New Teaching Support Tools: Cl@SSI 2.0 and Cooperative Learning

R. Tammaro, University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy
A. D’Alessio, University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy
A. Petolicchio, University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy

ABSTRACT

The collaborative approach through which learning becomes significant, active, located, open, multimedia, and meta-cognitive has profoundly changed pedagogical tradition. Nowadays, the teaching/learning process is based more on the subject who learns rather than on the teacher: the main goal is the construction of a person who is able to go towards broader educational horizons. In this “rolling over” process of traditional roles in which the student becomes unique and true knowledge constructor, every good teacher knows that in order to make an effective contribution, it is necessary to support motivation, promote the desire to learn, to encourage research as well as develop learning processes through empowerment strategies and personal learning project (L. Camaioni, P. Di Blasio, 2007, p.162). Formal education becomes an environment of life experience, where the student “grows with others”. This kind of education is based on the dynamic interaction between multiple subjects, rather than on a dual relationship. Moreover, when we deal with problems related to the learning and teaching processes, it is worth considering communication technology due to the fact that they play a very important role in the formation of the person. New media are not simply added to old ones but they have created powerful interference fields in cognitive processes. New image, sound and communication technologies have introduced significant anthropological elements of novelty. The teacher has the function of an expert who, in addition to supervising, continually introduces additional support. Teaching is, therefore, a radical process of adaptation to the new demands of new generations entering the classrooms. The action Cl@ssi 2.0 offers the possibility to verify how and how much the learning environment can change, through constant and widespread use of technologies in daily teaching practices. Additionally, innovative ideas that, with the use of technologies (consider the introduction in the classrooms of the electronic textbooks or interactive whiteboards (LIM)), have reconsidered and transformed the learning environments of our schools.

Keywords: Cl@ssi 2.0, Cooperative Learning, Lim, Role, Tablet

INTRODUCTION

The project Cl@ssi 2.0 was created by the Ministry of Education to show how and how much a constant and widespread use of technology in everyday school can change the way of learning. This involves progressively moving from text-based teaching to a kind of education which considers topics and issues from different points of view, multiple intelligences as well as the different skills and abilities of each student. In a Cl@ssi 2.0 classroom, the blackboard is
replaced by an interactive whiteboard, while the students work on computers. Cl@ssi 2.0 is a programme that focuses students and teachers: it is a radical change of the teaching/learning process, a reversal of the relationship between the teacher and student, promoting the critical capacity and constant learning. Students are, therefore, the main resources and origins of knowledge. They help each other and are jointly responsible for their learning, setting the rhythm of their work, correcting and evaluating, developing and improving social relationships in order to facilitate learning. The teacher is a facilitator and organizer of the learning activity. In cooperative learning activities, they are no longer trainers but rather someone who gives information, suggestions and cooperates with every group of students. The teacher’s no longer works simultaneously with the students, their primary function is to provide the best conditions for an ideal training situation (Negri, 2005, pp. 47-48).

Innovation is not imposed from the top but grows within the school. The change starts from the class: a Cl@sse 2.0 class can be recognised due to its different “look” when compared to a traditional one. The desks are arranged in a horseshoe so as to encourage interaction between the students as well as to make it easier to go around when working in groups. Another important feature of a Cl@sse 2.0 class is to work with open doors: This gives the students greater self-control of both voice levels and respect of rules during the activities. It can also be considered a way of showing how the class is not an enclosed space but open to the world!

Nowadays, teachers also need to know about using new technologies, with doing a lesson becoming a sort of challenge against themselves, skills and abilities (Antonietti & Cantoia, 2001).

The results of this process are evident both in international research as well as the first national studies. There are numerous studies in current literature about the introduction of these technologies in the United Kingdom and Nordic countries, where there have been used for much longer when compared to other countries. These studies, which include Smith, Higgins, Wall, and Miller (2006), Balanskat, Blamire, and Kefala. A review of studies of the ICT on Schools in Europe, 2006, do not merely highlight a simple diffusion of modern technological equipment but rather support a new learning environment for the multi-tasking student who lives in an information society.

Cl@ssi 2.0 has, on an international level, “twin projects” in Spain, with the Plan Escuela 2.0, and England, with the CAPITAL project. Following the widespread diffusion of technology in schools, also on a European level, it is important to see if and how the technologies have been integrated into the learning environment and whether their presence has made changes to teaching methodologies in order to support its stabilisation.

Some of the popular trends (EU Digital Agenda, March 2010, 2020 Vision-Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group) reveal that: pedagogical models, and constructivist and socio-constructivist, include ICT as tools to reinforce traditional teaching which prefer an active approach, open tasks and the personalization of learning paths.

Another commonly shared concept, although not widely adopted, concerns the role of the teacher who is the key point in the transformation process of learning.

The structure of learning spaces will probably remain unchanged, but the differentiation of learning models will be predominantly oriented to collaboration among students and content customization/path for both the traditional class model as well as different models with the support of ICT (e.g. widespread class).

Structural constraints have been overcome in recent years by extending the class space with virtual learning environments (VLES) and content management systems, LMS (Learning Management System), which are associated with Web 2.0 tools.

The prevalence of multimedia, interactive whiteboards and interactive surfaces in general will initiate the expansion of the number of
Exclusiveness vs. Inclusiveness in Software Development: The Triple-Loop-Learning Approach
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/exclusiveness-inclusiveness-software-development/68461?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/exclusiveness-inclusiveness-software-development/68461?camid=4v1a)

Information Policies: Agenda for Digital Inclusion in the European Union
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/information-policies/189049?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/information-policies/189049?camid=4v1a)