WP4 – "SMALL-SCALE MEETINGS"

[Istanbul 29 Mayıs University]

[TÜRKİYE]

Erasmus+ KA220-SCH Strategic Partnership in School Education

-DICOMI-

DIGITAL COMICS OF MIGRATION

[2023-1-TR01-KA220-SCH-000166103]

1. Introduction

Within the scope of Work Package 4 (From Action to Recommendation) of the DICOMI project, Istanbul 29 Mayıs University organized two small-scale stakeholder meetings with the participation of pre-service teachers. The primary objective of these meetings was to introduce the digital comic modules developed under WP2 to stakeholders in the educational field, to gather their perspectives via interview questions, and to formulate sustainable recommendations for educational policies. In alignment with the project's pedagogical objectives, the meetings were structured to integrate the participants' experiences into the project's final 'Recommendation Package

2. PARTICIPANT PROFILE AND MEETING ANALYSIS

The meetings were conducted in the meeting hall at the Istanbul 29 Mayıs University campus, engaging educational stakeholders actively involved in the field:

- **Total Number of Sessions:** 2 sessions.
- **Number of Participants:** A total of 22 pre-service teachers, comprising 12 in the first meeting and 10 in the second.5
- **Participant Characteristics:** Pre-service teachers currently undergoing their teaching practicum (internship), acquiring experience in classrooms where immigrant and local students are educated together.1
- **Meeting Procedure:** During the sessions, the DICOMI modules and the digital platform were initially introduced, subsequently followed by focus group discussions on the themes of migration, xenophobia, and digitalization.

3. MEETING FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Perspectives on Migration and Education

The pre-service teachers made profound humanistic and pedagogical observations regarding the educational processes of immigrant children:

- **Uniqueness of Experience:** The participants noted that the traumatic effects resulting from war and forced migration can only be fully comprehended by individuals who have directly experienced this process.
- **The Adaptation Process:** It was emphasized that the endeavor to adapt to a new society and educational system post-migration is at least as challenging as the act of migration itself.

3.2. Evaluation of the DICOMI Modules

The developed digital comics and learning modules were evaluated by the pre-service teachers across the following dimensions:

- **Combating Xenophobia:** Participants consider comics to be a highly effective instrument for overcoming xenophobia in classrooms and fostering a more cohesive societal structure.
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** It was confirmed that the modules cultivate students' ability to "see through the eyes of others" (perspective-taking) by enhancing their levels of empathy.

3.3. Digital Comics as Instructional Materials

The following feedback was gathered regarding the classroom integration of digital comics as a Web 2.0 tool:

- Interest and Motivation: It was emphasized that, from the students' perspective, the utilization of digital comics is significantly more engaging, enjoyable, and memorable compared to traditional instructional materials.
- Visual Storytelling: It was articulated that presenting complex social issues through a visual narrative enhances student engagement with the subject matter.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Recommendations for Students

- Digital comics should be utilized not merely as reading materials, but as creative tools that empower students to construct their own narratives. In mixed classrooms, local and immigrant students should be encouraged to undertake collaborative comic projects.

4.2. Recommendations for Teachers

- It was indicated that teachers require practical guides and continuous professional development support in the areas of digital storytelling and inclusive education. Furthermore, pedagogical support modules should be incorporated to address the emotional challenges teachers may encounter while navigating sensitive topics (such as war, migration, etc.) in the classroom.

4.3. Recommendations for Decision-Makers

- It was recommended that comic-based learning methods be integrated into the national curriculum and that such innovative pedagogical approaches be supported at the policy level. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the digital infrastructure in schools must be modernized to adequately support such interactive content.

5. RESULT

These stakeholder meetings, conducted at Istanbul 29 Mayıs University, demonstrated that pre-service teachers perceive digital comics as a "key instrument" in combating xenophobia and fostering social cohesion. The data derived from these meetings have been reported to

serve as foundational input for the final "Recommendation Pack," which is to be developed under the leadership of Yıldız Technical University.