



**“RIGHT TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION” (a. 24).
FOSTERING EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
AND BY WEAVING INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO
DIDACTICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Abstract:

This paper advances an applied framework for teachers' professional development in higher education, with particular emphasis on inclusive teacher training. It contributes to the field of Inclusion and Education of All by establishing as its central ideological framework the principles that underpin the “Right to Inclusive Education” (CRPD/C/GC/4. a.24). In this context, e-tivities constitute a student-centered learning framework in Higher Education. They function as a structured pedagogical tool for initiating dialogue, facilitating knowledge sharing and promoting critical reflection. In this way, they support the development and implementation of applied objectives of Inclusive Education in Higher Education, in alignment with international policy frameworks. The following illustrates a practical application of e-tivity based frameworks within the context of inclusive education.

Keywords: “Right to Inclusive Education” (a.24), inclusive education, e-tivities, equitable learning environments, blended learning, digital literacy, inclusive teacher, higher education, didactics

1. Introduction

1.1 Highlights

- Right to Inclusive Education (CRPD/C/GC/4, a. 24) as a foundation for an innovative approach to didactics in inclusive teacher education,

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- E-tivities such as a student-centered learning framework in Higher Education for inclusive teacher training,
- Collaborative and interactive activities/e-tivities in the development of equitable learning environments.

This paper advances an applied framework for teachers' professional development in higher education, with particular emphasis on inclusive teacher training. It contributes to the field of Inclusion and Education of All (Education 2030 "*The right...*", 2019) by establishing as its central ideological framework the principles that underpin the "Right to Inclusive Education" (CRPD/C/GC/4. a.24).

In short, it presents concrete, practice-oriented examples for the design and implementation of equitable learning environments (Florian, 2020; Mittler, 2019) and provides evidence-informed guidance on fostering effective inclusive pedagogical practices with e-tivities. Emphasizing awareness-raising and the cultivation of positive attitudes toward the acceptance of diversity, the proposed approach promotes the development of essential professional competencies and supports the systematic and sustainable implementation of inclusive education across diverse educational settings (Teacher's guide..., 2020) and blended learning contexts (Hrastinski, 2019).

Specifically, the e-tivities aim to enhance teachers' awareness and understanding of diversity and neurodiversity within multilingual educational contexts, fostering more inclusive and responsive pedagogical practices (Katsampoxaki-Hodgetts, 2023; Sharma et al., 2024).

In practice, an inclusive educational framework requires participation and accessibility for all; participation and collaboration; participation and achievement; participation and the support of everyone's learning; as well as the recognition and acceptance of diversity. Participation, understood as an ongoing process, concerns responses to student diversity and necessitates that learning be active and collaborative. Participation is grounded in relationships of mutual recognition and acceptance (Black-Hawkins, 2014, 2017; Degener, 2016; Filippaki, 2023).

Structured pedagogical, collaborative, and interactive activities play a significant role in the development of equitable learning environments. The strategic implementation of e-tivities can serve as a crucial mechanism for promoting equity within learning environments (Ioannidi & Malafantis, 2025).

In the following, we outline an e-tivity that establishes «The Right to Inclusion» (see: Florian & Beaton, 2018).

1.2 Fostering equitable learning environments with e-tivities

A mixed-ability, or heterogeneous, classroom comprises students with diverse cognitive levels, learning needs, and skill sets. Within this context, learners vary in their learning styles, prior knowledge, attitudes, strengths, and areas for growth (Malisiova et al., 2023). A key issue in this setting is how inclusive pedagogical practices can be effectively implemented by seamlessly integrating both traditional face-to-face instruction and online learning modalities, thereby fostering equitable engagement and supporting the

full spectrum of learners in contemporary mixed-ability classrooms in a global policy agenda for inclusive education (Armstrong et al., 2018).

According to Firwana et al. (2021), the integration of electronic tools in teaching has become a global imperative, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Online instructional guidance offers multiple benefits for mentors, teachers, and students. Specifically, students can receive more individualized attention when engaging with personal learning projects online, compared to the broader classroom context. Moreover, online interactions provide opportunities for the development of literacy and communication skills (Covasic et al., 2012).

At the same time, innovation is inherent in the design and evaluation of e-learning and blended learning, particularly through the creation and implementation of structured collaborative and interactive activities, or/and "e-tivities," across diverse fields of knowledge. Interactive activities such as e-tivities within both blended learning environments and digital learning ecosystems are designed to be accessible to all learners, while fostering the development of the 4Cs—Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication (<https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/learn/courses/4cs-creativity-critical-thinking-communication-and-collaboration-modern-class-2> / Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023).

Collaborative activities emphasize both individual and collective contributions, leveraging personal motivation to enable the practical application of knowledge across diverse educational contexts. In this way, collaborative learning becomes both feasible and effective across all modes of learning (Reid, 2019, p. 108).

Specifically, according to Salmon's 5-stage model (2013, 2011), active online learning is distinguished in the following stages:

- 1) Access and Motivation,
- 2) Online Socialization,
- 3) Information Exchange,
- 4) Knowledge Construction,
- 5) Development.

From this perspective, the active engagement and empowerment of learners within the educational process are fostered, so that knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be developed.

Finally, a fundamental pedagogical and methodological consideration is that inclusive teachers, educators, etc. should deliberately design learning contexts and instructional situations that actively promote meaningful interaction between learners and the learning process. This entails the integration of independent tasks, creative endeavors, structured discussion cycles, project-based learning, innovative instructional strategies and approaches to didactics, and other forms of student-centered engagement. A basic characteristic of these approaches is the "open" structuring of lessons, which grants students a degree of autonomy in their activities. Such designs are intended to facilitate personal contribution and development, enhance self-regulation, and foster

shared responsibility for the achievement of learning outcomes (Soulis, 2002, 2008), with the ultimate goal of ensuring "the right to inclusive education".

1.3 Drawing on e-tivity – Didactic example in inclusive teaching

Within this framework, e-tivities are implemented as internationally recognized best practices in Inclusive Education and as structured models of interactive and collaborative learning within blended learning environments (Ioannidi & Malafantis, 2024, 2025). Their implementation is informed by contemporary inclusive pedagogical theories, including universal design for learning (UDL - <https://www.cast.org/resources/tips-articles/a-research-reader-in-universal-design-for-learning/>), social justice education, and innovative didactic approaches, which collectively emphasize participation, equity and critical reflection.

For example, an collaborative and interactive activity/e-tivity can be applied in blended teaching on the topic: "Right to Inclusive Education (CRPD/C/GC/4, a. 24) as a foundation for innovative approach to didactics in inclusive teacher education".

Each learner's contribution can be utilized in the Forum (Discussion Group) in a digital environment or as a question in a mixed-ability classroom.

Title: "Acceptance of neurodifference and neurodiversity "

- Please watch the award-winning short animated film *CUERDAS* (2014) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4INwx_tmTKw], which received the award for Best Short Animated Film in 2014.
- *After viewing the film, you are invited to share your reflections and engage in a discussion. I encourage you to articulate your impressions, thoughts, emotions, and the cognitive and emotional challenges you encounter while watching the film.*

Spark: "Building Bridges"

- The inclusive teacher begins as follows: "*After watching the film "CUERDAS", share a short comment with the group.*"
- The teacher's intervention is organized around the discussion:

What do the CUERDAS symbolize?

What is the relationship of the CUERDAS with the educational and social reality?

Reflect on the teaching effectiveness in your classroom....

How do you utilize diversity?

Can you mention some ways of learning that you apply focusing on diversity?

Critically reflect on examples of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles that could be effectively implemented within an inclusive classroom setting...

What ways of expression, engagement and representation can the teacher utilize?

Can you design differentiated lesson plans for all learning styles?

Resources: Additionally, connect with open-access resources, e.g.

- <https://www.cast.org/>
- <https://index-for-inclusion.org/en/>
- <https://reachingthehardtoreach.eu/>
- <https://www.inclusiveschools2.net/>

- <https://www.blendedinclusion.eu/el/>

Furthermore, you can also search the internet and watch the film *"Including Samuel"*. You can reflect on perceptions of disabilities and think about barriers to inclusion...Reflect on multiple ways for equitable learning environments.

Digital tool: The digital tool "Ansergarden" (<https://answergarden.ch/>) can be used online and share a short comments.

Additional digital tools: Digital tools facilitate the analysis and visualization of the e-tivities's messages, enabling the identification of key ideas, themes, and relationships within the story. E.g.

- The free online platform Genially (<https://genial.ly/>) promotes game-based learning approaches.
- The pedagogical use of PowerPoint as a dynamic instructional tool ("powertool"), and the open-source authoring tool H5P (<https://h5p.org/interactive-video>) are useful for the development of interactive video content.
- The online platform Canva for Education (<https://www.canva.com/education/>) supports the creation of multimodal educational materials and the design of a wide range of collaborative activities, such as digital storytelling projects, animated visuals, animations, and related multimodal outputs.
- Tools, such as Pixton (<https://www.pixton.com/welcom>), facilitate the creation of comics and interdisciplinary, collaborative learning activities, enabling the visualization of ideas, concepts, dialogues, narratives, and stories, among others.

Time: 4 hours

Completion: Everyone can finish with an interactive comment... *«how do we building bridges in education?»*, *«how do they relate to sustainable practices in society?»* *«Think about Disability through a Human Rights Perspective...»*.

2. Conclusion

Overall, e-tivities constitute a student-centered learning framework at the university level (Katsaboxaki-Hodgetts, 2023). They function as a structured pedagogical tool for initiating dialogue, facilitating knowledge sharing, and promoting critical reflection. In this way, they support the development and implementation of applied objectives of Inclusive Education in Higher Education, in alignment with international policy frameworks such as the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

In total, e-tivities promote active learning, which refers to teaching practices that actively involve learners in the learning process through discussions (Kotzaboxaki-Hodgetts & Botzakis, 2023; Hoidn & Klemencic, 2020) and provide opportunities to cultivate cognitive, metacognitive and social skills within a learning environment. Active learning also involves collaborative and reflective activities, through which learning objectives and learning outcomes are aligned (Gravriilidou, 2023).

Further, the literature states that *"creativity and innovation are enhanced by defined "open" methodologies, as well as collaborative, experiential and active learning techniques"* (Papadimitriou & Sofos, 2020). In this context, we attempted to capture best practices in education, training and awareness-raising of students and future education professionals in general, through the use of digital tools and open educational resources, in the teaching of university education subjects related to Inclusive Education.

This can be extended to other online learning environments with reference points of critical thinking, communication and creative literacy practices in all educational contexts in formal and non-formal education. Let us not forget that the concept of Inclusive Education also refers to changes that must be implemented by everyone in the educational community to develop inclusive environments, recognizing and establishing the right to education for and to all, regardless of abilities and challenges (Flavian, 2024).

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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