

LABlearning Phase 1

Dialogue Report - YOUTH VOICE

1. Info about the meeting

- 1) Location, Date and Duration: *Technical School A.Volta Fano 14-03-2012 Time: 1:00:67*
- 2) Number of participants and general demographics (male/female; age; migration background?)
12 participants. They are all males ageing from 14 to 19 years old. Most of them are coming from previous different schools and experiences , 2 of them are immigrants from Romania and Moldavia.
- 3) Any general feature characterizing/qualifying the group (all from same school class; new/old members of a youth centre etc.)
All students come from the same school (Istituto Professionale A. Volta di Fano), but they are attending different classes with different courses (electronics, hydraulics, naval).
- 4) Especially in the case of a school setting, key figures (or qualitative comments) about school attendance by meeting participants (how many regularly go to class or skip them; how many are low performers, are “repeating” a year etc.)
*All students attend school constantly since they are controlled daily through a computer communication system with the families/parents.
Most of them (about ten) repeated one or more school years and in general are low performers. Some of them left school for a period of time. Most of them are attending the second year (age 16) while their age is 18-19.*
- 5) Who/how many adults attended the meeting . A short description + some evaluation comments could also be added about how the dialogue developed: overall climate and attitudes of participants; any conflict/difficult moment; etc. etc. This would be useful for interpreting and contextualising the dialogue’s results.
Initially 4 adults participated to the meeting (3 staff members of Training 2000 and a teacher). After a few minutes from the beginning of the meeting the teacher left the room since she thought she would facilitate communication among the representatives of LABlearning and the students present. The dialogue took place in a very informal climate, without particular problems or occasions for conflict. All participants seemed to be at ease and participated freely without any problems. Even before starting the debate some of them already had started to criticize the educational system while they were very happy about the friendly relationships developed within the school environment.

2. Adults’ accounts of key dialogue’s outcomes

The main content of the report should be what the adults perceived as the most interesting/relevant things said by the young people during the meeting.

We are NOT envisaging that “answers” are given to each individual question, but rather they should be given to the broader questions/topics that have been articulated and addressed during the dialogue. In order to enhance the structure of this report/account and to make the dialogues’ results more comparable across sites, we suggest that the report’s writer could follow the titles/topics of the guiding questions, by trying to answer to some closed options for each of them (high level answers) and then adding some qualitative/informative comments:

Q. 1 1-3: Perceived strength and weaknesses of the (current/recent past) school/education situation).

Please summarize what is the prevailing student/young peoples’ opinion about their school and their student experience. *First select one of the following options and then provide a more qualitative description.*

xThe opinions of most participants are negative

- The opinions of most participants are positive
- Some participants have a prevailing positive opinion and others a negative one
- Participants mostly have a mixed/balances opinion; they see both negative and positive aspects

Qualitative observations:

Just about all the students have a negative opinion about the school they attend. The main reason is that they have a low consideration of their teachers. Surprisingly their low consideration depends on the fact that they consider the teachers unprepared in their subject and good at transmitting the information. According to their opinion most of the teachers are not capable of providing suitable teaching to the students. This penalizes them in the educational progress and in passing exams. In second place they underline the relationship difficulties. Some teachers are strict and they do not succeed in creating a positive and stimulating dialogue with them. Those few teachers that do so succeed in reaching greater results from the students. Students follow carefully their lessons and have greater results. These teachers succeed in creating a relationship which goes beyond the school environment. Most of the teachers according to the students, does not succeed in motivating them sufficiently.

Another problem is represented by teaching times, too dense and without breaks. The hours of lessons come one after the other without having time to relax. During the six hour school day we do prefer two short breaks instead of only one break which lasts 18 minutes

Q. 4-7: What/how do you like to learn things + perceived personal strengths/abilities)

Please summarize what is the prevailing student/young peoples' opinion about their day-by-day learning experience at school. *First select one/more of the following options and then provide a more qualitative description.*

Most participants enjoy the activities they do at school

xMost participants do not enjoy the activities they do at school

Participants are divided on this aspect (some are positive, some negative)

Participants mostly have a mixed/balanced opinion; they see both negative and positive aspects

Most participants feel that they cannot do at school the things they like best or are good at

Most participants feel that they can do at school the things they like best or are good at

Qualitative observations:

Most of the students stated that they do not love the type of learning used at school. They would prefer by far a practical type of teaching (laboratories, workshop) in respect to traditional lessons. Laboratories are foreseen in their studying plan, but the hours used for these activities are very limited. The positive things of this learning methodology are the simplicity and the speed you learn at, the retention ability of information, a more relaxed and calm climate, the individual management of working time and the methodology (students opinion). This type of learning occurs autonomously, and the teacher is available in case of need. The students are free to move and are not obliged to remain seated and listen to the lesson which is almost never interesting.

Q. 8-12: Current use and desired/potential use/knowledge of digital tools/media

Please summarize what is the prevailing student/young peoples' situation with regards to current and desired/potential use of digital tools/media. *First select one/or more of the following options and then provide a more qualitative description.*

Most participants use computers, mobiles, internet etc. regularly

Most participants do not use computers, mobiles, internet etc. regularly

Participants are polarized between intensive and low ICT users

Most participants usually use computers etc. only for recreational reasons with no specific purpose

xMost participants use computers etc. not only for recreational reasons, but also with a specific purpose: media creation (blog, video, ...) , art creation (music, graphic, ...) , computer programming

...

xMost participants are aware about the potential of computers, media and internet

Most participants are not aware about the potential of computers, media and internet

Participants are divided between high and low awareness of ICT potential

xMost participants would like to use and learn more about computer programs, video etc.

Most participants would not like to use and learn more about computer programs, video etc.

Participants are divided about more ICT use/learning (some very keen, others not interested)

Qualitative observations:

Inside the school ICT's are very little used. Some subjects (programming, cad/cam design) foresee compulsorily the use of computers, but for the rest students hardly ever use these technologies. There are some exceptions, there are only a few exceptions, which are welcomed positively from the students (applications of game based learning, tests on PC or online, use of online spaces).

Most of the students interviewed uses daily at home computer and internet (2-3 hours in average). All except one student have a face book account and several of them use even other social

networks like Twitter. Many of them use computers to play. Mainly the use of ICT is aimed at free time and entertainment. Sometimes internet is used for specific reasons like searching for information, creating and listening to music

Q. 13-15: Learning elsewhere & learning differently: does it happen, could it happen?

Please summarize what is the prevailing student/young peoples' opinion with regards to traditional class-based education and alternative approaches. *First select one/or more of the following options and then provide a more qualitative description.*

- Most participants think that they learn almost nothing outside the school
- Most participants think that they learn something outside the school
- xMost participants think that they learn a lot outside the school***
- Participants are divided about learning outside the school
- Participants have no idea about other ways of learning things
- Participants have a lot of ideas about other ways of learning things

Qualitative observations:

Some of the students had the opportunity to work in real life and experimented the quantity of information that you learn and that should be learnt outside the school.

Students learn through the exchange of ideas with friends, through information conveyed from television and internet (tablet, Smartphone...). Nevertheless, although everyone state that they learn a lot of information outside the school the concept of learning remains foremost of them tied to the school environment. Only a few of them are aware of the informal and non formal learning processes that are activated daily.

Q. 16-22: Could this different perspective be brought into the school and how? Ideas, suggestions, desires

Please summarize what is the prevailing student/young peoples' opinion with regards to non traditional learning approaches, and the potential use of media.

Answers in this section are particularly difficult to summarize, except for the following three aspects. Please select one/or more of the following options and then provide a more qualitative description.

xMost participants are willing/interested to work more with computer, media etc.

- Most participants do not want to work more with computers, media etc.
- Participants are divided about working more with computers, media, etc.
- xMost participants would like to use computers etc. also after school time***
- Most participants would not like to use computers etc. also after school time
- Participants are divided about working more with computers etc. after school time
- xMost participants would like to experiment learning without a teacher in school***
- Most participants would not like to experiment learning without a teacher in school
- Participants are divided about experimenting learning without a teacher in school

Qualitative observations:

Most of the students would like to introduce ICT in the learning method used. Only one, among the students interviewed are not in favor of using computer and internet because he prefers direct communication, not indirect.

The idea of being autonomous from the teacher is positive for the totality of the students which declare to work/learn better on their own or in small groups. The use of ICT would also consist in making time more flexible and even to work at home.

Q. 23-24: Leading to post-meeting documentation

- Most participants do not want to use media to express their point of views
- xMost participants want also to use media to express their point of views***
- Some participants express their point of views better with media than in a group dialog.

Qualitative observations:

all the students decided to use the video recording to express key messages concerning the arguments dealt.

3. Synthesis in English of young people's produced documentation

The report should also include a brief written synthesis/presentation of any documentation produced by the young people. Since this material (text, video etc.) will be in the native language of each country, without such processing the other partners will not be able to understand it. This can be done in two ways:

- assuming that not too many young people will provide such input, partners could prepare a short synthesis of each documentation item. Not a full translation of whatever is written or expressed (too much work), but a summary of the key messages expressed by the young people, as they are subjectively perceived by the reporting staff. Again, such key messages should be related to the titles- broader questions/topics of the guiding questions list. Along with content information, for each documentation item it would help to have a short profile of the author (skipping names, we need age, sex, and whatever additional information is deemed useful). The issue of full anonymity is tricky here, because those who will collect the young people's documentation likely already know each person; besides, any recorded video or voice will likely reveal the author, at least to other members of the local group. On the other hand, we could guarantee the full removal of names and any other "critical" information when the documentation is published (if the authors agree with the publishing)
- in case many/all young people decide to provide some documentation of their views after the meeting, it might be too lengthy to prepare a synthesis of each item and we would suggest that just a selection of key messages is extracted and put into the report.

All the students decided to record a video to be registered all together for key messages. The video will be done in a week time.

In the meantime we have prepared video and audio registrations of the discussions in the meeting, stored in Dropbox:

(<https://www.dropbox.com/home/Youth%20Voice%20-%20Volta#!/home/Youth%20Voice%20-%20Volta>)

