

eTwinning Project

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Being abroad is not always possible, for a myriad of reasons, most recent of which (a virus outbreak) we have recently witnessed. However, there are still useful alternatives for furthering your pupils' intercultural communication skills while also advancing towards subject related goals. One such alternative is eTwinning.

eTwinning, The community for schools in Europe

E-twinning is an online platform for European schools, where teachers and pupils can develop projects. It was set up by the European Commission in order to encourage European schools to collaborate using IT by providing the necessary infrastructure (online tools, services, support). Teachers are enabled to form partnerships and develop collaborative, pedagogical school projects in any subject area with the sole requirements to employ ICT to develop their project and collaborate with teachers from other European countries (at least two teachers from two different European countries are needed). The primary workspace for eTwinning is the eTwinning Portal, which is available in twenty-five languages. Teachers registered in eTwinning find each other, communicate, share resources and collaborate through the eTwinning platform. This community of teachers, or eTwinners, changed the motto of eTwinning from "School partnerships in Europe" to "The community for schools in Europe". Since eTwinning is co-funded by Erasmus +, it is free of charge for all involved.

The eTwinning Project explained

This project involves setting up an eTwinning project. You will familiarize yourself with eTwinning, finding out its options and limitations, having a look at projects already online, signing up and designing your own project in detail. For lack of a class to teach, you don't publish the project at this point in time. It should however be ready to be published and used – waiting to be used in your future career, perhaps next academic year?

Task 1: Familiarizing yourself with eTwinning

Visit the eTwinning YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/eTwinning/>. A video will play automatically: watch the video. Then go to the tab "videos" and select one other video to watch, in order to get an idea of what working with eTwinning looks like. For example: [eTwinning: Transforming Teaching and Learning](#).

Next, watch the [Webinar to kick start your international journey with eTwinning resources](#). The audio is not as good as it is in other videos, since this is a recording of a live webinar.

Now you have a general idea of what eTwinning is about and what the gains of participating are.

Task 2: Registering

Go to etwinning.net and have a look around: eTwinning also sports communities, newsrooms, interesting articles and even opportunities for professional development (in workshops for example).

Then go to “get started” and “register” at the bottom of the page. Fill out your details and verify your account. Then finish your registration.

Task 3: Becoming an eTwinner

Find the “Self teaching material” (Homepage>Get started>Improve>Self Teaching Material) and click on the pencil icon.

- We will start with “getting ready to become an active eTwinner”. If you’ve already added as much details as you can, you can skip steps I and II. III is about discovering the Portal, which is a useful tool for you, so please either watch the film, or browse the PowerPoint below the film.
- Follow the same procedure for the other topics in the Self teaching materials
 - COMMUNICATING IN ETWINNING
 - COLLABORATION IN ETWINNING
 - MANAGEMENT OF THE TWinspace
 - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING
 - HOW TO ACHIEVE QUALITY

Task 4: Thinking about your project

Go to eTwinning Live (see the nine dots next to Erasmus + in the left hand corner) and have a look at some projects. Search for a topic of your interest and/or your school subject.

Now you are familiar with the ins and outs of eTwinning and it is time to think about your own project. Your project is connected to the subject you teach, but could optionally include other subjects in a multidisciplinary project.

Consider and describe the following:

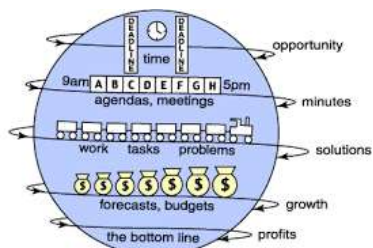
1. What is your target group? (i.e. what level, age group, level of competence in your school subject).
2. What is your topic of choice in one word or short sentence?
3. Consider and list three preliminary goals or learning outcomes.
4. Consider and list some work forms or (digital) platforms (like a Glogster) you would like to incorporate.
5. Which school subjects do you wish to cooperate with?
6. Which countries would you like to cooperate with? In an eTwinning project, three schools work together. So, select at least two countries that you think would be interesting for this project and write down why these are selected.

Task 5: Analysing your partner’s cultures

In task 4, you have selected two countries to participate in your project. In this task, you will analyse your and your project partners’ cultures in order to establish which differences and similarities will manifest themselves. It might be useful to know beforehand whether your partners are emotional or will hide their feelings, are task- or people-oriented, patient or impatient, listeners or talkers, etc. and how you and your pupils can anticipate and deal with or benefit from these differences and similarities.

We will use the Lewis Model, developed by linguist and cross-cultural specialist Richard D. Lewis and published in his book, "When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures". The theories are based upon his cross-cultural work in 135 countries and 150,000 online questionnaires. The difference between this and other models of cultural dimensions is that the Lewis Model is solely based on observable behaviour, which is why it is useful in this context. It was developed and is used for intercultural teams that need to work together

Lewis concluded that humans can be divided into 3 clear categories. The categories are distinctive, but each possesses behavioural elements from the other two. It is a question of which behaviours are dominant. The Lewis Model is designed to indicate which particular cultural group an individual would have most empathy with. Lewis named his three typologies Linear-active, Multi-active and Reactive. Their most noticeable types of behaviour are listed below.

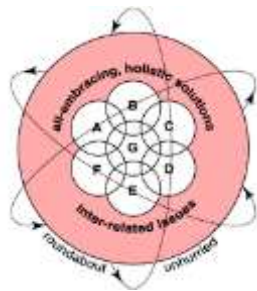


Linear-Active: Task-oriented, highly-organised planners, who prefer getting things done, one task at a time in a planned sequence. Arguments are made with logic, while rules are to be followed.

Characteristics

- Talks half the time
- Does one thing at a time
- Plans ahead step by step
- Polite but direct
- Partly conceals feelings
- Confronts with logic
- Dislikes losing face
- Rarely interrupts
- Job-orientated
- Uses many facts
- Truth before diplomacy
- Sometimes impatient
- Limited body language

- Respects officialdom
- Separates the social and professional

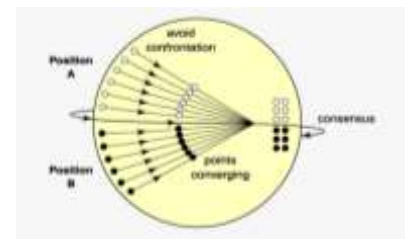


Multi-Active: Emotional, loquacious and impulsive who see family, feelings and relationships ahead of following an agenda. They are comfortable doing many things at the same time.

Characteristics

- Talks most of the time
- Does several things at once
- Plans grand outline only
- Emotional
- Displays feelings
- Confronts emotionally
- Has good excuses
- Often interrupts
- People-orientated
- Feelings before facts
- Flexible truth

- Impatient
- Unlimited body language
- Seeks out key person
- Interweaves the social and professional



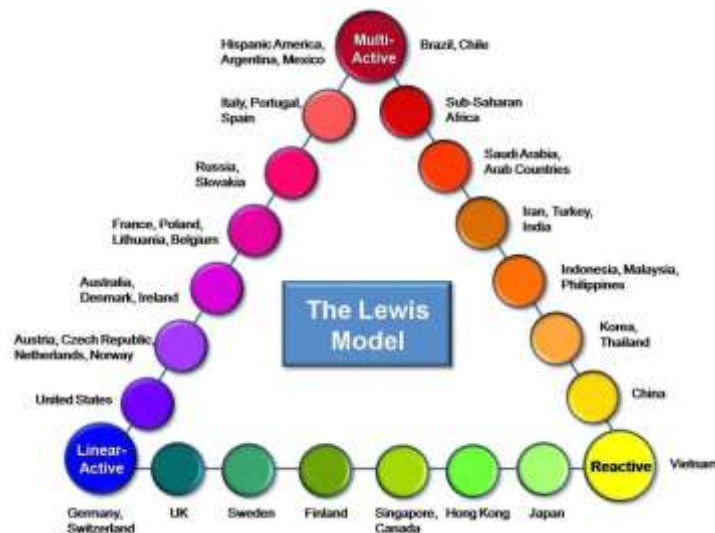
Reactive: Polite, attentive listeners, who rarely initiate action or discussion, instead react to it and form their own opinion. Harmony and avoiding embarrassment to themselves or others is core.

Characteristics

- Listens most of the time
- Reacts to partner's action
- Looks at general principles
- Polite, indirect
- Conceals feelings
- Never confronts

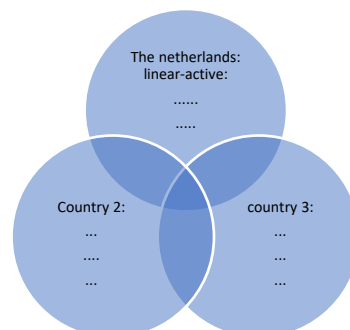
- Must not lose face
- Doesn't interrupt
- Very people-orientated
- Statements are promises
- Diplomacy over truth
- Patient
- Subtle body language
- Uses connections
- Connects the social and professional

The diagram below is a visual representation of linear-active, multi-active and reactive types of behaviour in major national cultures. The diagram indicates the relative position of each national culture in general terms of its linear-active, multi-active or reactive inclination.



Start out by describing your national culture using the information above. Also mention whether you think you deviate from this picture. If you are not sure, you can take [this test](#). Then describe the cultures you will ideally interact with.

What will be the main differences that might emerge when you cooperate? Describe at least five differences per combination. Use a Venn diagram to visualise your findings in addition to your description. In the main circle you list characteristics not shared by partners, whereas in the overlapping places you list shared characteristics.



Reflect on the combinations you have just described. You can use these questions to start your reflection:

1. Will the differences you have noticed create problems, or work to your advantage? Why?
2. What would the ideal team look like? Is your team different from the ideal team?

Next, consider how you will prepare your pupils for these differences. Write down a plan of action in approximately 300 words.

Task 6: Analysing an award-winning eTwinning project

We will use an actual project in order to give you an idea of what your products should look like. This project won a European eTwinning prize for ages 12-15 in 2017. Have a look at [the YouTube clip](#) to get an idea of the project. A project summary can be found below.

Project title: Migrants and Refugees

Partner Schools: 4 partner schools (from Denmark, France, The Netherlands, Norway)

Level: Lower Secondary

TwinSpace: <https://twinspace.etwinning.net/9674/home>

Description: Pupils in years 9 and 10 from 4 European countries explored the current humanitarian problem facing Europe, the migrant crisis. The aim is to raise awareness of what is happening not just in Europe, but in the world in general. During the project, they discussed what a refugee is and what he/she looks like to find out if there were stereotypes or misunderstandings. Then, they investigated the countries that refugees try to reach and the reasons for their choices. They had to reply to questions like: Why are the refugees leaving the Middle East? How do they travel from Asia to Europe? Where are they coming from? Where are they going? They also had interviews with people whose work is to support refugees, with NGOs, with parents who shared their experience as refugees and with other refugees. The final outcome is [an e-book](#) with the material of all their work ending as follows: *"Should the borders be closed? I personally think the borders should not close because what did the refugees do wrong to you? There are some people doing something wrong but everyone does something wrong. We do something wrong as well because we want the borders to close. So let them in!"*

You can find an elaborate outline of the project here:

<https://twinspace.etwinning.net/9674/pages/page/59283>. This is only accessible if you have created an eTwinning account (see task 2). On this site you will find: the aims of the project, the steps and time line, activities, the final product and resources used.

Now create a format for your own project based on the different aspects you see in this project. Your next step will be to use the format for your detailed project set-up, so make sure you include all elements that will make the project clear and successful. The lay-out of the format will differ according to your own preferences: you can use a grid with words or questions, or a list of questions, etc. on Word, Excel, a Padlet, etc.: just make sure you are able to share the format with your assessors.

Task 7: Setting up your project

Using the format you have created in task 6, set up your own project.

Carefully describe all important aspects in detail. Mention your sources and platforms too. In addition to the actual document, set up a document accounting for the choices you make: why do you choose these aims? These resources and activities? Etc. Describe this elaborately. Be sure to include arguments related to contents, didactics and pedagogy.

Task 8: Determining what success looks like

Lastly, an important question we haven't paid attention to yet: how will you know if the project has been successful: as a project and for individual learners? We will draw up two sets of criteria: one for the project as a whole and one for pupils, dividing both into at least two categories: product and process. So, answer the questions below:

1. What are the overall criteria for a successful project product? Have a look at [the Migrants and Refugees final product](#) to envision what a project's output could look like: what was the final product you described in task 7 and what criteria will it need to meet in order to be a successful product?
2. What are the criteria for a successful process? How will you know whether these criteria have been met? Refer to task 5 in your answer.
3. Which aims do your learners have to meet and how will you know whether they have reached the goals set? How will your learners know?
4. Which goals were important for your learnings with regards to the eTwinning process? How will you decide whether these goals have been reached? Refer to task 5 in your answer.

Assessment form eTwinning project

Task	Student's own assessment	Teacher's assessment
Task 5: Analysing your partner's cultures	<p>The task is complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A description of your own national culture ○ Your partners' cultures ○ Differences per combination ○ Problem/opportunity analysis ○ Pupil preparation plan 	
Task 6: Analysing an award-winning eTwinning project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The task is complete: all relevant aspects have been included in a format 	
Task 7: Setting up your project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The task is complete (if I fall ill, somebody else can carry out this project) ○ I have accounted for my choices related to contents, didactics and pedagogy. 	
Task 8: Determining what success looks like	<p>I have included a set of criteria for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project contents ○ Project process ○ Learner's contents development ○ Learner's process development 	
Overall	<p>(select one option and explain your choice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This final product is wonderful ○ The final product could use some improvements ○ I am not really satisfied with the product because <p>.....</p>	