

Virtual Exchange session in Education

Master students in Education had the opportunity to participate in a Virtual Exchange session on 'Self-regulation and socially shared regulation of Learning (SSRL)'. The two involved teachers, Dr. Astrid Wichmann from RUB and Essi Vuopala from UOULU, have integrated the session in their respective courses at their home universities.

The teachers collaborated on establishing shared learning objectives for a specific session, which were integrated into their respective courses at their home universities.

After the UNIC online session, students were expected to:

- define and explain main differences between self and socially shared regulation of learning,
- describe how theoretical aspects of regulation of learning can be applied in practice, and
- demonstrate a variability of perspectives on how to support regulation in difficult classroom situations.

To prepare for the session, the teachers selected two texts that students were required to read in advance. During the session, the teachers provided a brief introduction to the topic and explained the tasks. Subsequently, the students were divided into internationally mixed groups and engaged in a 50-minute collaborative activity based on a teacher's case study.

Task 1 involved the application of self-regulation principles, requiring students to provide advice to their peers on the best ways to prepare for an exam.

Task 2 focused on socially shared regulation of learning, where students were asked to organize themselves into small groups and outline how the teacher could guide the group effectively.

Students were instructed to apply the think-pair-share method to both tasks and collect their thoughts on a shared slide (Padlet). The session concluded with a summarizing discussion in a plenary session.

Several challenges were encountered during the process. Differences in semester times between Finland and Germany posed a challenge, and participation numbers were imbalanced, with 9 German students and 25 Finnish students. Language-related insecurities were addressed prior to the session and the teachers clarified expectations. During the session, it was observed that students were more reserved in the plenary sessions but engaged well in the breakout sessions.

Teacher's voice: From the teachers' perspective, the collaborative planning and teaching efforts required extra work but were also enjoyable. Both teachers integrated new perspectives on teaching and experimenting with new methods and approaches to education.

Student's voice: The session has been evaluated so that student's experiences could be understood by the teachers.

- "Clear structure and clear tasks. In general nice experience."
- "It was great that we are in Breakout sessions, so it was easier to use the English language. We were not forced to speak in plenary, that was nice."
- "Maybe it would be meaningful, if some groups have the chance to present their results on their own in the plenary session. But of course, this would need more time, which is probably difficult to implement. Maybe the discussion at the end would be more dynamic."

Dr. Astrid Wichmann, Ph.D. Essi Vuopala