authentic texts are considered to be more appropriate as they contain authenticity, cultural value and meaning (Coyle & Meyer, 2021). Among the texts used in the FL lessons, a big percentage of the teachers (77.8) claimed to use authentic text and text created with pedagogical purpose in their FL lessons. The use of authentic text by most of the teachers is a positive sign as Coyle & Meyer (2021) explained. Therefore, it is recommended to decrease the use of text created for pedagogical purposes and increase the use of authentic text in the FL classroom. Among the criteria to select the “text” for the FL lessons all participants considered the pupil's interest, identity and the civic value of the text among other criteria, which demonstrates a very positive sign. In Coyle and Meyer's words “selecting a text only according to its lexical and grammatical level of difficulty is no longer appropriate, instead, co-selection of texts with learners according to their interests, identities, creativity and civic responsibility” – is necessary to bring progressive pathways for deeper learning to the foreign language classroom (p. 156). This does not mean that lexical and grammatical level is not something to take into account when choosing the most appropriate input but it can always be solved with some explanatory activity, such as a glossary or some previous grammatical structure guidance. In relation to how the text is worked in the lesson, the responses have been varied among the participants. 44% affirmed that the curriculum attainment targets decide how the text is worked and only 11.1% affirmed that texts are seen as complex cultural discourses, thus, besides interpreting the text, critical thinking is encouraged in the classroom. Coyle & Meyer (2021, p.156) claim that FL teachers should help learners move beyond the stage of surface learning where texts are treated as stories to reach a level of interpretation where texts are treated as complex cultural discourses (Coyle and Meyer, 2021, p. 156). Thus, it will be important to revise if encouraging critical thinking is included in the curriculum attainment targets, and if not, strategies to encourage critical thinking about the text worked on in the FL lessons should be applied to promote deeper learning and the development of better communication skills.

In addition to the mentioned recommendations, it surely is essential for teachers to learn about CDFs and introduce them as main linguistic tools in their lessons as CDFs will not only promote the treatment of the text as cultural discourse but they will also allow students to progress in these genres as they build conceptual knowledge and improve their linguistic performance in terms of fluency, syntactic and lexical complexity, accuracy and task adequacy (Coyle & Meyer, 2021. p. 166).

### **Mentoring, Learning and Personal Growth**

The results showed that in the Belgian schools students rarely take part in the design of the FL lesson as the results showed a mean value of 2.3 ( $M=2.3$ ) and a median value of 2 ( $Mdn=2$ ) in a 1 through 5 Likert scale question, in which it was explained to the survey participants that answering 1 would mean pupils never take part in the design of the FL lesson and answering 5 would indicate that students do always participate in the design of the FL class session. However, the majority of the teachers stated that when designing the FL lessons besides the

communicative purposes (message), grammatical goals and the curriculum objectives, the interest of the students, the socio-cultural and linguistic background and the motivation and engagement of the students are considered. As mentioned in the theoretical framework of this project, the PTDL approach promotes a student centred approach, however, it also requires the teacher to adopt a “proactive” role, this means that the teacher is not a “facilitator” but an “activator” of the learning process (Hattie, 2012). Therefore, Meyers et al. (2018) affirm that the debate should be about the capacity of teachers and students working together in the design of the FL lessons. The observed results clearly indicate that this factor should be further investigated as it is claimed that students do not participate in the design but at the same time it is affirmed that their interest, socio-cultural backgrounds and motivations are considered in the design of the lessons. It is recommended to look at possibilities for teachers and students to work together in the design of the FL lessons as this is an important factor in the PTDL framework.

Belgian teacher-participants also confirmed that they create opportunities to scaffold, that is to guide and assist their students' learning process in the FL class ( $M=3.89 / Mdn=4$ ). Furthermore, they also confirmed that they use digital tools for the scaffolding process ( $M=4.1 / Mdn=4$ ). Among the scaffolding strategies the teachers used, the most common ones were using visual and digital aids, activating pre-knowledge, modelling, integrating collaboration in the lessons and offering students time to answer questions.

Self-regulation is another key factor in the PTDL framework, teacher participants answered vaguely ( $M=3.33 / Mdn=3$ ), this may be an aspect that could be reinforced in Belgian schools. Self-regulation or the ability that students have to plan, strategize and reflect on their own performance is key for the pupils to be able to monitor their learning process. In order to provide students with self-regulation opportunities, it is important for teachers to provide them with clear information about the objectives, instructions regarding the assignments and clear time-lines. This will help students get organized, setting their own objectives and implementing plans to achieve those goals. In order to work on self-regulation, it could be helpful for teachers to get familiar with the phases proposed by Zumbrunn et al (2011): planning phase, monitoring phase and reflection phase explained in the theoretical framework.

Regarding assessment, slightly more than half of the teachers (66.7) admitted using both summative and formative assessment which shows that the evaluation of the whole learning process is valued by the participants even though 22% of the participants affirmed that they only use summative assessment in their FL courses, evaluating through tests in the end of the units, while the rest of the participants transmitted that they use other forms of evaluation. These results suggest that it might be interesting to revise assessment procedures that are used among the Belgian schools that participated as the PTDL framework strongly recommends constantly evaluating the learning process involving all participants, students, peers and teachers. In relation to the instruments employed for assessment, all the participant teachers indicated they used rubrics and most of them also used portfolios or other instruments for evaluation. The questionnaire also checked whether the teachers designed the evaluation criteria together with the students and the answer was vague again ( $M=2.33 / Mdn=3$ ). This



suggests the teacher could co-design more with their students in order to make the pupil involved in their own evaluation process and make sure they are aware of the criteria that is going to be used in the assessment process. Similarly, when asked about who participates in the evaluation, the most used choices are hetero-evaluation (teacher evaluation) (44.4%) and 33% claimed to use self-evaluation, co-evaluation and hetero-evaluation. These answers align with the answers to the previous question and the recommendation is creating more opportunities for the implication of the students in the evaluation process by using not only teacher-directed evaluations but also self-evaluations and co-evaluations. Finally, when answering what kind of feed is given to the students, most teachers (44.4%) indicated they give feed-back. It is certainly beneficial to provide the students with more than one type of feed. The general tendency is to provide feedback at the end of a certain process and the PTDL model encourages providing different types of feed and in different formats, written and oral.

### Constructing Knowledge and Refining Skills

This dimension of the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning aims to foster the successful internalization of conceptual and factual content knowledge and the automatization of subject specific strategies and procedures (Coyle, 2018). To find out how this dimension is experienced in the Belgian schools' teachers were asked what language-specific strategies they used in the FL classroom. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies are reported to be used by 44% of the teachers. In this case, the pluriliteracies model emphasizes the importance of using several different language-specific strategies with the pupils in order for them to achieve the final goal.

### Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement

The PTDL model included this dimension to highlight the importance of including affective, motivational and reflective factors in the learning process to promote and maintain pupils' engagement in the learning process, and consequently, achieve a deeper learning.

The teacher participants were asked several questions to find out how these factors were reflected in their teaching practices. First, teachers were asked if pupils' interest and linguistic and cultural background were included in their FL Lessons. In a 1 through 5 Likert scale, the answer was mostly neutral ( $M=3.67 / Mdn=3$ ). This result indicates that including cultural, social and personal aspects may be something interesting to look into in Belgian schools as the PTDL model strongly underlines the importance of including and considering pupils' cultural, social and emotional aspects in the learning process to positively affect engagement and motivation.

In the DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework, intercultural competence was identified to belong to the generating and sustaining commitment and achievement dimension as affective (attitudes, motivation, well-being) and engagement (cognitive, emotional, behavioural, social) factors are involved in this dimension. Furthermore, the literature remarked that multilingualism and multiculturalism are in the core of the CLIL classroom as the immigrant student population

increases (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.233). Consequently, there are needs to be addressed in the FL classrooms: recognition of every language in the classroom to promote equity and inclusion; awareness of the sociolinguistic perspective among teachers; and practical knowledge on how to support multilingual students (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.241). Therefore, the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire also targeted this factor to find out how aware FL teachers are about the intercultural factor.

More than half of the Belgian teachers (66%) understand intercultural communication as “creating a context/activity that allows the students to have an intercultural conversation” while some participants understand it as “transmitting information about different countries and nationalities to students” (22%) and a minority understands intercultural communication as “teaching them how to deal with the speakers of the foreign language (11%). It could be observed that the understanding of most of the teachers is aligned with the definition provided in the DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework, however, it could be interesting to extend this understanding to a wider number of teachers. In order to take part in intercultural conversations, it is vital to find out pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and include them in the FL lessons. Regarding these points, the Belgian teachers mentioned that they mostly (66%) find out about their pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds during their FL lessons. However, they showed a neutral attitude towards including the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their pupils in their FL lessons ( $M=3.44/Mdn=3$ ). Teachers mentioned some examples when they have included their pupil's linguistic and cultural background. It was mentioned that specific activities were designed for students to use their home languages. Nevertheless, most of the examples provided by teachers refer to opportunities to reflect on the target language culture but not that much to discuss or include the pupil's linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, teachers provided some examples to explain how to spark conversations about identity and culture among their students: listening to a song, watching a skit, explicitly describing differences with their culture or comparing phenomenon and topics from the culture where the target language is spoken with their own cultures and history.

Considering that in the school information provided the participant schools claimed to have pupils and families with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and multiculturalism and multilingualism is a rising phenomenon at schools, it is recommended that teachers continue expanding their knowledge on strategies to successfully integrate intercultural competence in the FL teaching. The inclusion of the linguistic and cultural background of the students could contribute to the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Coyle, 2015p.5; Garcia, 2009).

Although teachers seem neutral about including pupil's interests and backgrounds, teachers feel quite confident that they are promoting active participation of the pupils in the FL lessons ( $M=4/Mdn=4$ ). Teachers also believed that they promote students' engagement in the class, teachers answered positively ( $M=3.67/Mdn=4$ ) and mentioned that they use strategies such as personalization of assignments, applying different teaching methods and activating and finding out students' pre-knowledge, for instance, through quizzes. Participants are quite convinced that they provide pupils with learning environments and feedback that allow students to be

aware of their progress and achievements ( $M=3.78/Mdn=4$ ). This are positive signs as active participation and feedback are essential aspect for engaging pupils in the learning process and making them more aware of their learning progress. Another factor to be considered to facilitate pupil's progress is pupil's mastery level. Teachers were asked if pupil's mastery level is considered when planning, scaffolding and assessing pupils and the results demonstrated that Belgian teachers consider their pupils' mastery levels ( $M=4/Mdn=4$ ). Finally, among the strategies used to motivate pupils, using authentic materials, considering pupils' interests, using different forms of input and designing communicative tasks and activities were mostly mentioned.

### Digital Tools

In the DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework it was concluded that digital tools could help with many of the factors involved in the four dimensions that constitute the PTDL model. For this reason, the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire aimed to find out about teachers' training, teachers' beliefs, school culture, advantages and disadvantages perceived in relation to the use of digital tools, and finally, how teachers were implementing digital tools in the FL lessons.

### Teacher training, beliefs and school culture

Teachers in Belgian schools seemed to be more satisfied with the technological infrastructure of the school than the school culture involving digital tools. However, there are aspects to consider in both areas. Participants were quite satisfied about the technological infrastructure, however, not that much with the school culture involving digital tools. On the one hand, teachers in general seemed not to be very satisfied with the infrastructures provided to support teaching and learning with digital tools ( $M=3.22/Mdn=3$ ). Still, they claimed to have digital tools to be used ( $M=4/Mdn=4$ ) and quality access to the internet ( $M=4.33/Mdn=4$ ). In addition to this, teachers agreed that technical support is available in case problems with digital technologies arise ( $M=3.89/Mdn=4$ ). Participants also agreed that there are school-owned/managed digital devices for students to use when they need them at school ( $M=4.22/Mdn=4$ ). However, teachers vaguely answered about the existence of school owned and managed portable devices that students can take home when needed ( $3.22/Mdn=3$ ). Answers also showed that teachers are not very satisfied with the physical space provided to support teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=3.22/Mdn=3$ ), nevertheless, they underlined that students in need of special support have access to assistive technologies at school ( $M=4.22/Mdn=4$ ).

On the other hand, teachers claimed slight agreement about having a digital strategy at school ( $M=2.89/Mdn=3$ ). They also expressed a slight agreement about their involvement in the development of the school's digital strategy ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3$ ). In line with these results, participants answered vaguely when asked about the measures in place to identify challenges that arise with blended learning, related to students' learning needs and socio-economic background ( $M=2.89/Mdn=3$ ). Consequently, teachers seemed to also disagree about having a

plan in place to help teachers deal with the identified challenges related to students' learning needs and socio-economic background ( $M=2.44/Mdn=2$ ).

The results demonstrated that the Belgian schools seem quite satisfied with the equipment and technical support but there may be room for improvement in relation to physical space and devices for students to take home if needed. It could also be recommended to work on their digital strategy as a team, involving teachers in designing measures to identify challenges that may arise with blended learning and develop a plan to deal with the learning and socio-economic needs of the students.

Another aspect analysed was teachers' training with digital tools. Teachers expressed agreement about having time for professional development ( $M=3.78/Mdn=4$ ), but less agreement when asked if leaders discuss with them their CPD needs for teaching with digital technologies ( $M=3.78/Mdn=3$ ). They were not positive either about the opportunities they have to participate in CPD for teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=2.56/Mdn=3$ ) and share their experiences with other workmates ( $M=3/Mdn=3$ ). Teachers appeared to be mostly choosing the "not applicable" option when asked about the usefulness of the CPD activities they have had the chance to participate in ( $M=5.33/Mdn=6$ ). Furthermore, the tendency was the same when asked about different modalities: face-to-face courses, seminars or conferences outside school ( $M=4.89/Mdn=5$ ); online courses, webinars or online conferences ( $M=5.13/Mdn=5.5$ ); and learning from other teachers within your school through online or offline collaboration ( $M=4.88/Mdn=5.5$ ). Finally, teachers continued mostly choosing "Not applicable" when asked about the use of teachers' networks or communities of practice (such as eTwinning) or study visits for professional development.

These findings suggest that looking at the opportunities and time offered for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) might be beneficial for the Belgian schools. Moreover, discussing with teachers the usefulness and modalities of CPDs might also be beneficial as many teachers seemed not to find the right answer for these questions. This is an important area to reflect on as digital tools play an important role in current FL education and application of the PTDL model.

Literature also underlined teachers' beliefs as an important factor. Teachers at Belgian schools slightly believed that a blended approach promotes learning autonomy, time-management, flexibility of interaction and innovation ( $M=2.89/Mdn=3$ ). They also slightly believed that the e-platform used for the blended approach is clear and helps the student develop study strategies and habits ( $M=2.89/Mdn=3$ ). In addition to this, teachers reckoned to be confident in the use of digital tools to prepare lessons, teach their class and provide feedback to students ( $M=3.78/Mdn=3$ ).

### Advantages and drawbacks of e-learning

Belgian teachers stated that they disagree that the advantages and disadvantages of teaching and learning with digital technologies are discussed among them ( $M=2.33/Mdn=2$ ). Participants

also reported that the factors that negatively affect teaching and learning with digital technologies are: lack of time for teachers (16%), unreliable or slow school connection (50%) and a combination of these two in addition to teacher and student digital competence and space restrictions. In a separate question with other options, teachers indicated that restricted student access to digital devices (37%), lack of time to develop materials for remote teaching (12%) and difficulties in engaging students (12%) were mentioned.

These results revealed that, as mentioned earlier, Belgian schools should try to improve their infrastructures for e-learning and look into expanding the time and CPD opportunities for teachers, and also training sessions for students if necessary.

### The use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes

The last area in this section is related to the use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes. Regarding this area, teachers responded that they search online for digital educational resources ( $M=4.22/Mdn=4$ ) and they also create digital resources to support their teaching ( $M=3.78/Mdn=4$ ). Teachers agreed about using virtual learning environments with students ( $M=3.44/Mdn=4$ ), however, they slightly agreed about the use of digital technologies to tailor their teaching to students' individual needs ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3$ ) and facilitate student collaboration ( $M=3.22/Mdn=3$ ).

Participants in Belgian schools were not very convinced about setting digital learning activities that engage students ( $M=3.56/Mdn=3$ ). They also seemed not to be using a lot of gamification ( $M=3.11/Mdn=3$ ), and even less, virtual exchange platforms such as eTwinning ( $M=2.22/Mdn=2$ ). Flipped-classroom appeared not to be a popular strategy either ( $M=2.89/Mdn=3$ ). Although digital tools are slightly used for assessment ( $M=2.78/Mdn=3$ ) and feedback ( $M=2.78/Mdn=3$ ), this could be an interesting area to look into.

### Differences between teacher and students' answers

The objective of the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire was not only to find out the teacher's perception on the pillars and factors of the PTDL model but also to contrast if the teacher's perspective and students' perspectives regarding the pillars and the factors that form the PTDL model was the same. This comparison was implemented within schools in order to be as precise as possible.

### Da Vinci scholen Sint-Niklaas

Results show that, in Da Vinci scholen Sint-Niklaas, there are a couple significant differences between the perception of the students and the perception of the teachers. For example, when asked about the type of assessment implemented in the FL lessons, students were almost equally balanced between only using summative assessment or both summative and formative whereas all teacher participants affirmed different answers. The difference in this case proved to be statistically significant ( $p=0.001$ ). This school also showed discrepancy about the inclusion of

pupil's interest and cultural backgrounds in the FL lessons. Students perceived that their interests and linguistic and cultural background was not included whereas teachers were quite positive about this aspect (*Student M= 2.44/Mdn=2 Teacher M= 4/Mdn=4*), therefore, statistical difference was observed ( $p=0.02$ ).

### Atheneum Zelzate

At this school statistically significant differences were observed in relation to assessment and the use of digital tools to provide feedback. A bit more than half of the students (58%) stated that the assessment used is summative, however, most of the teachers claimed to use both, formative and summative assessment ( $p=0.02$ ). Students seemed to feel more positive about the use of digital tools to provide feedback than the teachers and a statistically significant difference was observed ( $p=0.04$ ).

### Athena Oostende Campus Pegasus en Centrum

The results demonstrated that at this school several differences exist between teachers' and students' perspectives. For instance, significant difference ( $p=0.001$ ) was observed regarding the type of activities carried out in the FL lessons. 51% of students stated that all types of activities (reception, production, interaction) are practiced in the FL lessons, whereas the other half was divided between mostly production or mostly reception activities. Regarding teachers, half of them claimed that all activities are practiced while the rest showed different opinions. Variation was also noticed when asked about the use of digital tools for scaffolding ( $p=0.03$ ). Teachers showed more positive attitude than students (*Teacher M=4.25/Mdn=4 Student M=3.01/Mdn =3*). Another aspect where statistical difference was perceived is related to including students' interest and linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the FL lessons. Both groups showed quite neutral or negative perceptions in this area, however, teachers seemed more positive than students (*Teacher M=3.5/Mdn=3.5 Student M= 2.26/Mdn=2*). A very significant disagreement ( $p=0.02$ ) occurred when asked about pupils' active participation (*Teacher M=4.25/Mdn= 4.5 Student M=2.99/Mdn=3*). Furthermore, a significant difference was also found when asked about the access to the internet at school for teaching and learning ( $p=0.07$ ). Teachers perceived this aspect more positively than students (*Teacher M=4.5/Mdn=4.5 Student M=3.4 /Mdn=3*). Following this topic, significant variation was noticed when asked about the use of digital tools for assessment ( $p=0.05$ ). Again, teachers showed a more positive attitude than students (*Teacher M=4.25/Mdn=4.5 Student M=2.93/Mdn=3*). Finally, a significant difference was observed when asked about if students learn how to give credit to other's work found online ( $p= 0.014$ ). Teachers affirm that this is taught whereas students disagree (*Teacher M=4.25/Mdn=4 Student M=2.5/Mdn=2*).

## Summary of the recommendations

- Expanding teachers' knowledge on the PTDL model, Cognitive Discourse Functions and Deeper Learning.
- Increasing the use of authentic text in the FL lessons.
- Strengthening strategies to encourage critical thinking and deeper learning when working on different texts in the FL lessons.
- Considering the introduction of CDFs as main linguistic tools.
- Looking at possibilities for teachers and students to work together in the design of the FL lessons.
- Revising assessment procedures to create more opportunities for the implication of the students in the evaluation process by using not only teacher-directed evaluations but also self-evaluations and co-evaluations. It might also be beneficial to consider ways to provide the students with more than one type of feed.
- Becoming familiar with strategies and phases to work on students' self-regulation.
- Reflecting on how to enhance the inclusion of students' identity, cultural and linguistic background and interests in the FL lessons.
- Improving the digital infrastructure, especially in the areas of physical space and devices for students to take home if needed.
- Working on their digital strategy as a team, involving teachers in designing measures to identify challenges that may arise with blended learning. Developing a plan to deal with the learning and socio-economic needs of the students.
- Looking at the opportunities and time offered for Continuous Professional Development in digital tools and pedagogies. It might be also beneficial to discuss with teachers the usefulness and modalities of CPDs as many teachers seemed not to find the right answer for these questions.
- Working on teachers' beliefs on the benefits of a blended approach and finding out why they believe the platforms for blended learning are not appropriate.
- Reinforcing the use of virtual exchange platforms and strategies such as gamification and flipped-classroom to engage students and scaffold students' learning.
- Researching more on the use of digital tools for assessment and feedback.

# DENMARK

The results showed that the 58% of the teacher participants in Denmark are “not familiar” with the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning approach nor with the concept of Deeper Learning and Cognitive Discourse Functions (CDF). The rest of the participants seem to be just “a bit familiar” with this approach and its main concepts. The results also suggested that more or less 40% of the participants seem to use Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) combined with other FL teaching approaches. The most mentioned once being, grammar oriented, topic based and task-oriented approaches. In the following lines, recommendations in relation to the four pillars of the PTDL model and its factors are given based on the results of the Belgian participants.

## Constructing knowledge and refining skills

The main purpose of the FL teachers seems to be to promote language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills (achieving language and conceptual knowledge to communicate meaning in discourse) as 75% of the participants indicated this option. The rest of the teachers claimed that the main purpose is to promote communicative competence among learners (development of the ability to communicate meaning in discourse). These results and the results reported above suggest that Danes teachers could be familiar with CLIL practices, but they may need to expand their knowledge to learn more about the recently evolved Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning approach. However, the results also showed that teachers already implement practices considered in the PTDL approach. For instance, more than half of the participants seemed to be accustomed to discussing the purpose of the FL task with their pupils in the beginning of the FL lesson (58.3%). This practice is fundamental in the PTDL approach, so even though this practice is used among the participants, it is recommended to reinforce this among the rest of the participants who claimed discussing objectives in the end of the lesson or providing written objectives to the students. The understanding of the purpose of the FL task will positively influence the rest of the factors of this pillar “Demonstrating and Communicating Understanding”. Understanding the purpose will help in identifying genre specific characteristics, mode and the language style needed to fulfil the task.

The results also reported that the majority of teachers (75%) focus on all the language skills (reception, production, interaction) in their FL lessons, which is favourable to implement the PTDL approach, which aims to promote language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills. The rest of the participants claimed to focus mostly on reception and production skills. In addition to this, teachers also seem to be using a wide range of text genres and multimodal text to work on students' communications skills (Lyrics, Audio Message, Podcast, Video Clip, Video, Newspaper Article, Magazine Article, Book Excerpt, Audio Interview, Video Interview, TV News). It is important to remember that in the PTDL approach “text” refers to language manifestations in all modalities (spoken, written, audio, video,



graphic or plurimodal) and authentic texts are considered to be more appropriate as they contain authenticity, cultural value and meaning (Coyle & Meyer, 2021). Among the texts used in the FL lessons, the answers of the teachers are evenly divided as 50% mentioned that they only use authentic texts and the rest affirm that they use both, authentic text and text created with pedagogical purpose. The use of authentic text by most of the teachers is a positive sign as Coyle & Meyer (2021) explained. Therefore, it is recommended to decrease the use of text created for pedagogical purposes and increase the use of authentic text in the FL classroom. Among the criteria to select the “text” for the FL lessons most of the participants (80%) considered the pupil's interest, identity and the civic value of the text among other criteria (the lexical and grammatical level of the text, the textbook or readymade material for the course), which demonstrates a very positive sign. In Coyle and Meyer's words “selecting *a text only according to its lexical and grammatical level of difficulty is no longer appropriate, instead, co-selection of texts with learners according to their interests, identities, creativity and civic responsibility*” – is necessary to bring progressive pathways for deeper learning to the foreign language classroom (p. 156). A fifth of the participants (20%) answered that the criteria they use is the lexical and grammatical level of the text and the textbook or ready-made material for the course. Thus, it could be recommended to expand the inclusion of this criteria to all participants. In relation to how the text is worked in the lesson, the responses were varied among the participants. 41% affirmed that the texts are interpreted and the general understanding of the text is the aim. Then, 33% stated that the texts are seen as complex cultural discourses and besides interpreting the text, critical thinking is encouraged. The rest of the participants mentioned that specific details of the text are targeted and understood. Coyle & Meyer (2021, p.156) claimed that FL teachers should help learners move beyond the stage of surface learning where texts are treated as stories to reach a level of interpretation where texts are treated as complex cultural discourses (Coyle and Meyer, 2021, p. 156). Thus, it is recommended that teachers apply strategies to encourage critical thinking about the text worked on in the FL lessons in order to foster deeper learning and the development of better communication skills among the students.

In addition to the mentioned recommendations, it surely is essential for teachers to learn about CDFs and introduce them as main linguistic tools in their lessons as CDFs will not only promote the treatment of the text as cultural discourse but they will also allow students to progress in these genres as they build conceptual knowledge and improve their linguistic performance in terms of fluency, syntactic and lexical complexity, accuracy and task adequacy (Coyle & Meyer, 2021. p.166).

## Mentoring, Learning and Personal Growth

The results showed that in the Danish schools students rarely take part in the design of the FL lesson as the results showed a mean value of 1.6 ( $M=1.6$ ) and a median value of 1 ( $Mdn=1$ ) in a 1 through 5 Likert scale question, in which it was explained to the survey participants that answering 1 would mean pupils never take part in the design of the FL lesson and answering 5 would indicate that students do always participate in the design of the FL class session.

However, the majority of the teachers stated that when designing the FL lessons besides the communicative purposes (message), grammatical goals and the curriculum objectives, the interest of the students, the socio-cultural and linguistic background and the motivation and engagement of the students are considered. As mentioned in the theoretical framework of this project, the PTDL approach promotes a student centred approach, however, it also requires the teacher to adopt a “proactive” role, this means that the teacher is not a “facilitator” but an “activator” of the learning process (Hattie, 2012). Therefore, Meyers et al. (2018) affirm that the debate should be about the capacity of teachers and students working together in the design of the FL lessons. The observed results clearly indicate that this factor should be further investigated as it is claimed that students do not participate in the design but at the same time it is affirmed that their interest, socio-cultural backgrounds and motivations are considered in the design of the lessons. It is recommended to look at possibilities for teachers and students to work together in the design of the FL lessons as this is an important factor in the PTDL framework.

Danes teachers also confirmed that most of the time they create opportunities to scaffold, that is to guide and assist their students' learning process in the FL class ( $M=3.92 / Mdn=4$ ). Furthermore, they also confirmed that they often use digital tools for the scaffolding process ( $M=3.58 / Mdn=3.5$ ). Among the scaffolding strategies the teachers used, the most common ones were using visual and digital aids, activating pre-knowledge, modelling, integrating collaboration in the lessons and offering students time to answer questions.

Self-regulation is another key factor in the PTDL framework, teacher participants answered vaguely ( $M=3.42 / Mdn=3$ ), this may be an aspect that could be reinforced in Danish schools. Self-regulation or the ability that students have to plan, strategize and reflect on their own performance is key for the pupils to be able to monitor their learning process. In order to provide students with self-regulation opportunities, it is important for teachers to provide them with clear information about the objectives, instructions regarding the assignments and clear time-lines. This will help students get organized, setting their own objectives and implementing plans to achieve those goals. In order to work on self-regulation, it could be helpful for teachers to get familiar with the phases proposed by Zumbrunn et al (2011): planning phase, monitoring phase and reflection phase explained in the theoretical framework.

Regarding assessment, all the participants admitted using both summative and formative assessment which shows that not only a test is given at the end of the unit to evaluate the end product but the whole learning process is evaluated. This result is aligned with the PTDL model, as the PTDL framework strongly recommends constantly evaluating the learning process involving all participants, students, peers and teachers. In relation to the instruments employed for assessment, 58% of the teachers answered that they use other instruments besides portfolios and rubrics. The questionnaire also checked whether the teachers designed the evaluation criteria together with the students and the answer was vague again ( $M=2.17 / Mdn=2$ ). This suggests the teacher could co-design more with their students in order to make the pupil involved in their own evaluation process and make sure they are aware of the criteria that is going to be used in the assessment process. Similarly, when asked about who

participates in the evaluation, 33% of the teachers explained that they use hetero-evaluation (teacher evaluation) and the rest answered that they use different combinations of self-evaluation, co-evaluation and hetero-evaluation. These answers showed that students may be implicated in the evaluation process somehow, however, revising the opportunities for students to be implicated in the evaluation process might be interesting as their active participation seems to have positive effects in the learning process. Finally, when answering what kind of feed is given to the students, 33% of the teachers indicated they give feed-forward. 16% of the participants claimed to give feed-back and the rest of the teachers mentioned using all of the feeds. The PTDL encourages providing different types of feed and in different formats, written and oral.

### Constructing Knowledge and Refining Skills

This dimension of the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning aims to foster the successful internalization of conceptual and factual content knowledge and the automatization of subject specific strategies and procedures (Coyle, 2018). To find out how this dimension is experienced in the Danish schools' teachers were asked what language-specific strategies they used in the FL classroom. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies are reported to be used among most of the teachers. In this case, the PTDL model emphasizes the importance of using several different language-specific strategies with the pupils in order for them to achieve the final goal.

### Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement

The PTDL model included this dimension to highlight the importance of including affective, motivational and reflective factors in the learning process to promote and maintain pupils' engagement in the learning process, and consequently, achieve a deeper learning.

The teacher participants were asked several questions to find out how these factors were reflected in their teaching practices. First, teachers were asked if pupils' interest and linguistic and cultural background were included in their FL Lessons. In a 1 through 5 Likert scale, the answer was mostly neutral ( $M=3.25 / Mdn=3$ ). This result indicates that including cultural, social and personal aspects may be something interesting to look into in Danish schools as the PTDL model strongly underlines the importance of including and considering pupils' cultural, social and emotional aspects in the learning process to positively affect engagement and motivation.

In the DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework, intercultural competence was identified to belong to the generating and sustaining commitment and achievement dimension as affective (attitudes, motivation, well-being) and engagement (cognitive, emotional, behavioural, social) factors are involved in this dimension. Furthermore, the literature remarked that multilingualism and multiculturalism are in the core of the CLIL classroom as the immigrant student population increases (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.233). Consequently, there are needs to be addressed in the FL classrooms: recognition of every language in the classroom to promote equity and inclusion;

awareness of the sociolinguistic perspective among teachers; and practical knowledge on how to support multilingual students (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.241). Therefore, the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire also targeted this factor to find out how aware FL teachers are about the intercultural factor.

Half of the Danes teachers (50%) understand intercultural communication as “creating a context/activity that allows the students to have an intercultural conversation” while some participants understand it as “transmitting information about different countries and nationalities to students” (16%) and the rest understands intercultural communication as a combination of the mentioned answers. It could be observed that the understanding of most of the teachers is aligned with the definition provided in the DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework, however, it could be interesting to extend this understanding to a wider number of teachers. In order to take part in intercultural conversations, it is vital to find out pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and include them in the FL lessons. Regarding these points, the Danes teachers mentioned that they mostly (82%) find out about their pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds during their FL lessons or during the school year. They also showed quite a positive attitude towards including the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their pupils in their FL lessons ( $M=3.58/Mdn=4$ ). Teachers have mentioned some examples when they have included their pupil's linguistic and cultural background. It was mentioned that introductory tasks, self-reflective tasks or cultural clash discussions are designed for this purpose. Moreover, teachers provided some examples to explain how to spark conversations about identity and culture among their students: virtual exchanges, work explicitly around questions involving culture and cultural differences or discussions about stereotypes.

Even though the school information provided showed that the participant schools have pupils and families with homogenous cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as one of the main aim of learning foreign languages is to communicate with people from different backgrounds and facilitate mobility and understanding among cultures, it is recommended that teachers continue expanding their knowledge on strategies to successfully develop intercultural competence among the students.

Teachers also feel quite confident that they are promoting active participation of the pupils in the FL lessons ( $M= 4.58 / Mdn= 5$ ). As to whether they promote students' engagement in the class, teachers answered positively ( $M=3.92 / Mdn=4$ ) using strategies such as personalization of assignments (letting them choose the subject for the presentation), applying different teaching methods (task based and collaborative learning) and adapting tasks to students' mastery levels. Teachers are also quite convinced that they provide pupils with learning environments and feedback that allow students to be aware of their progress and achievements ( $M= 3.67 / Mdn=4$ ). These are positive signs as active participation and feedback are essential aspects for engaging pupils in the learning process and making them more aware of their learning progress. Another factor to be considered to facilitate pupil's progress is pupil's mastery level. Teachers were asked if pupil's mastery level is considered when planning, scaffolding and assessing pupils and the results demonstrate that Danes teachers have a neutral opinion regarding this issue ( $M=3.42/Mdn=3$ ). It might be convenient to raise awareness about this factor and increase the

consideration of different mastery levels, as this is an important factor for deeper learning to happen. Finally, among the strategies used to motivate pupils, using authentic materials, considering pupils' interests, using different forms of input, promoting the active role of students and designing communicative tasks and activities were mostly mentioned.

### Digital Tools

In the DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework it was concluded that digital tools could help with many of the factors involved in the four dimensions that constitute the PTDL model. For this reason, the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire aimed to find out about teachers' training, teachers' beliefs, school culture, advantages and disadvantages perceived in relation to the use of digital tools, and finally, how teachers were implementing digital tools in the FL lessons.

### School culture, Teacher Training and Teachers' Beliefs

Teachers in Danish schools seemed to be quite satisfied about the school culture involving digital tools, even though there are some aspects that should be considered. On the one hand, teachers in general seemed to be satisfied with the infrastructures provided to support teaching and learning with digital tools ( $M=4.25/Mdn=4$ ). They claimed to have digital tools to be used ( $M=4.5/Mdn=5$ ) and quality access to the internet ( $M=4.75/Mdn=5$ ). In addition to this, teachers affirmed that technical support is available in case problems with digital technologies arise ( $M=4.67/Mdn=5$ ). Participants also agreed that there are school-owned/managed digital devices for students to use when they need them at school ( $M=3.67/Mdn=4$ ). However, teachers stated that there are no school owned and managed portable devices that students can take home when needed ( $M=2.92/Mdn=2$ ). Answers also showed that teachers are satisfied with the physical space provided to support teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=3.92/Mdn=4$ ), and they also underlined that students in need of special support have access to assistive technologies at school ( $M=4.58/Mdn=5$ ).

On the other hand, teachers claimed slight agreement about having a digital strategy at school ( $M=3.58/Mdn=3.5$ ). They also expressed a slight agreement about their involvement in the development of the school's digital strategy ( $M=3.58/Mdn=3$ ). In line with these results, participants answered vaguely when asked about the measures in place to identify challenges that arise with blended learning, related to students' learning needs and socio-economic background ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3$ ). Consequently, teachers seemed to also slightly agree about having a plan in place to help teachers deal with the identified challenges related to students' learning needs and socio-economic background ( $M=2.92/Mdn=3$ ).

The results demonstrated that the Danish schools seem to have an appropriate digital infrastructure, even though a lack of digital devices to take home was observed. However, it could be recommended to work on their digital strategy as a team, involving teachers in designing measures to identify challenges that may arise with blended learning and develop a plan to deal with the learning and socio-economic needs of the students.

Another aspect analysed was teachers' training with digital tools. Teachers expressed slight agreement about having time for professional development ( $M=3/Mdn=3$ ) and even less agreement when asked if leaders discuss with them their CPD needs for teaching with digital technologies ( $M=3.08/Mdn=2.5$ ). They were not very positive either about the opportunities they have to participate in CPD for teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=3.42/Mdn=3$ ) and share their experiences with other workmates ( $M=3.25/Mdn=3$ ). Nevertheless, teachers appeared to be very positive when asked about the usefulness of the CPD activities they have had the chance to participate in ( $M=4.33/Mdn=4$ ). Furthermore, they pointed out to be happy with different modalities: face-to-face courses, seminars or conferences outside school ( $M=4.33/Mdn=4$ ); online courses, webinars or online conferences ( $M=4.25/Mdn=4$ ); and learning from other teachers within your school through online or offline collaboration ( $M=4.42/Mdn=4$ ). Finally, there were some interesting questions that were marked as "Not applicable", for instance, when asked about the use of teachers' networks or communities of practice (such as eTwinning) or study visits for professional development.

These findings suggest that looking at the opportunities and time offered for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) might be beneficial for the Danish schools as teachers seem to find them really useful and digital tools play an important role in current FL education and application of the PTDL model.

Literature also underlined teachers' beliefs as an important factor. Teachers at Danish schools believed that a blended approach promotes learning autonomy, time-management, flexibility of interaction and innovation ( $M=3.33/Mdn=4$ ). They also believed that the e-platform used for the blended approach is clear and helps the student develop study strategies and habits ( $M=3.75/Mdn=4$ ). In addition to this, teachers reckon to be confident in the use of digital tools to prepare lessons, teach their class and provide feedback to students ( $M=4.17/Mdn=4$ ).

### Advantages and drawbacks of e-learning

Danes teachers stated that they somehow agreed that the advantages and disadvantages of teaching and learning with digital technologies are discussed among them ( $M=3.5/Mdn=4$ ). Participants also reported that the factors that affect negatively the teaching and learning with digital technologies are: lack of time for teachers (37%), low digital competence of students (12%), low digital competence of teachers (12%), school space restrictions (12%) and unreliable or slow school connection (12%). In a separate question with other options, teachers lacking time to develop materials for remote teaching (50%) and difficulties in engaging students (40%) were mentioned.

These results revealed that, as mentioned earlier, Danish schools should continue providing a good infrastructure for e-learning and look into expanding the time and CPD opportunities for teachers, and also training sessions for students if necessary.

## The use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes

The last area in this section is related to the use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes. Regarding this area, teachers responded that they search online for digital educational resources ( $M=4/Mdn=4$ ) and they also create digital resources to support their teaching ( $M=4/Mdn=4$ ). Participants also stated that they use open educational resources ( $M=4.55/Mdn=4$ ) and they make use of digital technologies to facilitate student collaboration ( $M=4.27/Mdn=4$ ). However, teachers slightly agreed about using virtual learning environments with students ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3.5$ ), they also have a similar impression about the use of digital technologies to tailor their teaching to students' individual needs ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3$ ).

Participants in Danish schools were quite convinced about setting digital learning activities that engage students ( $M=3.83/Mdn=4$ ). They also seemed to be using quite a lot of gamification ( $M=3.58/Mdn=4$ ) and virtual exchange platforms such as eTwinning ( $M=4/Mdn=4$ ). Nevertheless, flipped-classroom appeared to be a less popular strategy ( $M=3.25/Mdn=3$ ). Although digital tools are used for assessment ( $M=3.75/Mdn=3.5$ ) and feedback ( $M=3.67/Mdn=4$ ), this could be an area to look into.

## Differences between teacher and students' answers

The objective of the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire was not only to find out the teacher's perception on the pillars and factors of the PTDL model but also to contrast if the teacher's perspective and students' perspectives regarding the pillars and the factors that form the PTDL model was the same. This comparison was implemented within schools in order to be as precise as possible.

### Paderup Gymnasium

Results showed that, in Paderup Gymnasium, there are a couple significant differences between the perception of the students and the perception of the teachers. For example, when asked about the type of communicative activities implemented in the FL lessons (reception, production, interaction) significant difference was noticed ( $p=0.001$ ). Teachers affirmed that all of them are equally implemented but different opinions were observed among students (36% all of them, 27% mostly production and 24% mostly reception). This school also showed discrepancy about the use of digital tools to enable students to provide feedback on other students' work ( $p=0.03$ ). Students demonstrated quite a negative attitude ( $M=2.69/Mdn=2$ ) whereas teachers marked this answer as not applicable.

### HHX Tradium Randers

The results demonstrated that at this school several differences exist between teachers' and students' perspectives. For instance, significant difference ( $p=0.004$ ) was observed regarding including students' cultural identities in the FL lessons. Teachers expressed more positive attitudes towards this factor than students (*Teacher*  $M=4/Mdn=4$  *Student*  $M=3.05/Mdn=3$ ).

Variation was also noticed when asked about the use of digital technologies to facilitate student collaboration ( $p=0.01$ ). Students showed more positive attitudes than teachers (Teacher  $M=3.25$ / $Mdn=3.5$  Student  $M=4.32$  / $Mdn=4$ ). Last but not least, significant difference was perceived about the use of digital technologies to enable students to reflect on their own learning ( $p=0.03$ ). Again, students showed more positive opinions than teachers (Teacher  $M=3.25$  / $Mdn=3.5$  Student  $M=4.23$ / $Mdn=4$ ).

### Summary of the recommendations

- Expanding teachers' knowledge on the PTDL model, Cognitive Discourse Functions and Deeper Learning.
- Reinforcing the routine of discussing the FL lesson purposes in the beginning of the lessons among all teachers.
- Increasing the use of authentic text in the FL lessons.
- Strengthening strategies to encourage critical thinking and deeper learning when working on different texts in the FL lessons.
- Considering the introduction of CDFs as main linguistic tools.
- Looking at possibilities for teachers and students to work together in the design of the FL lessons.
- Investigating a bit more on the use of digital tools for scaffolding.
- Becoming familiar with strategies and phases to work on students' self-regulation.
- Creating opportunities to share and co-design evaluation criteria with students in order to make the students more involved in their own evaluation process and make sure they are aware of the criteria that is going to be used in the assessment process.
- Continuing expanding teachers' knowledge on strategies to successfully develop intercultural competence among the students.
- Considering the option of providing digital devices to students to take home if needed.
- Working on their digital strategy as a team, involving teachers in designing measures to identify challenges that may arise with blended learning. Developing a plan to deal with the learning and socio-economic needs of the students.
- Looking at the opportunities and time offered for Continuous Professional Development in digital tools and pedagogies.
- Reinforcing the use of virtual exchange platforms and strategies such as flipped-classroom to scaffold students' learning.
- Researching more on the use of digital tools for assessment and feedback.



# NORWAY

In the case of Norway, results showed that more than half of the teachers participating in the surveys (55.6% to be specific) were “a little bit familiar” with the concepts of Pluriliteracy Teaching, Deeper Learning and Cognitive Discourse Functions and 22.2% of the teachers could connect the terms with Foreign Language (FL) teaching. In the following lines we will address the results concerning the four main pillars of the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning (PTDL) theoretical framework.

## Demonstrating and Communicating Understanding

When asked about their main objective as FL teachers, none of them targeted grammatical knowledge, but instead, the answers were similarly divided between promoting communicative competence (44.4%) and promoting language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills (55.6%).

The PTDL framework also encourages the transmission objectives and purposes of the different activities in the FL classroom to take place at the beginning of the process in order to provide the students with guidance and structure. The majority of teachers in Norway, 66.7% of them, successfully fulfilled this requirement. According to their answers, most of them make sure they discuss the purpose or objective of the task with the pupils at the beginning of each FL lesson.

It is even a higher number of teachers who confirm they focus on different linguistic capabilities in a balanced way, rather than giving more importance to reception or production. The pluriliteracies perspective acknowledges the importance of maintaining a balance between reception, production and interaction related activities, and therefore, Norwegian teachers seem to show a strength regarding this aspect.

Although using texts with pedagogical objectives has been seen to be a general tendency, the current communicative teaching approaches such as the PTDL framework opt for the use of authentic materials in the classroom. Some of the Norwegian teachers chose the authentic material option but most of them affirm that they employ a combination of authentic texts and texts created with pedagogical objectives. In this sense, it is recommendable to encourage the use of authentic text for FL purposes. There is always material and structures that the students might not understand, but it will be in the way of working that text that the teacher can make a difference and focus on the most relevant aspects of the text. Overall, Norwegian teachers have reported a variety of modalities of text used in their FL class sessions including song lyrics, podcasts, videos, newspaper articles or book fragments. The use of authentic text combined with diversity in the type of texts used in class is one of the recommendations provided by the PTDL approach.

When choosing a text, most teachers reported focusing on the pupil's interest, identity and civic value of the text. Some of them (22.2%) also seem to give importance to the lexical and

grammatical level of the text. The pluriliteracies model puts the emphasis on students' identity and interests, since it is this fact that will provide the students with the motivation and the interest to work on the text. Lexical and grammatical level is also something to take into account when choosing the most appropriate input, but it can always be solved with some explanatory activity, such as a glossary or some previous grammatical structure guidance. Regarding the treatment of the text, there is a balanced amount of responses between targeting the general understanding of the text (44.4%) and interpreting the text and encouraging critical thinking (33.3%). According to the pluriliteracies framework applied in the current study, the aim of learning must be deeper learning and therefore, merely deciphering the text is not enough. Deeper learning implies a critical understanding of the text as a complex cultural production that takes place in a certain context within the society.

Therefore, it is important to recommend the teachers to create activities that go beyond the simple meaning of the text and allow them to discuss the topics exposed by it, making connections with their previous knowledge and formulating new hypotheses based on the information obtained.

The use of different text genres constitutes another important aspect that must be reinforced within the FL classroom, according to the PTDL perspective. Most Norwegian teachers have affirmed to use mainly narrative texts in their FL classroom, it would be interesting to encourage them to check for different text genres in order to offer the pupils with new possibilities. When asked about the way in which teachers introduce and work with the texts used in the FL class, most of them affirm to pay attention to both, the language forms and the understanding of the concepts, which is the ideal approach to take when working with a text-input, based on the pluriliteracies approach.

Finally, when asked about the Cognitive Discourse Function, the majority of teachers (88.9%) answered that they were not familiar with the concept.

### **Mentoring, learning and personal growth**

The first question that structures the mentoring, learning and personal growth pillar of the pluriliteracies model addresses the implication of students in the FL lesson design. Norwegian teachers got a mean value of 2.56 ( $M=2.56$ ) and a median value of 2 ( $Mdn=2$ ) in a 1 through 5 Likert scale question, in which it was explained to the survey participants that answering 1 would mean pupils never take part in the design of the FL lesson and answering 5 would indicate that students do always participate in the design of the FL class session. Therefore, it can be concluded that the participation of these students in the design of their FL classroom is not significant. Teachers were also asked about what they took into consideration when designing the FL classes and, although the previous question did not give signs of student involvement in class design, most teachers indicated that they keep their pupils' interests and motivation in mind when designing their class. Similarly, Norwegian teacher-participants also confirmed that they create opportunities to scaffold, that is to guide and assist their students' learning process in the FL class ( $M=3.89 / Mdn=4$ ). Furthermore, they also confirmed that they

use digital tools for the scaffolding process ( $M=3.78 / Mdn=4$ ). Among the scaffolding strategies the teachers used, the most common ones were digital tools, visual aids and pause/ask questions/pause review. As to whether they promote students' engagement in the class, teachers answered very positively ( $M=4.00 / Mdn=4$ ) using strategies such as intercultural topics, addressing their interests, including a diversity of formats and materials for classroom tasks.

Self-regulation was another key concept targeted in the questionnaire and teachers answered vaguely ( $M=3.44 / Mdn=3$ ), maybe this is an aspect that could be reinforced in Norwegian schools. Self-regulation or the ability that students have to plan, strategize and reflect on their own performance is key for the pupils to be able to monitor their learning process. In order to provide students with self-regulation opportunities, it is important for teachers to provide them with clear information about the objectives, instructions regarding the assignments and clear time-lines. This will help students get organized, setting their own objectives and implementing plans to achieve those goals. Furthermore, teachers should also encourage autonomous work, provide spaces for assistance and feedback. Last but not least, there can be different types of evaluation and including a self-evaluation might help the student keeping track and reflecting on their process. Continuing with assessment, almost all the teachers (88.9%) admitted using both summative and formative assessment which gives their evaluation a complete view focusing not only on the final product but also on the process. Regarding the instruments employed for assessment, all the participant teachers indicated they used both rubrics, portfolios and other techniques which can be enriching for the evaluation. The questionnaire also checked whether the teachers designed the evaluation criteria together with the students and the answer was vague again ( $M=2.67 / Mdn=3$ ). This suggests the teacher could co-design more with their students in order to make the pupil involved in their own evaluation process and make sure they are aware of the criteria that is going to be used in the assessment process. Similarly, when asked about who participates in the evaluation, the most used choices were self-evaluation (33.3%) and hetero-evaluation (22%). These answers align with the answers to the previous question and the recommendation is creating more opportunities for the implication of the students in the evaluation process by using not only teacher-directed evaluations but also self-evaluations and co-evaluations. Finally, when answering what kind of feed is given to the students, most teachers (44.4%) have indicated they give feed-forward. It is certainly beneficial to provide the students with more than one type of feed. The general tendency is to provide feedback at the end of a certain process and the pluriliteracies encourage providing different types of feed and in different formats, written and oral.

### Constructing Knowledge and Refining Skills

In order to address the third dimension in the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning, Constructing Knowledge and Refining Skills, teachers only needed to face a question. This question addressed the language-specific strategies that they used in the FL classroom. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies and social strategies were among the most used by teachers. In this case, the pluriliteracies model emphasizes the importance of using several different language-specific strategies with the pupils in order for them to achieve the final goal.

## Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement

The PTDL model gives a special importance to creating and maintaining motivation and commitment. That is why the fourth pillar previously explained in the theoretical framework specifically addresses these concepts.

Teachers were asked to indicate whether they included their pupils' interests and linguistic and cultural background in their FL lesson. In a 1 through 5 Likert scale, the answer was mostly neutral ( $M=3.33 / Mdn=3$ ). When asked about whether they promote the active participation of the students in class, teachers answered favorably ( $M=4.22 / Mdn=4$ ). Similarly, when asked about learning environments and feedback, most teachers answered more positively ( $M=3.67 / Mdn=4$ ). Furthermore, the teachers confirmed taking into account different mastery levels in the FL classroom ( $M=4.22 / Mdn=4$ ). Most teachers also claimed to use topics of the students' interest, authentic material and communicative tasks and activities as strategies to motivate their students.

The Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning (PTDL) model, considered the basis for the current DIGI-LINGO research project, establishes intercultural competence as a key concept belonging to the “Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement” dimension, since affective (attitudes, motivation, well-being) and engagement (cognitive, emotional, behavioural, social) factors are involved in this dimension as well. Furthermore, the literature reviews present in the current study remarked that multilingualism and multiculturalism are in the core of the CLIL classroom as the immigrant student population increases (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.233). Consequently, there are needs to be addressed in the FL classroom such as recognition of every language in the classroom to promote equity and inclusion; awareness of the sociolinguistic perspective among teachers; and practical knowledge on how to support multilingual students (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.241). Therefore, the questionnaire created for the DIGI-LINGO project also targeted intercultural competence in order to find out how aware FL teachers are about the intercultural factor.

More than half of the Norwegian teachers (66.7%) understand intercultural communication as “creating a context/activity that allows the students to have an intercultural conversation” while the rest of the teachers understand it as “transmitting information about different countries and nationalities to students” (22.2%). It could be observed that the understanding of most of the teachers is aligned with the definition provided in the PTDL framework, however, it could be interesting to extend this understanding to a wider number of teachers. In order to take part in intercultural conversations, it is vital to find out pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and include them in the FL lessons. Regarding these points, the Norwegian teachers mentioned that they usually (44.4%) try to find out about their pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds at the beginning of the school year, which is really important, according to the PTDL model, in order to integrate that information into the FL classroom design. However, they showed a neutral attitude towards including the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their pupils in their FL lessons ( $M=3.22/Mdn=2$ ). Moreover, Norwegian teachers provided some examples to explain how to spark conversations about identity and culture among their students:

discussions, comparisons amongst cultures, working with music and cultural artists or debating about the socio-cultural situation in other cultures.

### Digital Tools

The theoretical framework for the current DIGI-LINGO study concluded that digital tools could be helpful in integrating the factors involved in the four dimensions that constitute the PTDL model into the FL teaching. For this reason, the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire aimed to find out about teachers' training, beliefs, school culture, advantages and disadvantages perceived in relation to the use of digital tools, and finally, how teachers were implementing digital tools in the FL lessons. To that end, as explained in the methodology section, an adaptation of the SELFIE questionnaire was distributed to the different schools.

### School culture, Teacher Training and Teachers' Beliefs

Teachers at Norwegian schools seemed to be neutral about the digital context and tools offered at their schools. In the following lines, the answers of Norwegian teachers to the SELFIE adaptation questionnaire will be commented with further detail. Overall, the rating given to the digital infrastructure support provided by the school is favourable ( $M=3.71/Mdn=4$ ) and they positively see having access to digital devices at schools ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ). Norwegian teachers also answered positively to having quality access to the internet ( $M=4.71/Mdn=5$ ) as well as technical support availability ( $M=4.43/Mdn=5$ ). However, when asked about availability of school-owned/managed digital devices for student use, the answer was vaguer ( $M=3.43/Mdn=3$ ) and it happened the same when asked about school-owned material that pupils could take home ( $M=3.14/Mdn=3$ ). Norwegian teachers also indicated disagreement with the statement "In our school we have a plan in place to help teachers deal with challenges that arise with blended learning" ( $M=2.71/Mdn=3$ ). Answers also showed that teachers were neutral with the physical space provided to support teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=3.57/Mdn=3$ ) and they agreed that students in need of special support have access to assistive technologies at school ( $M=3.71/Mdn=4$ ). Additionally, Norwegian teachers claimed slight agreement about having a digital strategy at school ( $M=3.57/Mdn=3$ ). They also expressed a slight agreement about their involvement in the development of the school's digital strategy ( $M=3.57/Mdn=3$ ).

The results show that Norwegian schools have a digital infrastructure in place but teachers' answers also indicate that there are not many school-owned or managed digital devices for the students to use either in class or at home. Furthermore, Norwegian teachers feel that, although there is a technical support group, there is no plan to help them deal with the difficulties and challenges caused by the digital technologies and its daily use in the FL classroom.

Teachers' digital training was another important aspect addressed by the questionnaire. Norwegian teachers showed agreement about having opportunities in professional development programs related to teaching and learning with digital technologies

( $M=4.43/Mdn=4$ ) and they also agreed that school leaders would discuss with them professional development needs for teaching with digital tools ( $M=4.00/Mdn=3$ ). Results were less positive when asked whether the school leader supported them to share experiences within school about teaching with digital technologies ( $M=3.57/Mdn=3$ ). Although Norwegian teachers seem to answer positively to digital infrastructure questions, it seemed interesting that when they were asked about professional development courses they had participated during the last year, the majority of them indicated that they did not participate in any professional development courses, not face-to-face but neither online. It is highly advisable for teachers to have continuous professional development training in different aspects but also regarding their digital competence. These findings suggest that looking at the opportunities and time offered for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) might be beneficial for the Norwegian schools as teachers seem to be lacking them and digital tools play an important role in current FL education and application of the PTDL model.

The PTDL model also emphasizes teachers' beliefs as a key factor. Teachers at Norwegian schools believed that a blended approach promotes teacher collaboration within the school on digital technology use and creation of resources. They showed confidence in their use of digital technologies when preparing, teaching and assessing their FL class sessions.

### Advantages and drawbacks of e-learning

Norwegian teachers somehow agree that the advantages and disadvantages of teaching and learning with digital technologies are discussed with them ( $M=3.29/Mdn=3$ ). Teacher participants also reported that the factor most affected teaching and learning with digital technologies was lack of time for teachers (71.4%) and they repeated their answer in the next question, claiming that teachers lacked time to develop materials for remote teaching was their main problem regarding remote teaching (71.4%). These results revealed that, as mentioned earlier, Norwegian schools should look into expanding the time and professional development opportunities for teachers.

### The use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes

The last area regarding digital competence is related to the use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes. Results showed that most teachers search online for digital educational resources ( $M=4.29/Mdn=4$ ) and they also create digital resources to support their teaching ( $M=4.43/Mdn=4$ ). Norwegian teachers also claimed that they use open educational resources ( $M=4.14/Mdn=4$ ) and they make use of digital technologies to facilitate student collaboration ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ). Similarly, results showed that teachers are in favor of using virtual learning environments with students ( $M=4.00/Mdn=3$ ), and they try to tailor their teaching to students' individual needs ( $M=3.86/Mdn=4$ ).

Participants in Norwegian schools were very convinced about setting digital learning activities that engage students ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ). They also seemed to be using quite a lot of gamification

( $M=4.29/Mdn=4$ ) but they do not seem to be using virtual exchange platforms such as eTwinning. Nevertheless, flipped-classroom appeared to be a less popular strategy ( $M=3.25/Mdn=3$ ). Some teachers also use digital tools for assessment ( $M=3.71/Mdn=3$ ) and feedback ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ) in their FL classroom.

### Differences between teacher and students' answers

For the DIGI-LINGO questionnaire, there were questions for students and teachers that targeted the same concepts in order to be able to make a comparison between students and teachers from the same school. This comparison was implemented within schools in order to be as precise as possible.

#### Nordahl Grieg

Results show that, at Nordahl Grieg school, there is a significant difference between the perception of the students and the perception of the teachers. For example, when asked about the type of focus given to the activities, students stated that most activities focused on production while teachers claimed that they focused on all linguistic capacities in the same way. The difference in this case proved to be statistically significant ( $p=0.016$ ). Similarly, this same school also showed statistical significance in the different perspectives regarding the type of texts used in the FL classroom. Students indicated that their teachers used more pedagogically Pro adapted texts rather than using authentic material and teachers claimed they used both ( $p=0.043$ ). The other significant difference was perceived in the students' involvement in FL class design. In a 1 through 5 Likert scale (where 1 indicated the students' participation in the design was non-existent and 5 would mean students' are fully involved in the design process) 40% of students indicated their participation was neutral (it was rated with a 3), while most teachers said that student participation could be rated with a 4 ( $p=0.016$ ). There was also disagreement when asked about learning how to check that information found online is reliable and accurate. In this Likert-scale question (where 1 stands for "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree") it was teachers ( $M=3.67 / Mdn=4$ ) who rated below the students ( $M=4.63 / Mdn=5$ ). Seeing the disagreement in this case, schools should be encouraged to provide their teachers as well as students with digital tool training.

#### Amalie Skram VGS

The first significant difference perceived in the results of Amalie Skram VGS school are seen in the question targeting the teacher's objective in the FL classroom. In this question all teachers indicated that their objective was "to promote language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills" while the majority of the students claimed that their teacher's objective was "to promote communicative competence among learners" ( $p=0.042$ ). It is interesting to see that such a key question provoked statistically significant differences in student-teacher answers. It would be convenient to train teachers further on

teaching to obtain deeper learning. Another question that received notoriously different answers from the groups was connected with the statement “In our school I learn how to behave responsibly and respect others when I am online”. This 1 through 5 Likert scale (where 1 stands for “strongly disagree” and 5 is “strongly agree”) received higher score within the teacher group ( $M=5.00$  /  $Mdn=5$ ) when compared to the student group ( $M=3.71$  /  $Mdn=4$ ) and the analysis showed the difference to be statistically significant ( $p=0.035$ ). Last question receiving statistical significance was related to the ability to solve technical problems when using technology. Teachers ( $M=4.67$  /  $Mdn=4$ ) rated the statement higher than students ( $M=3.33$  /  $Mdn=3$ ).

### Summary of Recommendations for Norwegian schools

- Expanding teachers' knowledge on the PTDL model, Cognitive Discourse Functions and Deeper Learning.
- Encouraging the use of authentic text, selected based on pupils' interests and identities and encouraging more critical thinking.
- Including more diverse text genres, not only narratives.
- Involving the students in the design of the FL classroom, including the evaluation criteria.
- Introducing more content based on pupils' interests and cultural and linguistic background.
- Offering teachers support regarding the use and training of digital tools and blended learning.
- Make available more digital devices for students to work in and out of the classroom, keeping in mind that not all students share the same socioeconomic background.
- Offering teachers more professional development courses, especially focusing on digital technologies.
- Providing the teachers with opportunities and resources to facilitate the creation of new materials.
- Encouraging the use of virtual exchange platforms to work on interculturality and linguistic interaction.



# BASQUE COUNTRY

In a final group of results, Kristau Eskola collected evidence from four different schools: Askartza Claret, Herrikide Escolapios, Salesianas Barakaldo and San Antonio.

The teachers were first asked about their approach in the FL classroom and they selected a variety of answers: grammar oriented, task-based, topic-based or project based learning and it was also observed that CLIL was only chosen by 14.3% of the teachers.

When indicating their main objective as FL teachers, most of them (50.0%) claimed to promote communicative competence among learners. Although a communicative approach is, according to the PTDL model, a more desirable approach than grammar-based learning. The ideal goal would be to promote language and content learning to achieve deeper learning and better communicative skills. Furthermore, the results of the question inquiring about concepts such as pluriliteracies teaching, deeper learning or cognitive discourse functions reported many teachers (28.6%) were not familiar with the concept while some others could relate it to FL teaching (42.9%).

## Demonstrating and Communicating Understanding

The first pillar of the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning model is based on demonstrating and communicating understanding. In order to obtain information on this domain, several questions on the surveys targeted concepts such as purpose, text-genre, mode or style.

Teachers were asked whether they explained the purpose of the task or activity to the pupils. The majority of them (78.6%) confirmed that they make sure to discuss the purpose or objectives of the task with the students at the beginning of the FL lesson.

When asked about the linguistic capabilities they mostly target in class, the results showed an even amount of answers between those teachers claiming they were more focused on reception and production (35.7%) and those teachers claiming they focused on all the aspects in the same way (35.7%). The pluriliteracies framework emphasizes the importance of working on all linguistic capabilities through the tasks and activities offered within the FL classroom, including interaction among peers.

Another question targeted the type of text used in the FL classroom. The pluriliteracies model encourages teachers to use authentic texts and materials for their classes and adapt the activities or the way to work around that text depending on the mastery level of the students. Most teachers (78.6%) confirmed that they use both authentic texts and also texts created with pedagogical purposes; and some of them admitted only focusing on pedagogical texts (21.4%). Basque teachers also claimed working with diverse text modalities in their class such as song lyrics, podcasts, newspaper articles, story books or audio messages. Teachers were also asked about what they took into account when choosing the texts and the answers showed that they

not only focus on the lexical and grammatical level but they also kept in mind the interests and identity of the students and they also follow the textbook or readymade material for the FL classroom. It is interesting to remark that the PTDL model highly suggests taking into account students' identities, interests and linguistic and cultural backgrounds in order to get the students engaged with the task. Furthermore, when asked about the way of treating the text in the classroom, the most repeated goal was to interpret and get the general understanding of the text (35,7%) rather than treating it as a complex cultural production. It is advisable to introduce critical thinking into the treatment of the different texts. When introducing a text genre to the students, all teachers claimed that the focus should be in both working on the language and acquiring the understanding of the concepts, just as the PTDL says.

Basque teachers were also asked whether they were familiar with the Cognitive Discourse Function. The results showed that many of them (42.9%) were not familiar with the concept, while others (28.6%) reported knowing about the term.

### Mentoring, learning and personal growth

The second pillar of the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning model focuses on mentoring, learning and personal growth. To this end, the question contained in this section targeted constructs such as design, scaffolding, feedback and assessment.

The first question inquired about the participation of the students in the design of the FL class session. This question is a Likert-scale question with possible answers from 1, indicating never, through 5, indicating always. The results reported by Basque teachers showed little participation of the students in the FL class session design ( $M=2.21 / Mdn=2$ ). However, on the next question, teachers were asked whether they offered scaffolding opportunities for students and the answers showed a favourable tendency ( $M=4.00 / Mdn=4$ ). Among the scaffolding techniques the teachers claimed to use were the use of digital tools, visual aids, activating previous knowledge and giving the pupils glossaries and key concepts in order to help them with the content.

Regarding the engagement, Basque teachers seem to agree that they greatly promote their students' engagement during the FL class session ( $M=4.07 / Mdn=4$ ) by asking them questions, keeping their interests in mind when choosing materials, switching roles with them or being creative with the projects.

However, Basque teachers gave neutral responses when asked whether they provided the students with self-regulation opportunities ( $M=3.14 / Mdn=3$ ). It would be appropriate to provide the students with more self-regulation opportunities. Self-regulation, when applied to learning, is defined as a process that helps learners with their thought, behaviour and emotional management in order to successfully achieve the goals set by the learning process (Zumbrunn et al., 2011). Self-regulation opportunities are key in the learning process since several researchers have discovered a direct connection between self-regulation and motivation, being the latter the strongest predictor of academic performance (Ning and Downing, 2010). Self-

regulation might seem like an abstract concept for teachers, but it essentially consists of three phases: forethought and planning, performance monitoring, and reflections on performance (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002). In order to give students control of these phases, it is as simple as offering the pupils with clear instructions on the task and the pursued objectives, giving them chances to monitor their process (this can be done with a simple to-do checklist with some parameters) and allowing the students to observe their final product with a self-evaluation form that can help them reflect on the work done.

Following up with assessment, most Basque teachers confirmed that they do both summative and formative assessment, which allows them to focus not only on the one-time final product but also observe the process made towards that final product. Similarly, most of them (42.9%) declared using rubrics, charts with evaluation criteria. Rubrics are a common way of monitoring the evaluation process but seeing that most teachers answered that they use both formative and summative assessment, the formative assessment should have a more process-oriented assessment tool, such as a portfolio. Additionally, Basque teachers do not seem to co-design the evaluation criteria with their students ( $M=2.14 / Mdn=2$ ). Even if the teachers do not co-design the evaluation criteria, it is essential to provide the pupils with that evaluation criteria right from the beginning of the process and additionally, this also serves as a self-regulation opportunity for the students. When asked about who evaluates the process, the grand majority of Basque teachers (85.7%) indicated that their evaluation was hetero-evaluation, therefore, teacher-guided evaluation only. It is enriching to provide students with more than one type of evaluation, co-evaluation carried out by their classmates or self-evaluation implemented by the students themselves are some of the examples. Also, the PTDL model advocates towards a diversity not only on the types of evaluation but also on the times of evaluation. Similarly, in the question targeting the kind of feed teachers give to their students, results showed that most of the teachers (78.6%) only give feedback. As explained in the PTDL model, it is advisable to give different types of feed, together with different types of evaluation. Teachers were also asked to provide an example of an assessment tool they use and the results showed that discussion, projects, traditional tests, oral presentations and class participation were amongst the most used instruments.

### Constructing Knowledge and Refining Skills

The third dimension titled “Constructing Knowledge and Refining Skills” defined by the PTDL model is targeted by an only question. This question addressed the language-specific strategies that they used in the FL classroom. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies and social strategies were among the most used by Basque teachers. In this case, the pluriliteracies model emphasizes the importance of using several different language-specific strategies with the pupils in order for them to achieve the final goal.

## Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement

The pluriliteracies model includes pupils' motivation and commitment as key concepts. That is why the fourth pillar, "Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement" previously explained in the theoretical framework, specifically addresses these concepts.

Teachers were asked to indicate whether they included their pupils' interests and linguistic and cultural background in their FL lesson. In a 1 through 5 Likert scale, the answer was quite favourable ( $M=3.72 / Mdn=4$ ). The questionnaire also asked about whether they promote the active participation of the students in their classroom and the answers showed that Basque teachers do promote pupils' participation in class ( $M=4.57 / Mdn=5$ ). Similarly, when asked about providing learning environments and feedback, most teachers answered positively ( $M=4.14 / Mdn=4$ ). However, Basque teachers do not seem to take into account different mastery levels in the FL classroom ( $M=3.43 / Mdn=3$ ). Most teachers also claimed to use topics of the students' interest, authentic material and communicative tasks and activities as strategies to motivate their students.

The DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework, following the guidelines proposed by the Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning (PTDL) model, identifies **intercultural competence** as a key concept belonging to the "Generating and Sustaining Commitment and Achievement" dimension, as affective (attitudes, motivation, well-being) and engagement (cognitive, emotional, behavioural, social) factors are involved in this dimension. Furthermore, the literature reviews present in the current study remarked that multilingualism and multiculturalism are in the core of the CLIL classroom as the immigrant student population increases (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.233). Consequently, there are needs to be addressed in the FL classroom such as recognition of every language in the classroom to promote equity and inclusion; awareness of the sociolinguistic perspective among teachers; and practical knowledge on how to support multilingual students (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017, p.241). Therefore, the questionnaire created for the DIGI-LINGO project also targeted intercultural competence in order to find out how aware FL teachers are about the intercultural factor.

More than half of the Basque teachers (61.5%) understand intercultural communication as "creating a context/activity that allows the students to have an intercultural conversation" while the rest of the teachers understand it as "transmitting information about different countries and nationalities to students" (38.5%). It could be observed that the understanding of most of the teachers is aligned with the definition provided in the PTDL framework, however, it could be interesting to extend this understanding to a wider number of teachers. In order to take part in intercultural conversations, it is vital to find out pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and include them in the FL lessons. Regarding these points, the Basque teachers mentioned that they mostly (38.5%) find out about their pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds during their FL lessons or during the school year. They also showed quite a positive attitude towards including the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their pupils in their FL lessons ( $M=3.69/Mdn=4$ ). Among the examples of including students' linguistic and cultural background in class, Basque teachers mentioned social debates, comparison between the target language

and the mother tongue, getting to know the sociolinguistic context of the language or even sharing recipes in eTwinning. Moreover, Basque teachers provided some examples to explain how to spark conversations about identity and culture among their students: virtual exchange projects such as Erasmus+ or eTwinning, comparison of local festivities in other parts of the world or talking about the countries in which the pupils have lived or visited.

### Digital Tools

The DIGI-LINGO theoretical framework concluded that digital tools could help with many of the factors involved in the four dimensions that constitute the pluriliteracies model. The following lines will comment on teachers' digital training, beliefs, school's digital context and advantages and disadvantages perceived in relation to the use of digital tools within Basque schools.

### School culture, Teacher Training and Teachers' Beliefs

Basque teachers seemed to be quite satisfied about the digital infrastructure Basque schools provide them with, the following lines will delve into the details of the information collected. Basque teachers, in general, seem to be satisfied with the infrastructures provided to support teaching and learning with digital tools ( $M=4.31/Mdn=4$ ). They claimed to have availability of digital devices to use ( $M=4.31/Mdn=4$ ) and quality access to the internet ( $M=4.31/Mdn=5$ ). In addition to this, teachers affirmed that technical support is available in case there are problems with digital technologies ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ). Teacher participants also agreed that there are school-owned/managed digital devices for students to use when they need them at school ( $M=4.08/Mdn=4$ ) and they also confirmed that there are no school owned and managed portable devices that students can take home when needed ( $M=4.15/Mdn=4$ ). Answers also showed that teachers are satisfied with the physical space provided to support teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ), and they also underlined that students in need of special support have access to assistive technologies at school ( $M=3.85/Mdn=4$ ).

Additionally, Basque teachers also claimed to have a digital strategy at school ( $M=4.23/Mdn=4$ ) and they also expressed that they were involved in the development of the school's digital strategy ( $M=4.08/Mdn=4$ ). The results demonstrated that the Basque schools seem to have an appropriate digital infrastructure, including availability of devices for teachers and students and a technical support group in place.

Another aspect analysed was teachers' training with digital tools. Teachers agreed on having opportunities to participate in professional development for teaching and learning with digital technologies ( $M=3.54/Mdn=4$ ) and they also agreed that the school leaders discussed with them their professional development needs for teaching with digital technologies ( $M=3.46/Mdn=4$ ). They were also positive about having opportunities to share their experiences with other workmates ( $M=3.92/Mdn=4$ ). However, when they were asked about the professional development opportunities attended during last year, most of Basque teachers answered that they did not participate in those opportunities but in the previous

questions, they confirmed actually having that opportunity. Therefore, it is not clear if it was the lack of opportunity or teachers' decision to not participate in those professional development programs.

These findings suggest that looking at the opportunities and time offered for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) might be beneficial for the Basque schools as teachers seem to be avoiding participating in those, it could also be due to a lack of time. Basque schools should definitely make sure they encourage their teachers' participation in professional development programs.

The theoretical framework also claimed teachers' beliefs to be an important factor. Basque teachers claimed being confident in the use of digital tools to prepare lessons, teach their class and provide feedback to students.

### Advantages and drawbacks of e-learning

Basque teachers stated that they somehow agree that the advantages and disadvantages of teaching and learning with digital technologies are discussed among them ( $M=3.62/Mdn=4$ ). Teacher participants also reported that the factors that negatively affect teaching and learning with digital technologies are: lack of time for teachers (54.5%) and unreliable or slow school connection (36.4%), which is contradictory since Basque teachers indicated having a quality internet access at their schools. In a separate question with other options, teachers lacking time to develop materials for remote teaching (45.5%) and low digital competence of families (27.3%) were mentioned.

These results revealed that, as mentioned earlier, Basque schools should continue providing a good infrastructure for e-learning and look into encouraging teachers to participate more into professional development opportunities. Additionally, given that the last question mentioned low digital competence of families, it could also be beneficial for students and their families to attend digital technology training programs together.

### The use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes

The last area in this section is related to the use of digital tools for pedagogical purposes. Regarding this area, teachers responded that they search online for digital educational resources ( $M=4.38/Mdn=4$ ) and they also create digital resources to support their teaching ( $M=4.08/Mdn=4$ ). Participants also stated that they use open educational resources ( $M=4.27/Mdn=4$ ) and they make use of digital technologies to facilitate student collaboration ( $M=4.25/Mdn=4$ ). Furthermore, teachers claimed using virtual learning environments with students ( $M=4.08/Mdn=4$ ), they also have a similar impression about the use of digital technologies to tailor their teaching to students' individual needs ( $M=3.62/Mdn=4$ ).

Participants in Basque schools were quite convinced about setting digital learning activities that engage students ( $M=4.08/Mdn=4$ ). They also seemed to be using quite a lot of gamification

( $M=3.25/Mdn=3$ ) and virtual exchange platforms such as eTwinning ( $M=3.83/Mdn=4$ ). Nevertheless, flipped-classroom appeared to be a less popular strategy ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3$ ). Although digital tools are used for assessment ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ) and feedback ( $M=3.92/Mdn=4$ ), this could be an area to look into.

### Differences between teacher and students' answers

The DIGI-LINGO questionnaire included similar questions for students and teachers in order to be able to make a comparison between their perspectives and opinions within the same school. The results were then analysed to check for statistically significant differences ( $p<0.05$ ). Those results that were statistically significant are explained in the following lines.

#### Askartza Claret

Surprisingly, the only significant difference between teacher and student answers was seen in the question asking teachers whether they promote pupils' active participation in the FL classroom. Students' results were lower ( $M=3.46/Mdn=4$ ) than the answers provided by the teacher group ( $M=4.50/Mdn=4.5$ ), indicating that teachers' impression of the participation is higher than pupils' impression of their own participation.

#### Herrikide Eskolapioak

The first statistically significant difference between teacher and student position at Herrikide Eskolapioak school was in the question targeting the main focus of the tasks offered in the FL classroom: reception, production, interaction or all of them in the same way. Half of the students' answers indicated that the focus was placed on all linguistics capacities in the same way (50%); while teacher group data claimed they focused mostly on reception and production.

The next question having a statistical impact was again, targeting student engagement in the classroom. In this 1 through 5 Likert-scale question (in which 1 indicates Never and 5 means Always), pupils' group data ( $M=3.33/Mdn=3$ ) showed a lower rating than teachers' answers ( $M=4.33/Mdn=4$ ), meaning students considered their engagement to be lower, compared to the teachers' considerations.

When Herrikide teachers were presented with the statement "I value digital skills that students have developed outside school", teacher answers showed a much higher rating ( $M=5.00/Mdn=5$ ) than when the students were presented with the statement "Our teachers value digital skills that I have developed outside school" ( $M=2.96/Mdn=3$ ).

#### Salesianas Barakaldo

The only significant difference between students and teachers at Salesianas school comes again with the question targeting the focus of the activities. More than half of the students (61.9%)

answered that activities in the FL classroom targeted all linguistic capabilities (production, reception and interaction) in the same way. However, teacher answers were more scattered and some of them claimed they focus more on reception.

### San Antonio

Interestingly the first significant difference between teacher and student answers at San Antonio school is visible again in the question asking about the main focus of the activities. In this case, students indicated again that all the linguistic skills (reception, production and interaction) were targeted in the same way (61.4%) while teachers' answers were divided between "mostly reception" and "mostly reception and production".

The next question that showed a statistically significant result was the question targeting the types of texts used in the FL classroom. Results indicate that most students (43.2%) claimed that most texts used in class were created with pedagogical purposes while all teachers (100%) affirmed that they use both, authentic texts and texts created for pedagogical purposes.

The next difference can be found, again, in the question targeting the student engagement in class. This 1 through 5 Likert-scale question showed that students considered their engagement to be lower ( $M=3.78/Mdn=4$ ) than what teachers considered ( $M=5.00/Mdn=5$ ).

It is also interesting to see that the question asking teachers whether they included pupils' social and cultural interest in their FL classes threw different answers. In this Likert-scale question, students answered more negatively ( $M=3.94/Mdn=4$ ) than teachers ( $M=4.00/Mdn=4$ ). Similarly, when asked whether they used technology to keep track of their learning, students also gave a lower rate ( $M=3.72/Mdn=4$ ) than teachers ( $M=5.00/Mdn=5$ ). Along these lines, students also give lower responses ( $M=3.78/Mdn=4$ ) compared to the teacher group ( $M=5.00/Mdn=5$ ) when asked whether they learn how to find accurate and reliable information online.

### Summary of Recommendation for Basque schools

- Expanding teachers' knowledge on the PTDL model, Cognitive Discourse Functions and Deeper Learning.
- Encouraging the use of authentic text, selected based on pupils' interests and identities and encouraging more critical thinking.
- Involving the students in the design of the FL classroom, including the evaluation criteria.
- Providing the students with self-regulation opportunities through clear goal setting and introducing co-evaluation and self-evaluation to monitor the process and include pupils' social and cultural interests in the FL class.
- Encourage teachers to participate in the professional development opportunities.





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