Erasmus+

PROJECT:

Module 2

Innovative Pedagogical Techniques for Teaching Roma Students

PAL LAB

Co-funded by the European Union

Table of Contents

Training Module 2: Innovative Pedagogical Techniques for Teaching Roma Students 2
Introduction: pedagogical techniques to be used in the classroom 2
Unit 1. Understanding the Roma Community – 30 minutes theory and exercises: 5
Unit 2. Culturally Responsive Teaching – 60 minutes theory and practical exercises: 9
Unit 3. Strengths-Based Approach – 90 minutes theory and practical exercises: 12
Unit 4. Differentiated Instruction - 120 minutes theory and practical exercises: 18
Unit 5. Student-centered teaching techniques - 60 minutes theory: 23
Unit 6. Community Engagement and Partnerships - 30 minutes theory and practical exercises: 27
Unit 7. Technology Integration - 30 minutes theory and demonstration of resources: 32
Unit 8. Assessment and Feedback – 60 minutes theory: 34
REFERENCES 37

This document was created in the frames of the project "Pedagogical approaches for upskilling of teachers, mediators and experts working with Romani children and youth - Equal Opportunities and reducing early school leaving", funded the European Union with contract N 2022-1-RO01-KA220-SCH- 000086373.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Training Module 2: Innovative Pedagogical Techniques for Teaching Roma Students

This training module aims to:

- Explore innovative pedagogical techniques and strategies to effectively teach Roma students.
- Understand their cultural background, educational challenges, and specific needs
- Create inclusive and engaging learning environments that foster academic success and personal growth.
- Discover best practices, creative teaching approaches, and resources to support educators in meeting the diverse learning needs of Roma students.

Module duration - 8 training hours, including theory and exercises

Module Content:

Introduction: pedagogical techniques to be used in the classroom

1. The flipped classroom is an instructional strategy where traditional teaching methods are reversed or "flipped." Instead of students passively receiving lectures during class time and then doing homework independently, students are assigned pre-recorded lectures, readings, or other materials to review at home. They then come to class ready to engage in active learning activities, such as discussions, problem-solving exercises, or group projects, where they can apply what they've learned.

The idea behind the flipped classroom is to utilize valuable class time more effectively by focusing on activities that promote deeper understanding, critical thinking, and collaboration, rather than just passive consumption of information. This approach often allows for more personalized instruction, as teachers can better identify and address individual student needs during in-person sessions.

The flipped classroom model also empowers students to take more responsibility for their learning, as they are expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate actively. It can be particularly beneficial for subjects that require more hands-on or interactive learning experiences, as well as for accommodating different learning styles and pacing.

2. Blended learning is an educational approach that combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning activities. It integrates the best elements of both traditional classroom teaching and digital learning to create a more flexible and personalized learning experience.

In a blended learning environment, students typically engage in a variety of activities, including in-person lectures, discussions, and group work, as well as online modules, videos, quizzes, and interactive exercises. The online component can be delivered through learning management systems, educational apps, or other digital platforms.

The goal of blended learning is to leverage the advantages of both offline and online learning modalities to enhance student engagement, flexibility, and outcomes. It allows for more individualized pacing and instruction, as students can progress through online materials at their own speed and receive personalized feedback. Blended learning also promotes greater accessibility, as students can access learning materials and resources from anywhere with an internet connection.

Blended learning can take on various forms and configurations, depending on the needs and preferences of the students and instructors. It has gained popularity in recent years due to its potential to cater to diverse learning styles, promote self-directed learning, and prepare students for the digital demands of the 21st century.

3. Integrated learning, also known as interdisciplinary or cross-curricular learning, refers to an educational approach that combines concepts, methods, and content from multiple subject areas or disciplines. Instead of teaching subjects in isolation, integrated learning aims to connect different areas of study to create a more cohesive and holistic understanding of the world.

In an integrated learning environment, teachers design curriculum and instruction that emphasize connections between subjects such as science, math, language arts, social studies, and the arts. Rather than teaching each subject separately, teachers identify themes, topics, or real-world problems that cut across multiple disciplines, allowing students to explore them from various perspectives.

Integrated learning encourages students to make connections between different areas of knowledge, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. By contextualizing learning within broader themes or issues, students can see the relevance and applicability of their education to the real world.

Integrated learning can take on different forms, ranging from loosely connected thematic units to more tightly integrated interdisciplinary projects. It often involves collaboration among teachers from different disciplines to design and implement interdisciplinary curriculum and assessment strategies.

The benefits of integrated learning include promoting deeper understanding, increasing student engagement, and preparing students for complex, interconnected challenges they may face in the future. Additionally, integrated learning can help break down the artificial barriers between subjects, providing a more holistic and meaningful educational experience.

4. The open labs approach, also known as open laboratory or open-ended laboratory, is an educational method that emphasizes student-centered, experiential learning in laboratory settings. Unlike traditional laboratory sessions where students follow a prescribed procedure to achieve specific outcomes, open labs provide students with more autonomy, flexibility, and opportunities for exploration and discovery.

In an open lab environment, students are encouraged to design their own experiments, explore different hypotheses, and engage in hands-on inquiry-based learning. Rather than being given step-by-step instructions, students are presented with open-ended questions or problems to investigate, allowing them to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, and experimental design skills.

The open labs approach often involves providing students with access to a variety of resources, materials, and equipment, as well as guidance and support from instructors or facilitators. Students may work individually or in small groups, collaborating and sharing ideas as they conduct their experiments and analyze their findings.

The goals of the open labs approach include fostering curiosity, creativity, and a deeper understanding of scientific concepts and principles. By engaging in authentic, inquiry-driven experiences, students develop a greater appreciation for the scientific process and gain valuable skills that are applicable across disciplines.

Open labs can be implemented in various educational settings, from K-12 schools to undergraduate and graduate programs in higher education. While they require careful planning, support, and supervision, open labs offer students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning and develop the skills and mindset needed for success in STEM fields and beyond.

5. The open schooling approach, also known as open education or open learning, is an educational philosophy and practice that emphasizes flexibility, accessibility, and learner-centeredness. It aims to provide education to a diverse range of learners, including those who may face barriers to traditional schooling, such as geographical distance, socioeconomic status, or personal circumstances.

In an open schooling environment, learners have greater control over their education, including the pace, place, path, and time of learning. This approach often involves a combination of self-directed study, individualized instruction, and flexible learning options, such as online courses, distance learning, project-based learning, and experiential learning opportunities.

Key principles of open schooling include:

Accessibility: Open schooling aims to make education more accessible to all learners, regardless of their background, location, or circumstances. It seeks to remove barriers to learning and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.

Flexibility: Open schooling offers flexible learning pathways and options to accommodate diverse learning styles, preferences, and needs. Learners have the freedom to choose what, when, and how they learn, allowing for personalized and self-paced learning experiences.

Collaboration: Open schooling encourages collaboration and community engagement among learners, educators, and other stakeholders. It fosters a supportive learning environment where learners can share resources, ideas, and experiences, both online and offline.

Innovation: Open schooling promotes innovation in teaching and learning practices, leveraging technology and other resources to enhance the learning experience. It embraces new pedagogical approaches, educational technologies, and learning environments to meet the evolving needs of learners in the 21st century.

Lifelong learning: Open schooling recognizes the importance of lifelong learning and encourages learners to pursue learning opportunities beyond formal schooling. It supports continuous learning and skill development throughout life, empowering individuals to adapt to change and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Open schooling can take various forms and be implemented at different levels of education, from K-12 schools to higher education institutions and adult education programs. While it requires careful planning, support, and resources, open schooling has the potential to democratize education and empower learners to achieve their full potential, regardless of their circumstances.

6. Children's universities are educational initiatives designed to provide children with opportunities for learning outside of the traditional school environment. These programs aim to stimulate curiosity, creativity, and a love for learning among young learners by offering engaging and interactive educational experiences.

Here are some key features and principles of children's universities:

Informal Learning Environments: Children's universities often take place in informal settings such as museums, science centers, libraries, or outdoor spaces. These environments offer hands-on learning experiences that complement and extend classroom learning.

Interdisciplinary Approach: Children's universities typically offer a wide range of subjects and activities that span various disciplines, including science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics (STEAM), humanities, and social sciences. This interdisciplinary approach encourages holistic learning and allows children to explore their interests across different fields.

Experiential Learning: Children's universities emphasize experiential learning through interactive workshops, experiments, projects, and field trips. These hands-on activities provide children with opportunities to explore concepts, develop skills, and apply knowledge in real-world contexts.

Engagement and Participation: Children's universities prioritize active engagement and participation, encouraging children to ask questions, solve problems, and collaborate with their peers. This learner-centered approach fosters curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity.

Inclusive and Accessible: Children's universities aim to be inclusive and accessible to children from diverse backgrounds, regardless of their socioeconomic status, abilities, or prior educational experiences. They may offer scholarships, discounts, or outreach programs to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate.

Partnerships and Collaboration: Children's universities often collaborate with schools, universities, community organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders to enrich their programs and resources. These partnerships help to expand the range of learning opportunities available to children and enhance the quality of their educational experiences.

Celebration of Learning: Children's universities typically culminate in celebrations or showcases where children can share and showcase their learning experiences with their families, peers, and the broader community. These events recognize children's achievements and inspire them to continue their learning journey.

Overall, children's universities play a valuable role in complementing formal education and fostering a lifelong love for learning among young learners. By providing engaging, interdisciplinary, and experiential learning opportunities, children's universities empower children to explore their interests, develop their talents, and realize their full potential.

Unit 1. Understanding the Roma Community – 30 minutes theory and exercises:

- Understanding the educational challenges and barriers faced by Roma students - **theory**
- Recognizing the strengths, resilience, and assets of Roma students - **theory and practical exercises**

A brief intro

History

Origins: The Romani people trace their origins to northern India, believed to have migrated around the 11th century. Linguistic and genetic studies support this theory, indicating a connection between Romani language and Indian languages like Hindi and Punjabi.

Migration to Europe: The Romani migration to Europe occurred over several centuries, with different waves settling in various regions. They traveled along multiple routes, encountering diverse cultures and adapting their lifestyle accordingly.

Persecution and Discrimination: Throughout their history in Europe, Romani people faced severe persecution and discrimination. They were often viewed as outsiders and subjected to laws restricting their movements, occupations, and even personal freedoms.

Culture

Language: The Romani language, Romani, is a key element of their cultural identity. It has numerous dialects and is primarily oral, passed down through generations within close-knit communities.

Nomadic Traditions: Traditionally, Romani communities were nomadic, following seasonal patterns and livelihood opportunities. While many have settled over time, nomadic traditions still influence their cultural practices and values.

Family and Community: Romani culture places a strong emphasis on family and community ties. Extended families often live together or in close proximity, providing mutual support and maintaining cultural traditions.

Community

Social Structure: Romani communities typically have their own social structures, often led by elders and respected community members. Decision-making and conflict resolution are often communal processes, with elders playing significant roles.

Challenges: Despite efforts to promote inclusion, Romani communities face persistent socio-economic challenges. Poverty, lack of access to education and healthcare, and discrimination in housing and employment remain significant issues.

Activism and Advocacy: In recent years, there has been a surge in activism and advocacy within Romani communities. Organizations and individuals work to combat stereotypes, promote cultural pride, and address systemic barriers to equality and opportunity.

Understanding the educational challenges and barriers faced by Roma students

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental human right and a key driver of social and economic development. However, for the Romani community, accessing quality education remains a significant challenge.

The Romani people have a long history of marginalization and discrimination, which has had a profound impact on their access to education. Historical factors, including forced assimilation policies and segregation, have contributed to the perpetuation of educational inequalities within Romani communities.

The barriers to access faced by Roma students are: poverty, discrimination, cultural and linguistic barriers.

Despite these barriers, there are ongoing efforts at the local, national, and international levels to improve educational opportunities for Romani children and youth. Inclusive policies and community empowerment are efforts in this direction.

Addressing the educational challenges faced by the Romani community requires a multifaceted approach that tackles systemic discrimination, poverty, and cultural barriers. By investing in inclusive policies and empowering Romani communities, we can work towards creating equitable educational opportunities for all.

Recognizing the strengths, resilience, and assets of Roma students

While Roma students often encounter significant barriers to education, it is essential to recognize and celebrate their strengths, resilience, and assets.

Resilience in adversity are: cultural richness, family support, strengths and assets (adaptability, cultural intelligence)

The community assets are: community cohesion and cultural heritage.

Despite facing systemic barriers and discrimination, Roma students possess a wealth of strengths, resilience, and assets that contribute to their academic success and personal development. By recognizing and leveraging these strengths, educators and policymakers can create inclusive learning environments that empower Roma students to reach their full potential.

EXERCISES

I. The SINELG method

I know – for known information, for extracts / passages that confirm what they already know
I want to know – for new information, unknown to them that they have just discovered
I have found out – for information which contradicts what they already know
Questions – for information that requires further documentation, because certain passages contain uncertainties, confusions, pose questions

☺ *I already know* ☺ *I want to know* *I have found out* ☺ *Questions*

II. **How much do you value**

The objectives of the story: After reading/listening to the story, readers/listeners will be able to: understand that, regardless of the situation, we are the same;

Story:

Paul, with a sad and dejected face, met his friend Carla in a confectionery, for a coffee. Depressed, he began to vent to her, telling her about his many problems, about his job, money, friends, his purpose in life and much more... Everything seemed to be going wrong for him... At one point , Carla reached into her bag and took out a brand new 200 lei bill. He handed it to her smiling: - Do you want this banknote? Paul, a little confused, answered: - If I want it? Of course, Carla... it's only 200 lei! Who would refuse them?! Then Carla moved the banknote to her left hand and crumpled it until she made a small ball of it.

Showing the wallet to Paul, he asked him again: - But now, do you want another bill? - Carla, I don't know what you're after, but that ball in your hand is still worth two hundred! Of course I want the bill, even if you give it to me. Carla unwrapped the bag, threw the crumpled bill on the floor and stomped on it until it was all dirty. - Do you still want a bill? - Listen, Carla, I still don't understand where you want to go. Even so, trampled and dirty, it is still a 200 lei banknote, and until you break it, it retains its value... - Paul, you said it - a 200 banknote remains a 200 banknote! Well, you have to know that no matter what happens to you, even if sometimes something doesn't turn out the way you want, even if life "bends" you or makes you a little lumpy, you continue to be as important as you always were ... What you have to ask yourself is how much you are worth in reality, not how dejected you are at a given moment or how depressed you are because of some more or less transient situations in your life. Paul stood still, staring at Carla without saying a word as her words made their way into his mind and heart. Carla put the unfolded banknote on the table, next to Paul's cup, and with a complicit smile, said to him:

- Take the million, it's yours! Keep it to remember this moment when you fall into the barrel again... but you have to give me a new bill... also 200 so I can use it on the next friend who needs it... he kissed her on the cheek and headed for the door. Paul looked at the bill, smiled, looked at it again and woke up as if to a new life, called the waiter to pay the bill…

Reflection and evaluation questions:

- What happened?
- What do you think about the story?
- What exactly is a banknote?
- What can you learn from this situation?
- What is Carla really trying to explain to her friend?
- Have you ever had similar experiences?
- What conclusion can we draw?

- What did you each learn about yourself from this story?
- What will you put into practice and how will you put into practice what you have learned?

III. Students leaning their teachers the Romani culture

A method that purposes many pedagogy techniques, like flipped classroom, bended learning, open labs approach, open schooling approach etc.

IV. My story

Game objectives (from the perspective of knowledge, skills and attitudes): By engaging in the game, the participants will be able to: identify common values in the group; to accept the common points as well as the diversity of the whole group;

Description: The participants ponder and pick three important moments that have marked their lives. They can be personal, political, historical, musical, sports related, etc. Afterwards they will talk about why they are important, what they represent and why they have chosen these moments.

Reflection and evaluation questions: Was it hard to identify important moments in life? Was it hard to choose which is more important? Were you surprised by the events reported by others? Are you familiar with the other events mentioned?

Suggestions for follow up: You can exemplify some examples, to give confidence to the group, starting from the simplest, to particularly difficult or important moments in someone's life. Do not force participants to share more than they are comfortable with, they will open up as trust in the group increases.

V. Landmine field

Game objectives (from the perspective of knowledge, skills and attitudes): By engaging in the game, the participants will be able to: identify the problems that may arise in a group; to develop confidence in their own and group potential; to take into account the needs of teammates;
Description: The participants will discuss what creates dysfunctionalities within a group. For each characteristic / action they will throw an object inside the game area, the landmine field. The participants will chose partners. One partner will be blindfolded and sat at the edge of the playing field. The other will not be blindfolded and sat on the opposite end of the field. The players will attempt to talk to each other. The players are not allowed to step onto the landmine field. In the end, the blindfolded participants will try to cross the playing field with the aid of their partners.
Reflection and evaluation questions:

- How easy was it to identify problems in the functioning of a group?
- How did you feel on the trap floor?
- Would you have made it on your own?
- What did you appreciate about your teammate?
- How did you feel at the end?
- How does it help us to correctly identify (possible) problems in time?

Unit 2. Culturally Responsive Teaching – 60 minutes theory and practical exercises:

- Importance of culturally responsive teaching for Roma students – **theory**
- Incorporating Roma culture, language, and history into the curriculum – **theory and practical exercises**
- Building positive relationships with Roma students and their families - **practical exercises**

What is culturally responsive teaching?

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is an educational approach that acknowledges and values the cultural backgrounds, experiences, and identities of students. It emphasizes the importance of integrating students' cultural knowledge, perspectives, and languages into the teaching and learning process to promote academic success and social-emotional well-being. By incorporating culturally relevant content, instructional strategies, and assessments, CRT aims to create inclusive classrooms where all students feel respected, engaged, and empowered to learn.

One key principle of culturally responsive teaching is recognizing and addressing cultural biases and stereotypes that may exist within educational practices. Educators strive to create a classroom culture that celebrates diversity, challenges stereotypes, and promotes positive interactions among students from different cultural backgrounds. By fostering open dialogue and mutual respect, teachers create safe spaces where students feel valued and supported.

Research has shown that culturally responsive teaching has numerous benefits for students, including improved academic achievement, increased motivation and engagement, and enhanced socio-emotional development. When students see themselves reflected in the curriculum and instructional materials, they are more likely to feel connected to their learning and motivated to succeed. Additionally, culturally responsive teaching helps break down barriers to learning by acknowledging and addressing the systemic inequities that impact marginalized students.

To implement culturally responsive teaching effectively, educators must engage in ongoing reflection, professional development, and collaboration. They should continuously examine their own beliefs, biases, and practices, and seek out opportunities to learn from colleagues, students, and community members. By prioritizing cultural responsiveness in teacher preparation programs and professional learning communities, educators can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to create inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Importance of culturally reponsive teaching for Roma students

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) has emerged as a crucial pedagogical approach for fostering inclusive learning environments that honor the diverse cultural backgrounds of students. For Roma students, who often face marginalization and discrimination in educational settings, CRT holds particular significance, like: acknowledging cultural identity, promoting academic engagement, challenging stereotypes and bias, empowering educators.

Building positive relationships with Roma students and their families

Developing positive relationships with Roma students and their families is crucial for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters academic success and personal growth.

Elements like: cultural understanding and respect, open communication and collaboration, community engagement and partnerships, individualized support and empowerment, culturally responsive practices in education.

Implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies that honor Roma culture, language, and identity helps create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

By incorporating Roma perspectives, experiences, and contributions into the curriculum, educators can enhance engagement, relevance, and academic success for Roma students.

In conclusion, building positive relationships with Roma students and their families is essential for promoting academic success, social-emotional well-being, and cultural affirmation. By fostering understanding, communication, collaboration, and empowerment, educators can create inclusive learning environments where Roma students thrive and reach their full potential.

EXERCISES

I. Puzzle vision

Game objectives (from the perspective of knowledge, skills and attitudes): By engaging in the game, participants will be able to: communicate to complete a work task; establish a work strategy; to take into account the points of view of the team members;

Description: The game coordinator splits the group into two teams. Each team will receive a puzzle of around 200 pieces without the example picture that they need to put together. The time given is of around 7 minutes. After the time is over (of course they will not be able to complete the puzzle) there will be a discussion on the topic of why they could not finish the task. After the talk the teams will have 10 minutes to finish the task. They will receive the exemple picture only if requested by the participants.

Reflection and evaluation questions: Why was it difficult to complete the task? If you had to do it all over again, how would you go about it? How important is it to know what you are doing before you start doing something? Why do we need a vision? Who can provide a vision? How do we know if the vision is good or not?

Suggestions for follow up: The facilitator can propose to the participants the drawing up of a personal action plan, for a determined period.

II. Future projections

Description: The coordinator asks the students to evaluate, based on the worksheet, the distance between their present characteristics and the ones they desire, after which they receive the suggestion to analyze the degree of realism of their desires. The students are then required to replace the unrealistic characteristics with more realistic ones. They can be prompted to represent the distance between their current characteristics and their desired ones through a drawing to better understand the difference between the present and the future.

III. Story : What I am means something

The objectives of the story: After reading/listening to the story, readers/listeners will be able to: explain the role of self-image in the development of self-esteem; to show openness to the appreciation of those around them and the qualities they possess;

Story:

A teacher from New York decided to give a token of appreciation to her final year students by telling each one of them how important they are. Using a method developed by Helice Bridges, he called everyone to the front of the class one by one; first she told everyone what it means to the class and to her, then she gave them each a ribbon that read "WHAT I AM MEANS SOMETHING". After that, the teacher decided to do a

class study to see what kind of impact appreciation has on a community. He gave each student 3 more ribbons and then instructed them to go and do the same recognition ceremony. He had to track the results, see who respected whom, and present them after a week. One of the boys in the class went to the young vice president of a nearby company and gave him one of the ribbons for helping him with his career planning and tied his shirt bow. Then she gave him the other 2 ribbons and said: "We are doing a study at school about appreciation and we would like you to find someone to appreciate and give them the blue ribbon, then give them the one that remained, so that he, in turn, could honor someone else". Please then tell me what happened. Later, the vice president walks into the office of his boss, who was known to be a grumpy guy. He asked him to take a seat and told him how much he admired him because he was a true genius. The chief was simply amazed. Then the vice-president asked him if he would not like to accept the ribbon as a sign of appreciation and pin it to his coat. The surprised boss said: "Of course yes!". The vice president took the blue ribbon and pinned it to his boss's coat right next to the heart. Giving him the other ribbon, he said: "Would you like to do me a favor? Do you mind if you take the other ribbon to give to someone you care about? The young man who gave me these ribbons is doing a study at school and would like us to do this recognition ceremony, to observe how it influences people". That night, the chief went to his 14-year-old son's house and sat next to him. He said: "Today an extraordinary thing happened to me. I was in my office and one of my employees came and told me that he admired me; then he gave me a blue ribbon for being a creative genius.

Imagine: he thinks I'm a creative genius! Then she pinned this blue bow on my chest that says "WHAT I AM MEANS SOMETHING" and gave me another ribbon to give to someone I appreciate. While I was driving home, I kept wondering who I should give this token of recognition to, and I thought of you. I want you to accept my token of appreciation. My days are so hectic that when I get home I don't really pay much attention to you. Sometimes I yell at you because you don't get good grades in school and because your bedroom looks like a battlefield, but I don't know how, tonight I wanted to sit here with you and tell you how much I mean you I love you and how much you mean to me. Apart from your mother, you are the most important being for me, you are my life. You are a wonderful child and I love you! The amazed kid started crying loudly and couldn't stop.

He was shaking in all his joints. He looked up at his father and said through tears: "I was getting ready to leave home tomorrow, father, because I thought you didn't love me. Now I don't need to do that anymore."

Reflection and evaluation questions:

- What happened in the story?
- What are your reactions and feelings about the story?
- What can you learn from this situation?
- What really happened?
- Have you ever had similar experiences?
- What conclusion can we draw?
- What did you each learn about yourself from this story?
- What will you put into practice and how will you put into practice what you have learned?

Unit 3. Strengths-Based Approach – 90 minutes theory and practical exercises:

- Identifying and leveraging the strengths and talents of Roma students - **theory and practical exercises**
- Fostering a growth mindset and positive self-image in Roma learners - **theory and practical exercises**
- Empowering Roma students to take ownership of their learning and success - **theory and practical exercises**

This module is designed to equip teachers and facilitators with the knowledge and tools necessary to implement a strengths-based approach, foster growth mindsets, and empower Roma students to take charge of their learning and success. Incorporating these theoretical insights and practical exercises can create a supportive environment that maximizes the potential of every learner.

Defining Strengths-Based Approach

The strengths-based approach focuses on recognizing and nurturing individual strengths, abilities, and positive attributes rather than solely addressing weaknesses or deficits (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). By adopting this approach, educators can empower Roma students to build on their existing capabilities and talents, fostering confidence, motivation, and resilience.

Promoting Academic and Personal Growth

Focusing on strengths contributes to academic success and holistic development by enhancing self-efficacy and self-regulation (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2002). When Roma students are encouraged to cultivate their strengths, they are more likely to engage actively in learning, persist through challenges, and develop a growth mindset that values effort and continuous improvement (Dweck, 2006; Yeager & Dweck, 2012). For Romani students, promoting academic success requires taking into account:

Importance of Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness is crucial in identifying and appreciating Roma students' strengths (Cherata, 1993). Educators should recognize the diversity within Roma communities and understand how cultural factors influence students' strengths, values, and ways of knowing. By incorporating cultural perspectives and practices into strengths-based education, educators can establish meaningful connections with Roma students and create inclusive learning environments.

Romani people have a highly developed sense of community spirit, and their needs for group and ethnic belonging are of great importance. For an outsider to adapt to the requirements of the Romani community, it takes time and a close understanding of their communal life. Understanding Romani culture requires spending time among them, with communication being an essential aspect of outsiders adapting to the demands of their community (Geantă, 2022).

To identify and capitalize on the strengths and talents of Romani students, certain markers are necessary to facilitate the integration of outsiders into their community (Geantă, 2022). Among the markers that teachers can use to bring Romani students closer to education and, implicitly, to prevent school dropout, are: promoting the benefits of schooling, providing community support and volunteering, and understanding both the Romani culture and self-awareness.

Promoting the benefits of schooling

Romani children often drop out of school for various reasons, including lack of resources and the negative perception of schooling by community members and families (Geantă, 2022). Therefore, it is important to initially present the benefits of schooling to adults, and then to children.

By emphasizing the benefits of participating in school activities, parents will be more inclined to send their children to school. Changing parents' views on school requires identifying their needs. Among

their needs are the existence of an after-school program, children learning a trade, providing hot meals at school, etc.

These types of needs can be met through support from authorities and by promoting the idea that these needs can be fulfilled through a close school-family partnership focused on the child's needs and future after completing education.

Providing community support and volunteering

Volunteer activities and community support are two prosocial behaviors that contribute to the well-being of others. While the Romani community is accustomed to receiving support, are they willing to give back? The answer can be positive if students are encouraged to contribute to any act of kindness, which does not necessarily involve monetary or material donations but rather good deeds without any reward.

Understanding Romani culture and self-awareness

The history of the Romani community dates back to ancient times, proving the existence of a culture and civilization worthy of recognition. Romani culture is known worldwide for its music, crafts, traditional attire, and Romani language. Presenting models and images of Romani culture can contribute to identifying and valuing individuals and the community. Additionally, experiences where Romani children demonstrate their talents within the community or in extracurricular contexts will significantly advance the cultural identity of the Roma (Geantă, 2022).

Fostering a growth mindset and positive self-image

Defining Growth Mindset

A growth mindset, as described by Dweck (2006), is the belief that intelligence, abilities, and talents can be developed through dedication, effort, and resilience. Roma students who embrace a growth mindset view challenges as opportunities for growth and are more likely to persist in the face of setbacks.

Cultural Considerations in Nurturing Positive Self-Image

Cultivating a positive self-image in Roma students involves recognizing and valuing their cultural heritage, strengths, and unique identities (Cherata, 1993). Educators should create a culturally responsive learning environment that celebrates diversity, fosters inclusivity, and promotes a sense of belonging among Roma learners.

Strategies for promoting a growth mindset and positive self-image among Roma students include modeling resilience, providing opportunities for meaningful feedback and reflection, teaching self-regulation skills (Zimmerman, 2002), and integrating positive psychology principles (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) into educational practices. In the case of Romani communities, values such as family or freedom are commonly found (Mihăilescu, 2014), which are not far from the traditional values of majority communities. In certain Romani communities, however, religious faith is among the values (Cherata, 1993), or even fame (Mihăilescu, 2014). Therefore, the promotion of a growth mindset and positive self-image among Roma can be achieved through appeals to morality, empathy, and compassion.

Romani trades have not been well preserved by society, as evidenced by the difficulty Romani people face in integrating into modern society with new professions. The feeling of not belonging to a guild can be perceived as a blow to the need for belonging and even to the identity of Romani people in general (Cherata, 1993).

Therefore, school activities that encourage students to learn traditional trades and find a purpose for the outcome of traditional trades in the modern world (can others use what I have created through my

work?) can help young Roma integrate into the workforce and achieve a sustainable income to prevent poverty.

Empowering ownership of learning and success

Concept of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, as described by Bandura (1997), refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks or situations. Roma students with high self-efficacy are more likely to set ambitious goals, persist in the face of challenges, and take proactive steps to achieve academic success.

Strategies to Foster Autonomy and Initiative

Encouraging Roma students to set goals, monitor their progress, and make informed decisions about their learning journey promotes autonomy and initiative (Zimmerman, 2002). Educators can facilitate self-directed learning by teaching self-regulation skills, promoting reflective practices, and creating opportunities for student-led inquiries and projects.

Addressing Systemic Barriers:

Roma students may face systemic barriers and educational challenges that impact their sense of ownership and agency (Cherata, 1993). Educators should advocate for inclusive policies and practices, provide tailored support to address individual needs, and collaborate with community stakeholders to navigate systemic barriers and promote equitable access to education.

Every person needs rights and responsibilities for daily life to be considered decent. Promoting the idea that it is necessary to assume responsibilities may not seem very interesting to students, but holding students accountable can be done by giving them the chance to perform small responsibilities in class: keeping the classroom clean, taking notes in class notebooks, arriving at school on time, etc. All these responsibilities can be rewarded accordingly: adhering to these responsibilities can bring them a reward, such as a field trip or other extracurricular activities. Thus, responsible behavior will be cultivated among Romani students, with the idea that after work comes reward.

Throughout history, Roma have been known to prefer the authority of a leader (typically the bulibașa). This tradition persists to this day. For Romani children, authority is represented by their parents, so it is crucial that the leader whom the parents believe in is one who supports the community. The community leader is chosen by Roma based on wealth (Mihăilescu, 2014). If the leader is financially affluent and chooses to present himself in this way, then the community will also relate to him in terms of wealth. If the leader chosen by the community chooses to represent other values (Geantă, 2022), then parents and children will also choose to follow these beliefs. Thus, a sense of importance is created for students to achieve success or have a positive outlook on the future.

In conclusion, bringing closer to the Romani community and preventing school dropout can be achieved by encouraging communication, prosocial behaviors, self-confidence through activities where community members feel useful, and by holding teachers, students, and parents accountable together.

EXERCISES

I. „My Values”

Objective 1: encouraging students to learn traditional trades and find a purpose for the outcome of traditional trades in the modern world

Objective 2: To help students identify and reflect on their personal values and understand the role these values play in their actions and decisions.

Materials needed: working sheet

Description of the activity: Explain the concept of values and how they influence behavior and choices.On a working sheets, students can make an inventory of their values

Activity: Provide each student with a list of values (e.g., honesty, respect, kindness, perseverance). Ask them to choose their top five values and write them down.

Sharing: In small groups, students share their chosen values and explain why they are important to them.

Reflection: Facilitate a class discussion on how these values can help them in their school life and personal growth, emphasizing the importance of staying in school to achieve their goals.

Outcome: This game encourages self-reflection and helps students see the importance of education in fulfilling their values and life goals.

Duration: 10 minutes
Recommended age: +12 years old

II. „Who Am I?"

Objective: identify and capitalize the strengths and talents of Roma students
Materials needed: working sheet
Description of the activity: students can realise a drawing or a description about themselves
Duration: 15 minutes
Recommended age: any age, needs adaptation for every age segment

III. „Strengths and Weaknesses"

Objective: ensuring confidence that what they learn is useful in their daily lives
Materials needed: flipchart, markers or a panel with examples of strengths and weaknesses, for every students it is necessary worksheets or diaries
Description of the activity: every students can discover strengths and weaknesses; after that is important to discuss about common and differences in learning with strengths and weaknesses; the message is „every learning can be different"
Duration: 10 minutes
Recommended age: +10 years old

IV. "Qualities and Flaws"

Objective: To promote self-awareness and empathy by recognizing personal strengths and areas for improvement.
Materials needed: working sheet or just simple paper
Description of the activity
Introduction: Discuss the concept of self-awareness and its role in personal development and relationships.
Activity: Each student receives two sheets of paper. On one sheet, they write their qualities (strengths) and on the other, their flaws (areas for improvement).
Pair Sharing: Students pair up and share their lists with their partner. Each partner provides positive feedback and suggestions for improvement in a supportive manner.

Group Discussion: Reconvene as a class to discuss how understanding and accepting both strengths and flaws can lead to personal growth and better relationships. Highlight the importance of supporting each other in school to overcome challenges.
Outcome: This game helps students build self-awareness, appreciate their strengths, and work on their flaws, fostering a more empathetic and supportive classroom environment.
Duration: 15 minutes

Recommended age: +12 years old

V. "What If I Were..."

Objective: To foster empathy by encouraging students to step into others' shoes and understand different perspectives.
Description of the activity:
Introduction: Begin with a brief discussion on empathy and its importance.
Activity: Divide students into pairs. Each pair receives a card with a scenario involving different roles (e.g., teacher, classmate, parent, community member).
Role-Playing: Students take turns acting out their given roles, imagining how they would feel and react in that situation.
Discussion: After the role-play, students discuss their feelings and thoughts during the exercise. Highlight the importance of understanding and empathy in building strong relationships and overcoming challenges.
Outcome: This game helps students develop a deeper understanding of others' experiences, fostering a supportive school environment.
Duration: 20 minutes
Recommended age: +10 years old

VI. „I am independent"

Objective: obtain meaningful feedback to helps students understand their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and develop a growth mindset that values effort and resilience.
Materials needed: -
Description of the activity: teacher can emphasize independence of Roma students by give them feedback for every learning situation
Duration: 5 minutes
Recommended age: +11 years old

VII. „My Responsibilities"

Objective: focusing on guiding students towards improvement
Materials needed: pannel with responsabilities
Description on the activity: every students is going to have responsabilities and receive feedback for the result of the responsability taken
Introduction: Discuss the concept of responsabilities and its role in personal development
Activity: On a panel every student is going to have a responsabiliy (e.g cleaning, behavior etc.). From time to time it should be changed between students

Group Discussion: Reconvene as a class to discuss about the degree of fulfillment of responsibilities. Appreciation is necessary
Outcome: This game helps students to be more responsible for their actions
Duration: 5 minutes
Recommended age: +7 years old, needs adaptation for every age segment

VIII. ”The Power of Words and Empathy”

Objective: To help Roma students understand the impact of their words and actions on others and to build a culture of kindness and empathy.
Materials Needed: Two apples (one pre-dropped, one untouched), sticky-note and pen for each student, a whiteboard and markers
Introduction (5 minutes)
Gather the students in a circle. Show them the two apples and ask them to describe what they see. Highlight that both apples look the same: red, juicy, and perfect.
Setting the Scene (10 minutes)
Pick up the apple you pre-dropped (do not reveal this yet). Start speaking negatively about this apple. Say things like, "I don't like this apple," "It's probably rotten inside," "It's ugly." Pass the apple around the circle, asking each student to say something unkind to the apple. Encourage creativity but ensure the words remain appropriate. Observe the students' reactions, noting anyone who looks uncomfortable or hesitant.
Positive Reinforcement (10 minutes) Now, pick up the untouched apple. Start speaking positively about this apple. Say things like, "This is a beautiful apple," "It looks delicious," "I love its color." Pass this apple around the circle, asking each student to say something kind to the apple.
The Reveal (10 minutes) Hold both apples up and discuss their similarities once again. Cut open both apples, starting with the untouched one. Show the students how fresh and juicy it is inside. Then, cut open the pre-dropped apple. Show them the bruises and mushy parts inside. Discuss the visible differences and explain that the bruised apple represents the damage caused by unkind words and actions.
Personal Reflection (10 minutes) Share a personal story about a time when unkind words hurt you. Ask the students to write down a time when someone’s words made them feel bad. Ensure they understand this is private and they don’t have to share unless they want to.
Group Discussion (15 minutes) Invite volunteers to share their experiences if they feel comfortable.
Discuss how they felt when they were hurt and how they think the person who hurt them would feel if they knew the impact of their words. Encourage a conversation about how we can use our words to build each other up instead of tearing each other down.
Empathy and Kindness (10 minutes) Explain that just like the bruised apple, people can be hurt inside even if they look fine on the outside. Brainstorm ways to show kindness and stand up against bullying. Write these ideas on the whiteboard. Emphasize the importance of standing up for each other and being a friend to those who are mistreated.
Conclusion (10 minutes) Summarize the lesson by reinforcing the message that words have power. Encourage students to be mindful of their words and actions. End with a positive affirmation circle, where each student says something kind about the person next to them.

Unit 4. Differentiated Instruction - 120 minutes theory and practical exercises:

- Adapting teaching methods and materials to meet the diverse learning needs of Roma students
- Providing individualized support and scaffolding for academic success
- Using multiple modalities and strategies to engage Roma students in learning

This module aims to equip teachers with practical strategies and theoretical insights to effectively implement differentiated instruction for Roma learners. By customizing teaching methods, providing individualized support, and engaging students through diverse modalities, educators can create inclusive and empowering learning environments that promote academic success and holistic development.

Adapting teaching methods and materials

Differentiated instruction is a pedagogical approach that acknowledges the diverse learning needs of students and aims to tailor teaching methods and materials to accommodate these differences.

In the context of inclusive education, differentiated instruction plays a crucial role in ensuring that every student, including Roma learners, has equitable access to learning opportunities and experiences academic success.

Today's teacher must possess a range of competencies that transform them into true educators. Some of these contemporary teacher competencies include: subject matter expertise, correct and efficient use of modern technologies, as well as intercultural competence.

Intercultural competence involves understanding one's own culture in all its aspects, as well as the culture of the students in the school where you teach, and even the organizational culture of the school you are part of. Thus, the differences and similarities between cultures are recognized, and mechanisms of mediation between cultures are "opened," supporting both students and the school to adapt to the needs of students (Nedelcu, 2008). A teacher who possesses intercultural competence is one who develops a relationship with students and their families without considering them as "us" and "them," believes that all students can succeed, explicitly teaches cultural elements in school, and is concerned with the cultural identity of students (Nedelcu,2008).

In the case of Romani students, we have identified cultural elements and values in previous chapters and highlighted the importance of a comprehensive understanding of Romani culture. From this context, we can extract the fact that teaching methods and materials can be adapted by using:

- **Intercultural and multicultural contexts** – collaboration and cooperation activities with students from diverse backgrounds can be applied to learn skills such as adaptability, acceptance of others, awareness of one's own culture and abilities, as well as the culture of those they collaborate with;
- **Valuable social and personal contexts** – within these contexts, values such as respect, empathy, responsibility, tolerance, equality, fairness, and harmony will be emphasized;
- **Contexts involving different types of communication** – communication skills can be honed by involving students in activities such as practicing active listening, effective communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution.

When adapting teaching approaches for Roma learners, it is essential to consider their cultural context and background. Hammond (2015) discusses the significance of culturally responsive teaching, which involves recognizing and valuing students' cultural identities, beliefs, and experiences in the learning process.

For Roma students, who often come from tight-knit communities with distinct traditions and values, culturally responsive teaching can foster authentic engagement and create a more inclusive classroom environment.

Educators should be sensitive to cultural norms and preferences when designing instructional strategies for Roma students. This may involve incorporating culturally relevant materials, such as stories or examples that resonate with Roma culture, and providing opportunities for students to share their perspectives and experiences in the learning process.

Providing individualized support and scaffolding

Personalized Learning and Scaffolding

Scaffolding refers to the instructional supports and guidance provided by educators to help students achieve learning goals beyond their current capabilities (Vygotsky, 1978). For Roma learners, scaffolding plays a critical role in facilitating academic success by offering tailored assistance that meets individual needs and fosters independent learning.

Tomlinson (2017) emphasizes the importance of personalized support through scaffolding in academically diverse classrooms. Educators can employ various scaffolding techniques such as modeling, questioning, and providing feedback to help Roma students navigate complex tasks and concepts. By gradually reducing support as students gain proficiency, educators empower Roma learners to develop essential skills and competencies.

Use of Formative Assessment to Inform Instructional Decisions

Formative assessment serves as a valuable tool for guiding differentiated instruction and supporting Roma learners (Rose & Meyer, 2002). By regularly assessing student progress and understanding, educators can gather real-time data to inform instructional decisions and adapt teaching approaches accordingly. Formative assessment not only helps identify areas of strength and challenge but also provides insights into individual learning styles and preferences among Roma students.

Challenges and Effective Strategies for Individualized Support

Addressing the diverse needs of Roma learners may present certain challenges for educators. Gay (2010) discusses the importance of culturally responsive teaching in overcoming these challenges and fostering meaningful connections with students. To provide effective individualized support, educators should consider Roma students' cultural identities, linguistic backgrounds, and prior experiences when designing learning experiences.

Providing Individualized Learning Support and Building a Support Structure for Academic Success

In the teaching-learning-evaluation process, the teacher must consider that they are dealing with a group of students, and each student comes into contact with their own life experiences, personal way of thinking, and learning (Pănișoară, 2009). Therefore, it is important for the teacher to consider all resources available so that Romani students can benefit from equal opportunities while also taking into account individual needs to ensure academic success. For example, in a class of Romani students, there may be children who do not have suitable learning conditions at home (lack of items such as a desk and chair for doing homework, lack of access to electricity, or even insufficient school supplies), the teacher can adapt learning requirements by providing longer time resources for a certain curricular requirement or skill to become competence.

Romani families need support in raising and educating children from teachers. The school-family partnership has different dimensions in Romani communities, considering the challenges they face. There is

a significant chance that parents may need additional clarification regarding their children's schooling. In this case, implementing individualized learning support should involve the child's family as well.

Parents (if they wish to be involved in the relationship with the school) can receive a copy or outline of the student's individual learning plan, with small steps that are easy for family members to accomplish. Additionally, "family tasks" can be offered to involve learning experiences, such as involving the child in simple household chores, such as cooking, caring for vegetables and flowers in the garden, etc., using math, grammar, or biology.

Obviously, trust between parents, students, and teachers is needed throughout this process to ensure academic success for the child (Pănișoară, 2009). Therefore, it is important to establish a relationship of trust and empathy with the Romani family, to adapt any educational objectives in relation to the student's family and their capabilities. It is recommended to invest time in this relationship because there will be no immediate results, and it is important to pay attention to the causes of mistrust in teachers. Studies have noted over time that there is a correlation between trust and lack of safety from others: low self-esteem, low resistance to stress, antisocial behaviors, negative general attitudes (Pănișoară, 2009).

In society, these patterns are encountered, and we tend to say that they are "dangerous," "uneducated," but behind these patterns lies a possible generalized academic failure, where the student has not benefited from effective individualized learning strategies. So, to prevent repeated academic failures, it is important not to judge anymore, but to act to prevent individual and collective social problems.

Engaging Roma students through multiple modalities

Multimodal Learning and Engagement

Understanding multiple intelligences and learning styles is crucial when engaging Roma students in diverse learning modalities (Gardner, 2006). Gardner's theory posits that individuals possess different cognitive strengths and preferences across various intelligences, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. By recognizing and accommodating these intelligences, educators can design inclusive learning experiences that cater to the diverse strengths and interests of Roma learners.

Technology-Enhanced Strategies for Engaging Roma Students

Technology can serve as a powerful tool for engaging Roma students and enhancing learning outcomes (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Through universal design for learning (UDL), educators can leverage digital resources and assistive technologies to create accessible and customizable learning experiences that accommodate diverse needs. For example, providing multimedia materials, interactive simulations, and online collaborative platforms can promote active engagement and facilitate deeper understanding among Roma learners.

Culturally Responsive Approaches to Promoting Active Participation

Culturally responsive teaching emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing students' cultural backgrounds and identities (Gay, 2010). When engaging Roma students, educators should incorporate culturally relevant content, perspectives, and instructional practices that resonate with their lived experiences. By fostering a sense of cultural validation and inclusivity, educators can promote active participation and empower Roma learners to take ownership of their learning journey.

Hammond (2015) further highlights the role of authentic engagement in culturally responsive teaching, emphasizing the importance of rigor and relevance in educational experiences for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Encouraging active participation through dialogue, collaborative activities,

and project-based learning can cultivate a sense of belonging and investment in learning among Roma students.

Using Multiple Methods and Strategies to Engage Romani Students in the Learning Process

The contexts prepared by teachers to facilitate the learning process are very important. In the case of Romani students, it is necessary to have a good knowledge of the community they belong to so that the planning of pedagogical contexts is in good relation to community life.

Although it is considered that teaching methods and strategies need to be varied, in the case of Romani students, it is necessary to ensure confidence that what they learn is useful in their daily lives. Consistency is also necessary for teachers regarding the use of certain methods and strategies so that Romani students feel a sense of security and efficacy that participation in school activities is not demotivating. Of course, we are constantly looking to find out what works and what blocks learning.

Active-participatory methods and strategies offer Romani children the opportunity to explore what they learn. Based on the values they guide we can understand how they can value what they learn. Moreover, problem-solving in groups can be interesting due to the exploration of a given topic within the group, each student gaining experience in collaboration, the importance of harmony, or even life lessons such as the importance of work for achieving positive results.

And thus, we can say that we have used the value of the community in which Romani students believe by using problem-solving in groups as a teaching-learning-evaluation method.

In addition to active-participatory methods, counseling and personal development activities can be very useful for Romani students so that they can know their own potential, gain self-confidence, discover new personalized learning methods, and styles.

It is also relevant to mention that the teacher provides security to children through their methods, through the patience they must frequently demonstrate, and through the values they themselves promote without disturbing their own value system imbued with the adults in the community, even if they themselves, the children, have a value system in formation. The process is not impossible, although sometimes it seems so (Geantă, 2022).

EXERCISES

I. **Role-Playing Scenarios**: Create scenarios where teachers role-play as Roma students facing various challenges (e.g., language barriers, cultural misunderstandings).

II: **Discussion Groups:** Hold group discussions where teachers share experiences and strategies for addressing these challenges.

Inclusive Curriculum Development

Objective: To create a curriculum that reflects the diverse backgrounds of students.

III: Culturally Relevant Materials: Integrate Roma culture, history, and contributions into the curriculum.

Student Projects: Assign projects that allow Roma students to explore and present their heritage.

IV. Flexible Grouping: Group students based on their learning needs and styles, not just their abilities.

Varied Instructional Strategies: Use a mix of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning activities.

V: Use of Technology and Multimedia

Objective: To make learning more engaging and accessible.

Activity: Educational Software: Implement educational software that is culturally relevant and language-sensitive.

Multimedia Resources: Use videos, music, and interactive tools that reflect Roma culture and language.

Unit 5. Student-centered teaching techniques - 60 minutes theory:

- Implementing project-based learning activities to promote student engagement and creativity
- Encouraging collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in Roma students
- Connecting classroom learning to real-world applications and experiences

Student-centered teaching techniques focus on empowering students to take an active role in their own learning process.

Here are some effective strategies:

1. **Active Learning**: Encourage activities that engage students actively in the learning process, such as group discussions, problem-solving exercises, case studies, and hands-on experiments.
2. **Collaborative Learning**: Foster collaboration among students by assigning group projects, peer teaching, or cooperative learning tasks. This encourages teamwork and helps students learn from one another.
3. **Inquiry-Based Learning**: Pose open-ended questions or real-world problems that prompt students to investigate, analyze, and discover answers on their own.

   This cultivates critical thinking skills and encourages curiosity.
4. **Problem-Based Learning (PBL)**: Present students with complex, real-world problems and guide them through the process of solving these problems. PBL encourages students to apply their knowledge to practical situations and develop problem-solving skills.
5. **Flipped Classroom**: Provide learning materials (such as lectures or readings) outside of class time, and use class time for activities, discussions, and application of concepts. This allows students to engage with the material actively during class and receive support from the instructor as needed.
6. **Student Choice**: Offer students choices in assignments, projects, or topics for exploration. Allowing students to pursue their interests increases motivation and engagement.
7. **Peer Teaching**: Give students opportunities to teach concepts to their peers. Teaching others requires a deep understanding of the material and can reinforce learning for both the student-teachers and their peers.
8. **Feedback and Reflection**: Provide regular feedback on students' progress and encourage self-reflection. This helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement, empowering them to take ownership of their learning journey.
9. **Technology Integration**: Use technology tools to facilitate student-centered learning, such as online discussions, multimedia presentations, interactive simulations, or digital portfolios. Technology can enhance collaboration, provide personalized learning experiences, and increase accessibility to resources.
10. **Flexible Learning Environment**: Create a flexible learning environment that accommodates diverse learning styles, preferences, and needs. Offer opportunities for independent study, small-group work, and one-on-one support.

By implementing these student-centered teaching techniques, educators can foster a more engaging, meaningful, and empowering learning experience for their students.

Implementing project-based learning (PBL) activities can be an excellent way to promote student engagement and creativity.

Here's a step-by-step guide to implementing PBL effectively:

1. **Define Learning Objectives**: Clearly define the learning objectives and skills you want students to develop through the project. These objectives should align with your curriculum standards and learning goals.
2. **Select a Real-World Problem or Task**: Choose a meaningful, real-world problem or task that students can investigate, analyze, and solve through the project. The problem should be relevant to students' interests and experiences.
3. **Provide Guidelines and Resources**: Provide students with guidelines, resources, and support to help them get started with the project. Offer scaffolding as needed, but encourage autonomy and independence in their work.
4. **Organize into Teams or Groups**: Divide students into teams or groups to work collaboratively on the project. Ensure that each group has a diverse mix of skills and strengths, and encourage teamwork and communication throughout the process.
5. **Facilitate Inquiry and Exploration**: Encourage students to ask questions, conduct research, and explore different approaches to solving the problem. Provide opportunities for hands-on experimentation, investigation, and discovery.
6. **Encourage Creativity and Innovation**: Foster creativity and innovation by allowing students to brainstorm ideas, think outside the box, and experiment with different solutions.
7. **Encourage them to take risks** and embrace failure as a learning opportunity.
8. **Provide Feedback and Support**: Offer regular feedback on students' progress and provide support and guidance as needed. Encourage students to reflect on their work, identify areas for improvement, and revise their strategies accordingly.
9. **Promote Presentation and Sharing**: Provide opportunities for students to present their projects to their peers, teachers, or even external audiences. Encourage them to communicate their findings, insights, and solutions effectively.
10. **Celebrate Success and Reflection**: Celebrate the completion of the project and recognize students' achievements. Encourage them to reflect on their learning experience, what they have accomplished, and how they have grown throughout the process.
11. **Iterate and Improve**: Use feedback from students and reflections on the project to iterate and improve your PBL approach for future projects. Continuously refine your methods to better meet the needs and interests of your students.

By following these steps, you can create engaging and meaningful project-based learning experiences that promote student engagement, creativity, and critical thinking skills.

Encouraging collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in Roma students requires culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches.

Here are some strategies tailored to meet the needs of Roma students:

1. **Cultural Sensitivity**: Understand and respect Roma culture, values, and traditions. Build trust and rapport with Roma students and their families by acknowledging and valuing their cultural background.
2. **Community Involvement**: Involve Roma community members, elders, and leaders in the education process. Collaborate with community organizations and advocates to support Roma students' learning and well-being.

3. **Multilingual Support**: Provide language support for Roma students who may speak Romani or other languages in addition to the majority language of instruction. Offer bilingual resources, interpreters, or language assistance to ensure all students can fully participate.
4. **Inclusive Curriculum**: Incorporate Roma history, culture, and contributions into the curriculum to promote pride and identity among Roma students. Make learning materials relevant and relatable to Roma students' experiences and backgrounds.
5. **Group Activities**: Facilitate collaborative learning activities that promote teamwork and cooperation among Roma students and their peers. Encourage group discussions, cooperative projects, and peer teaching to foster collaboration skills.
6. **Inquiry-Based Learning**: Use inquiry-based learning approaches to stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Pose open-ended questions, real-world problems, or scenarios that require students to analyze, evaluate, and generate solutions collaboratively.
7. **Hands-on Learning**: Provide hands-on learning experiences that engage Roma students actively in the learning process. Use manipulatives, experiments, and real-life examples to make abstract concepts more concrete and accessible.
8. **Culturally Responsive Teaching**: Adopt teaching practices that are responsive to Roma students' cultural and learning needs. Be flexible, patient, and adaptive in your approach, and incorporate culturally relevant teaching methods and materials.
9. **Supportive Environment**: Create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where Roma students feel safe, respected, and valued. Encourage open communication, positive relationships, and mutual respect among students and between students and teachers.
10. **Empowerment and Advocacy**: Empower Roma students to advocate for themselves and their community. Provide opportunities for leadership, self-expression, and civic engagement to foster confidence and agency.

By implementing these strategies, educators can create a more inclusive and empowering learning environment that promotes collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among Roma students.

Connecting classroom learning to real-world applications and experiences enhances student engagement, understanding, and retention of knowledge.

Here are some effective strategies to achieve this:

1. **Case Studies and Simulations**: Use real-life case studies or simulations to illustrate how concepts learned in the classroom are applied in professional contexts. This provides students with practical examples and allows them to see the relevance of their learning.
2. **Guest Speakers and Industry Experts**: Invite guest speakers or industry experts to share their experiences and insights with students. This gives students the opportunity to learn from professionals in the field and understand how classroom concepts are applied in real-world settings.
3. **Field Trips and Experiential Learning**: Organize field trips or experiential learning activities that allow students to see concepts in action. This could involve visiting businesses, museums, laboratories, or other relevant locations where students can observe and interact with real-world applications.
4. **Service Learning Projects**: Engage students in service learning projects that address real community needs. This could involve partnering with local organizations or community members to solve problems, conduct research, or provide assistance using classroom knowledge and skills.

5. **Internships and Work Placements**: Facilitate internships or work placements for students to gain hands-on experience in their field of study. This allows students to apply classroom learning in real-world work environments and develop valuable skills and connections.
6. **Project-Based Learning**: Implement project-based learning (PBL) activities that require students to tackle real-world problems or challenges. This allows students to apply their knowledge and skills to solve authentic problems, fostering critical thinking and creativity.
7. **Industry-Relevant Assignments**: Assign projects, essays, or presentations that require students to analyze real-world issues or trends relevant to their field of study. This encourages students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations and develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter.
8. **Current Events Discussions**: Incorporate discussions about current events or news articles related to the course material. This helps students see the relevance of what they are learning and encourages critical thinking about real-world issues.
9. **Technology Integration**: Use technology tools and resources to connect classroom learning to real-world applications. This could involve virtual simulations, online research, data analysis, or multimedia presentations that mirror professional practices in the field.
10. **Reflection and Application Exercises**: Provide opportunities for students to reflect on how classroom learning applies to their own lives and future career goals. Encourage them to identify connections between course content and their personal experiences or aspirations.

By implementing these strategies, educators can bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world applications, helping students understand the relevance of their education and preparing them for success in their future endeavors.

Unit 6. Community Engagement and Partnerships - 30 minutes theory and practical exercises:

- Collaborating with Roma community members, organizations, and leaders to support student learning
- Connect classroom learning to the local community by incorporating field trips, guest speakers, and service-learning projects that address community needs and interests.
- Engaging parents and families in their children's education and school activities

Community engagement and partnerships are essential for creating a supportive and enriching learning environment that benefits both students and the wider community.

Here's how educators can foster community engagement and establish meaningful partnerships:

1. **Identify Community Needs**: Understand the needs and priorities of the local community. Conduct surveys, interviews, or focus groups to gather feedback from community members about their interests, concerns, and aspirations.
2. **Collaborative Planning**: Involve community members, organizations, and stakeholders in the planning process for educational initiatives. Seek input and feedback from the community to ensure that programs and activities are relevant and responsive to their needs.
3. **School-Community Events**: Organize events and activities that bring together students, families, educators, and community members. This could include open houses, community fairs, cultural celebrations, or service projects that promote collaboration and engagement.
4. **Volunteer Opportunities**: Create opportunities for community members to volunteer or contribute their time and expertise to support educational programs. This could involve guest speaking, mentoring, tutoring, or leading workshops on specialized topics.
5. **Partnership Development**: Establish partnerships with local businesses, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and other community stakeholders. Collaborate on projects, initiatives, or events that align with educational goals and benefit both parties.
6. **Resource Sharing**: Share resources and facilities with the community to maximize their use and impact. This could include sharing school facilities for community events, providing access to educational materials or equipment, or partnering on joint fundraising efforts.
7. **Service Learning**: Integrate service learning opportunities into the curriculum that allow students to address real community needs while gaining valuable skills and experiences. Partner with local organizations to identify meaningful service projects that align with academic goals.
8. **Community-Based Research**: Engage students in community-based research projects that address local issues or challenges. Partner with community organizations to identify research topics, collect data, and analyze findings that contribute to positive change in the community.
9. **Cultural Exchange and Diversity**: Promote cultural exchange and celebrate diversity within the community. Create opportunities for students to learn about different cultures, traditions, and perspectives through events, workshops, or exchange programs.
10. **Continuous Communication**: Maintain open and transparent communication with the community to build trust and mutual understanding. Keep community members informed about educational initiatives, achievements, and opportunities for involvement.

By fostering community engagement and establishing partnerships, educators can create a collaborative and supportive ecosystem that enriches the educational experience for students and contributes to the overall well-being of the community.

Collaborating with Roma community members, organizations, and leaders is essential for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that meets the needs of Roma students.

Here are some strategies for effective collaboration:

1. **Build Trust and Relationships**: Start by building trust and rapport with Roma community members, organizations, and leaders. Take the time to listen to their perspectives, understand their needs and priorities, and show respect for their culture and values.
2. **Involve Roma Stakeholders in Decision-Making**: Include Roma community members, organizations, and leaders in decision-making processes related to education. Seek their input and feedback on policies, programs, and initiatives that affect Roma students and families.
3. **Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness**: Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and awareness in your interactions with Roma community members. Learn about Roma history, culture, and traditions, and incorporate this knowledge into your teaching practices and curriculum.
4. **Provide Opportunities for Engagement**: Create opportunities for Roma community members to actively participate in supporting student learning. This could include volunteering as mentors or tutors, sharing cultural knowledge and experiences with students, or participating in school events and activities.
5. **Collaborate on Outreach and Communication**: Work together with Roma community members, organizations, and leaders to improve outreach and communication with Roma families. Provide information about educational opportunities, resources, and support services available to Roma students and parents.
6. **Address Barriers to Education**: Collaborate with Roma community members and organizations to identify and address barriers to education faced by Roma students. This could involve addressing issues such as discrimination, poverty, language barriers, or lack of access to resources.
7. **Promote Parent and Family Involvement**: Encourage parent and family involvement in their children's education by collaborating with Roma community members and organizations to create supportive networks and programs. Provide opportunities for parents to participate in school activities, workshops, and decision-making processes.
8. **Offer Culturally Relevant Programs and Services**: Develop programs and services that are culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of Roma students and families. This could include bilingual education, culturally inclusive curriculum materials, or support services tailored to the unique needs of Roma communities.
9. **Advocate for Equity and Inclusion**: Collaborate with Roma community members, organizations, and leaders to advocate for equity and inclusion in education. Work together to address systemic barriers and promote policies and practices that support the success of Roma students.
10. **Celebrate Roma Culture and Achievements**: Recognize and celebrate Roma culture, heritage, and achievements within the school community. Showcase Roma contributions to society through cultural events, presentations, and curriculum integration.

By collaborating with Roma community members, organizations, and leaders, educators can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment that empowers Roma students to thrive academically and personally.

Incorporating field trips, guest speakers, and service-learning projects that address community needs and interests can effectively connect classroom learning to the local community.

Here's how you can implement these activities:

1. **Field Trips**:
   - Identify local businesses, organizations, museums, or natural sites relevant to your curriculum.
   - Plan field trips that allow students to explore real-world applications of classroom concepts.
   - Provide guided tours or activities that encourage students to engage with the environment and learn from local experts.
   - Incorporate pre-trip and post-trip discussions or assignments to help students reflect on their experiences and connect them to classroom learning.
2. **Guest Speakers**:
   - Invite professionals, experts, or community members with relevant expertise to speak to your students.
   - Coordinate with local businesses, non-profit organizations, or government agencies to identify potential speakers.
   - Encourage speakers to share their personal experiences, insights, and career paths related to the topics being studied.
   - Facilitate Q&A sessions or panel discussions to allow students to interact with the guest speakers and ask questions.
3. **Service-Learning Projects**:
   - Identify community needs or issues that align with your curriculum and student interests.
   - Collaborate with local organizations, charities, or community groups to identify service opportunities.
   - Design projects that allow students to address community needs while applying classroom learning.
   - Provide guidance and support to help students plan, implement, and reflect on their service projects.
   - Encourage students to document their experiences and share their findings or outcomes with the wider community.

By incorporating these activities, you can create meaningful connections between classroom learning and the local community, helping students see the relevance and impact of their education beyond the classroom walls. Additionally, these experiences can enhance students' understanding of their community, foster empathy and civic engagement, and develop important life skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

Engaging parents and families in their children's education and school activities is crucial for supporting student success and creating a positive learning environment.

Here are some effective strategies to foster parental involvement:

1. **Open Communication Channels**: Establish open and regular communication channels with parents, including newsletters, emails, phone calls, and parent-teacher conferences. Keep parents informed about their children's progress, upcoming events, and opportunities for involvement.
2. **Welcoming Environment**: Create a welcoming and inclusive school environment that encourages parents to participate and feel valued. Offer opportunities for parents to visit the school, meet teachers, and become familiar with school policies and procedures.

3. **Parent Education Workshops**: Organize workshops or seminars for parents on topics such as child development, academic support strategies, and navigating the education system. Provide resources and information to help parents better support their children's learning at home.
4. **Family Engagement Events**: Plan family engagement events and activities that bring parents and families together with students and educators. This could include family nights, cultural celebrations, academic fairs, or community service projects.
5. **Volunteer Opportunities**: Provide various volunteer opportunities for parents to contribute their time and skills to the school community. This could include volunteering in classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, or organizing school events.
6. **Parent Advisory Groups**: Establish parent advisory groups or committees to provide input and feedback on school policies, programs, and initiatives. Involve parents in decision-making processes and encourage them to share their perspectives and ideas.
7. **Home-School Collaboration**: Foster collaboration between home and school by encouraging parents to support their children's learning at home. Provide resources, tips, and activities for parents to reinforce classroom learning and promote academic success.
8. **Parent-Teacher Partnerships**: Build strong partnerships between parents and teachers based on mutual respect, trust, and communication. Encourage regular dialogue between parents and teachers to discuss students' progress, strengths, and areas for growth.
9. **Cultural Competence**: Respect and celebrate the cultural diversity of families within the school community. Provide opportunities for parents to share their cultural traditions, languages, and experiences, and incorporate diverse perspectives into school activities and curriculum.
10. **Recognition and Appreciation**: Recognize and appreciate the contributions of parents and families to the school community. Acknowledge their efforts through thank-you notes, awards, or public recognition events to show appreciation for their support and involvement.

By implementing these strategies, educators can build strong partnerships with parents and families, creating a collaborative and supportive network that benefits students' academic achievement and overall well-being.

EXERCISES

I. Parent-Teacher Conferences

Objective: To build a strong partnership between parents and teachers.
Goal Setting: Involve parents in setting academic and behavioral goals for their child.
Progress Reports: Provide regular updates on student progress and strategies for improvement.
Open Dialogue: Encourage parents to share their insights and concerns about their child's education.
Follow-Up: Schedule follow-up meetings to review progress and adjust goals as needed.

II. Classroom Volunteering

Objective: To create opportunities for parents to actively participate in classroom activities.
Reading Helpers: Invite parents to volunteer as reading buddies or to lead small reading groups.
Guest Speakers: Encourage parents to share their expertise or cultural background with the class.
Event Assistants: Seek parent volunteers for classroom events, field trips, and special projects.

Room Parents: Designate parent coordinators to organize classroom activities and communicate with other parents.

III. Cultural Celebrations and Events

Objective: To celebrate the diverse cultures and backgrounds of the school community.
Multicultural Fairs: Organize events where families can share their cultural traditions, food, music, and dances.
Heritage Projects: Encourage students and parents to create projects about their cultural heritage to display at school.
Family Storytelling: Host storytelling sessions where parents share folktales and stories from their culture.
Holiday Celebrations: Celebrate various cultural and religious holidays with activities and events that involve families.

IV. Student Showcases and Exhibitions

Objective: To highlight student achievements and involve parents in celebrating success.
Art Shows: Display student artwork and invite families to an art exhibition.
Science Fairs: Organize science fairs where students present their projects and experiments to parents.
Talent Shows: Host talent shows featuring student performances and invite families to attend.
Portfolio Nights: Invite parents to view their child's portfolio of work and discuss their progress.

V. Oral History Projects:

Have students collect and document oral histories from Roma elders about their life experiences and cultural heritage.

VI. Community Service Projects:

Engage students in community service projects that address local issues and involve Roma community members.

Unit 7. Technology Integration - 30 minutes theory and demonstration of resources:

- Utilizing technology tools and resources to enhance learning opportunities for Roma students
- Incorporating digital literacy skills and online resources to support academic achievement
- Providing access to educational technology that bridges the digital divide for Roma students

Integrating technology into education has become increasingly prevalent in modern classrooms, offering both opportunities for enhancement and challenges to the learning process. Technology can revolutionize teaching methods, engage students, and provide access to vast resources, but its effective integration requires careful consideration and planning.

One of the primary benefits of integrating technology in education is its potential to enhance teaching and learning experiences. According to "The Journal of Education Research", technology can facilitate personalized learning experiences, cater to diverse learning styles, and provide interactive and immersive educational content. For example, interactive simulations and educational games can make abstract concepts more tangible and engaging for students, fostering deeper understanding and retention of knowledge.

Moreover, technology enables access to a wealth of educational resources and information beyond traditional textbooks and classroom materials. Online databases, digital libraries, and multimedia resources offer students opportunities for self-directed learning and exploration. As "The Journal of Technology, Learning, and Assessment" highlights, technology can empower students to pursue their interests, conduct research, and collaborate with peers both within and beyond the classroom.

However, the integration of technology in education also presents challenges and potential drawbacks. "The Journal of Research on Technology in Education" points out that unequal access to technology and inadequate digital literacy skills can exacerbate educational inequalities and widen the digital divide. Additionally, excessive screen time and reliance on technology may hinder students' development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, the rapid pace of technological advancements poses challenges for educators in keeping up with emerging tools and platforms and effectively integrating them into the curriculum. As emphasized by "EdTech Magazine", educators must receive ongoing professional development and support to leverage technology effectively and address the evolving needs of students in the digital age.

In conclusion, integrating technology in education offers vast potential to enhance teaching and learning experiences, provide access to diverse resources, and foster student engagement and empowerment. However, it also presents challenges related to access, digital literacy, and pedagogical adaptation. By addressing these challenges through strategic planning, professional development, and equitable access initiatives, educators can harness the power of technology to create dynamic and inclusive learning environments.

Utilizing technology tools and resources to enhance learning opportunities for Roma students

Integrating technology into the classroom can significantly enhance learning opportunities for Roma students by providing access to diverse resources, personalized learning experiences, and opportunities for collaboration. Here are several ways technology tools and resources can be effectively integrated to support the educational needs of Roma students:

- Digital Learning Platforms and Resources;
- Mobile Learning Devices and Connectivity;
- Digital Literacy and Skills Development;

- Online Collaborative Tools and Communication Platforms.

By integrating technology tools and resources in these ways, educators can create inclusive and empowering learning environments that meet the diverse needs of Roma students, enhance their educational experiences, and promote academic success.

Here are several strategies for incorporating digital literacy skills and online resources to support the academic success of Roma students:

- Digital Literacy Curriculum Integration
- Access to Online Educational Platforms and Resources
- Digital Research and Information Literacy Skills
- Online Tutoring and Academic Support Services

By incorporating digital literacy skills development and online resources in these ways, educators can empower Roma students to navigate the digital landscape effectively, access high-quality educational materials, and achieve academic success.

PRACTICE

I. Mentimeter and PollEverywhere

These apps can be useful when you wish to discover students opinions on a certain subject but also if you want to test their knowledge level.
https://www.mentimeter.com/

https://www.polleverywhere.com/

II: Kahoot!, Educaplay, Quizizz, LearningApps

Kahoot! Is a very good instrument for testing students knowledge in real time during a class. The presence of a teacher is required so that the students can see the questions.
Educaplay, Quizizz or LearningApps can be used during class but also outside of it (for example as homework) because they can be accessed at any time through the link provided by the teacher.
https://kahoot.it/

https://www.educaplay.com/

https://quizizz.com/

https://learningapps.org/

III. Padlet and Checkin

Padlet offers students the possibility of working in teams and gathering ideas in real time, eliminating problems as they come, usually, from the physical environment (inhibitions or fears of being judged, the need to wait their turn to speak). Because it is a creative thinking app, it can be used in different ways, its purpose depending only on the teacher”s creativity.
Checkin is an instrument which generates questions which can be used to lighten the mood or to help students know each other better.
Check-in Generator (daresay.io)

https://padlet.com/

Unit 8. Assessment and Feedback – 60 minutes theory:

- Implementing culturally sensitive assessment practices to gauge student progress and growth
- Providing constructive feedback and support to help Roma students succeed
- Using assessment data to inform instructional decisions and tailor support for individual students

This module aims to equip educators with practical strategies and theoretical insights to implement culturally sensitive assessment practices, provide constructive feedback, and use assessment data effectively to support the academic success of Roma students. By embracing culturally responsive approaches to assessment and feedback, educators can create inclusive learning environments that honor students' diverse backgrounds and promote equitable outcomes.

Implementing cultural-sensitive assessment practices

Cultural Considerations in Assessment

Culturally sensitive assessment is a critical component of equitable education, particularly for Roma students whose cultural backgrounds may differ significantly from mainstream assessment norms. This approach recognizes and respects the cultural diversity and values of students, aiming to create assessment practices that are fair, relevant, and inclusive.

Defining Culturally Sensitive Assessment

Culturally sensitive assessment refers to the deliberate consideration of students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and identities when designing and implementing assessment strategies (Popham, 2009). It acknowledges that traditional assessment methods may be biased towards certain cultural norms and can lead to inaccurate representations of students' capabilities.

Impact on Equitable Education

Culturally sensitive assessment promotes equitable education by ensuring that assessments accurately reflect students' knowledge, skills, and abilities regardless of cultural differences (Wiliam & Thompson, 2007). It helps mitigate biases inherent in traditional assessment practices, thereby providing a more accurate and meaningful evaluation of student progress.

Challenges and Biases in Traditional Assessment Methods

Traditional assessment methods, such as standardized tests and uniform grading criteria, often overlook cultural variations in communication styles, problem-solving approaches, and social interactions (Popham, 2009). This can lead to misinterpretation of students' competencies and hinder their academic development.

Alternative Assessment Approaches

Exploring alternative assessment approaches that honor Roma cultural values and experiences is essential (William & Thompson, 2007). Performance-based assessments, portfolio reviews, authentic tasks, and culturally relevant projects can provide more comprehensive insights into students' learning achievements and promote deeper engagement.

Every teaching and learning process concludes with assessing and providing feedback on what has been learned. Traditional teaching and assessment methods can be challenging to implement with Roma children, as they are methods that are not student-centered but rather teacher-centered.

For Roma students, constructive feedback is relevant, encouraging them to have confidence in themselves, understanding that success is inevitable if you work for it. The value of success in life differs in the Roma community, and its perception is related to the spirit within the community (there are Roma communities where success is influenced by wealth in money or gold). Therefore, we often see Roma

children disinterested in coercive feedback, and if we were to compare them with students from other cultures, we would find that they are no more different than others (Mihăilescu, 2014).

Providing constructive feedback and support

Principles of Constructive Feedback

Constructive feedback is a vital component of effective teaching and learning, particularly for Roma students whose educational experiences can be shaped by culturally sensitive approaches. This session explores the principles of constructive feedback, emphasizing its impact on student motivation, growth, and academic success.

Defining Constructive Feedback

Constructive feedback involves providing specific, actionable, and supportive comments to students aimed at enhancing their learning and performance (Brookhart, 2008). It focuses on guiding students towards improvement rather than simply evaluating their work.

Impact on Student Motivation and Growth

Feedback plays a crucial role in shaping students' motivation and fostering continuous growth (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Well-structured and meaningful feedback helps students understand their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and develop a growth mindset that values effort and resilience.

Characteristics of Culturally Responsive Feedback

Culturally responsive feedback for Roma learners considers their cultural values, communication styles, and social contexts (Brookhart, 2008). It emphasizes encouragement, respect, and sensitivity to cultural differences, fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Techniques for Delivering Feedback

Effective feedback techniques promote self-efficacy and resilience among Roma students (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Educators can use strategies such as positive reinforcement, specific praise, constructive suggestions, and opportunities for reflection to empower students and enhance their belief in their abilities to succeed.

The objectives of schooling for Roma children involve social integration, increasing resilience, maintaining a high level of education in communities, accessing various job opportunities, and development opportunities. In assessment and providing feedback, these objectives can be considered particularly.

For example, encouraging Roma children to maintain their attendance at school can be rewarded with praise, parents can be appreciated for sending their children to school, feedback can be requested from them or from the child. Any prosocial behavior exhibited by students can also be appreciated, without offering rewards. Sometimes it may be necessary to highlight the child's qualities ("Thank you for volunteering, I knew you were trustworthy, keep it up!"). Also, in the case of failures, encouragements like "I appreciate your effort" or "Next time will be better" can be used.

In providing feedback to Roma students, authenticity, spontaneity, and realism are important (Mihăilescu, 2014).

Using assessment data to inform instructional decisions

Data-Informed Instructional Practices

Utilizing assessment data to inform instructional decisions is a key strategy for supporting individualized learning among Roma students and promoting academic achievement.

This session delves into the theoretical framework and practical applications of data-informed instructional practices, emphasizing their relevance in culturally diverse educational settings.

Role of Assessment Data in Guiding Instructional Planning

Assessment data provides valuable insights into students' strengths, weaknesses, and learning needs (Heritage, 2010). By analyzing assessment results, educators can tailor instructional planning and interventions to address specific areas of need among Roma students, fostering targeted support and personalized learning experiences.

Techniques for Analyzing Assessment Data

Effective analysis of assessment data involves identifying patterns, trends, and areas of growth for individual students (Guskey, 2000). Educators can use quantitative and qualitative methods to interpret data, such as disaggregating scores by student demographics, tracking progress over time, and triangulating multiple sources of evidence to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' learning trajectories.

Ethical Considerations in Data Use and Privacy

When working with Roma students, it is essential to uphold ethical standards and privacy protections in data use (Heritage, 2010). Educators should ensure confidentiality, obtain informed consent when collecting sensitive data, and prioritize the ethical use of assessment information to support rather than stigmatize students.

The assessment results of Roma students' activities can be quantified based on the educational objectives established from the first encounter with them. Setting realistic goals will be done after there is prior knowledge of all students, especially their community and family culture.

Data analysis can be done by comparing it to Roma culture, and at the same time, it can also be done by comparing it to our own culture only with the aim of understanding the functioning mechanism of the community and appreciating the principle of "we are different, but equal" (Nedelcu, 2008).

Differentiation in learning is important for Roma children, so feedback will be treated accordingly to this differentiation to provide students with the personalized attention they need and to benefit from learning success.

REFERENCES

Acton, T. (1997). *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*. University of Hertfordshire Press.
Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman and Company.
Brookhart, S. M. (2008). *How to give effective feedback to your students*. ASCD.
Cherata, L. (1993). *The History of the Gypsies*. Bucharest: Z Publishing House
Culdiuc, T., & colab., (2008). *Impact – Jocuri şi povestiri, Metode de educaţie nonformală*, Ediţia a II-a, Lupeni, Fundaţia Noi Orizonturi, 21-186.
Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Ballantine Books.
Fraser, A. (1995). *The Gypsies.* Blackwell Publishers
Gardner, H. (2006). *Multiple intelligences: New horizons*. Basic Books.
Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice.* Teachers College Press.
Geantă, N. (2022). *The Evangelical Roma in Romania*. Oradea: Casa Cărții Publishing House
Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students.* Corwin Press.
Hancock, I. (2002). *We Are the Romani People*. University of Hertfordshire Press.
Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). *The power of feedback.* Review of Educational Research, 77(1), 81-112.
Heritage, M. (2010). *Formative assessment: Making it happen in the classroom*. Corwin Press.
Howard, Tyrone C. (1972). *Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools: Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classrooms*. Teachers College Press.
Kenrick, D., & Grattan P. (1972). *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies*. Basic Books.
Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. Jossey-Bass.
Mihăilescu, V. M. (2014). *The Roma Condition and the Change of Discourse*. Iași: Polirom.
Nedelcu, A. (2008). *Fundamentals of intercultural education*. Iași: Polirom.
Nieto, S. (2016). *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education*. Pearson.
Pănișoară, I.-O. (2009). *The Successful Teacher. 59 Principles of Practical Pedagogy*. Iași: Polirom
Popham, W. J. (2009). *Assessment literacy for teachers: Faddish or fundamental?* Theory into Practice, 48(1), 4-11.
Rose, D. H., & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.*
Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). *Positive psychology: An introduction*. American Psychologist, 55(1), 5–14.
Silverman, C. (2012). *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*. Oxford University Press.
Tomlinson, C. A. (2017). *How to differentiate instruction in academically diverse classrooms* ASCD.
Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard University Press.

Waters, L. (2011). *Strength-based parenting and life satisfaction in teenagers*. In L. Oades, M. Steger, A. Delle Fave, & J. Passmore (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell handbook of the psychology of positivity and strengths-based approaches at work* (pp. 77-92). Wiley-Blackwell.
Wiliam, D., & Thompson, M. (2007*). Integrating assessment with instruction: What will it take to make it work?* In C. A. Dwyer (Ed.), *The future of assessment: Shaping teaching and learning* (pp. 53-82). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). *Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed.* Educational Psychologist, 47(4), 302-314.
Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). *Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. Theory into Practice*, 41(2), 64-70.
Cazacu, A., Boteanu, I.(2016). *Culegere de exerciții de dezvoltare personală*. Editura George Tofan, Suceava, 40.
https://lessonbud.com/blog/top-12-student-centered-teaching-techniques-for-modern-classrooms/
https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/teacher-centered-vs-student-centered-learning/
https://www.romaeducationfund.org/
https://www.kinderpedia.co/ro/metoda-sinelg.html
https://gutenberg.ro/instrumente-digitale-pentru-predarea-online/
https://www.mentimeter.com/
https://www.polleverywhere.com/
https://gutenberg.ro/instrumente-digitale-pentru-predarea-online/
https://kahoot.it/
https://www.educaplay.com/
https://quizizz.com/
https://learningapps.org/
https://gutenberg.ro/instrumente-digitale-pentru-predarea-online/
https://padlet.com/
Check-in Generator (daresay.io)
VIDEOS
I am Roma
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8vqUESWZ_g&t=117s&ab_channel=RomaSupportGroup
Roma Teaching and Training - General Routine – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQlnn_qngFk&t=4s
JOIA VESELĂ. Vezi cum învață 16 copii de rromi din Caracal - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouTAaRUk8y8
Roma Teaching and Training - Visit from a Writer - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAxy7tlmxQ0
DE DRAGUL COPIILOR RROMI - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3j8AoS9VK2M
Roma Mothers evaluating the program T&T and speak about their lives - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pktBbNI3Iow

LINKS
https://romaeducationfund.ro/ateliere-de-povesti-si-invatare-prin-joaca-in-proiectul-conectat-la-educatie/
https://www.romaniarts.co.uk/