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## **ENACT KA3 – Multilateral Project**

Enhancing Negotiation skills through on-line Assessment of Competencies and interactive mobile Training

*Lifelong Learning Programme 2013*

*Leonardo da Vinci*

## **D3.1 Training Needs Analysis Report ENACT Project**

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## **Introduction: ENACT Project motivation and background**

The ENACT project - Enhancing Negotiation Skills Through On-Line Assessment of Competencies and Interactive Mobile Training - main objectives are:

- to design and realise an online “game training methodology
- to develop an innovative and scientifically sound assessment methodology, in the form of an intelligent tutor, capable of providing reliable analysis of the user’s negotiation competences and communication style.

Both the methodology and technology is to be designed for different users as free tools. For this reason, a specific analysis to define the users’ profile was conducted.

This document describes the research methodology, the tools designed and the main results detected in three Countries (Italy, Spain and Turkey) referred to the four target groups: secondary school students, teachers and teachers in training, young people/athletes, manager and employees.

The ENACT project focuses on the negotiation skills as social–intra–interpersonal competence (soft skills) that can effectively and positively impact on both personal and professional life (our life is not made of separate compartments).The idea of negotiation embraced is based on effective communication with ourselves and others, as well as the awareness of how we are perceived and understood by others. The basic assumption is that negotiation and effective communication can be effectively discovered, improved and developed through dedicated training courses and personal development programmes. The Rahim’s model (1979) have been chosen for the design of the training as it stressed on the learning process enabling to learn the appropriate use of the conflict styles depending on situations (Rahim, 2001); the idea of conflict as not a negative concept and every situation of conflict is an opportunity for people to learn and work more effectively.; Rahim and Bonoma developed the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (Roci II), for assessing the 5 styles of handling interpersonal Conflict (Rahim & Bonoma, 1983, 2001) and might be useful for assessment after the trialling phase.

## **Methodological Approach**

The methodology adopted to conduct the Training Need Analysis (TNA) focused on eliciting the views and experiences of identified group targets about negotiation process. The findings will inform the design and development of the ENACT training-assessment

interactive scenarios in order to provide tailored learning experiences, and give indications about software requirements. More specifically the objectives were the following:

- Define the state of the art regarding the level of technological diffusion (ICT) in schools and sport training contexts.
- Investigate teachers and trainers' technological competencies analyzing national/international researches/reports.
- Deepen the key concept of "negotiation skills", reporting guidelines or national reports, to investigate the level of development of related initiatives.
- Investigate the key concept of online role-playing and computer based simulation methods for soft skills development and negotiation skills at secondary school, and in the sport context.
- Analyze the role of negotiation and the use of online role-playing and computer based simulation methods in today's business environment.

## **Main results**

### **ICT in school/sport training contexts**

In **Italy**, the Ministry of Education, University and Research launched in 2007 a National Plan for Digital Schools (Piano Nazionale Scuola Digitale<sup>1</sup>) to mainstream Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Italian classrooms and promote technology as agent of innovation in education, through the development of renewed teaching and learning models and methodologies, as well as the introduction of innovative tools and devices.

The study of the impact of technology in primary schools in EU (EACEA 2014), highlights that primary schools should exploit the potential of ICT as tool through which to fulfill educational goals, strengthen the pedagogical use of ICT. The primary school guidelines contain indications about uses of technologies since the first year of learning, and also a rigorous description of digital competencies meaning, defined as the ability to use ICT with familiarity and critical sensibility in working and communication environments. At lower secondary school, ICT is considered as a cross-curricular subject. Generally, secondary schools are provided with a gymnasium, and a library, as well as ICT, science and multimedia laboratories, even if they are not always fully exploited. More and more classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards (IWBs,) but only few teachers are

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<sup>1</sup> [http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/piano\\_scuola\\_digitale](http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/piano_scuola_digitale)

able to get the most out of them. The High school guidelines contain indications about applications of ICT in relation to different school specialisations (Technical, Linguistic, etc.).

~~One of the most recognized~~ public institute dealing with ICT exploitation in Italian school is INDIRE<sup>2</sup> National Institute of Educational Investigation, Innovation and Research. Within the project “Scuola Digitale”, INDIRE encourages the use of technologies to support learning and teaching; the assessment of the impact of the use of new technologies on teaching practices (CL@SSI 2.0); the development of didactic materials, and the adoptions of digital textbooks (project EDITORIA DIGITALE SCOLASTICA) in conjunction with the initiative of the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research introducing mixed resources books. Since 2007 INDIRE organizes specific training courses for teachers on ICT for teaching and learning, as for instance DiGi Scuola, Puntoedu, ForTIC and PON DIDATEC) targeting primary and secondary school teachers. Other organisations constituted on a private-public partnership, promote initiatives encouraging the use of ICT for teaching and learning. Among others, Fondazione Mondo Digitale, based on a partnership with the Municipality of Rome, works at national and European level to promote innovation in education through the use of new technologies, with the following projects and initiatives: XXIst Century Education (to develop teachers and students’ soft skills through the use of ICT); Educational Robotics (to support the introduction of robotics as part of the mainstream scholastic curriculum); M-Learn (to enhance teachers competences on the use of handheld technologies for teaching and learning); Città Educativa (to develop a centre for best practices and knowledge sharing related to innovation in education at national level).

In **Spain**, the use of ICT in education is widespread from the early years of schooling, including technologies in support for teachers. The number of PC in use has grown steadily and today there is one computer for every 2.8 students in both primary and secondary education and other technological tools have been incorporated, such as electronic whiteboards (15,4%). The digital development is linked to increased use of devices, complementary to traditional educational tools; therefore the main impact regards the way teaching activities are performed. Teachers and students have more opportunities

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.indire.it>

to access to a PC at school (97.2%), which are usually connected to the Internet (88.6%). At the end of 2013, the new law on the improvement of the quality of education (LOMCE - Ley Orgánica de Mejora de la Calidad Educativa<sup>3</sup>) has established the importance of ICT in the educational system, to prepare students to face the modern society. Since December 2013, an online platform called EducaLab has been launched as the first open massive network course (MOOC) for teachers professional development.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports organizes free training courses for teachers in several universities. In particular, the University of Valencia<sup>4</sup> offers a course including modules on how to integrate ICT into daily educational practices, as well as technological literacy resources.

In Spain the whole area of negotiation training is supported by SMEs providing training courses organised by qualified private training centres and financed by the Tripartite Foundation for Training in Employment (The **Ministry of Labour and Social Security**). Local municipalities develop policies to support SMEs providing training for employees depending on priorities of the organisations and needs of local business. It seems that SMEs do not always take advantage of these opportunities offered.

In **Turkey** exists an "Inclusion through Sport"<sup>5</sup> Training Module part of the project Sports for Social Inclusion by the Ministry of Youth and Sports/Sport Education Department<sup>6</sup>. The one week training course targets youth workers to enhance their competences by using sports as a method for disadvantaged young people inclusion. One of the module sessions consists in a role play of around 90 minutes. Each participant chooses a role to undertake in the imaginary country called "Includia". The game is a face-to-face role-playing that allows young people/youth workers to manage their budget in their roles as representatives of sport clubs, ministry, federation, enterprise. More in general, it helps participants to understand the role of negotiation and communication between different bodies and roles within the sport sector.

In Turkey, the Directorate General for Educational Technologies has launched the FATIH project, which aims at enhancing the benefits of the use of mobile technologies in youth education. During some pilot implementations of the FATIH Project plan many schools

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/sistema-educativo/lomce.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.uv.es/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding/project/sports-for-social-inclusion.2724/>

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnnBpHAqKmU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnnBpHAqKmU).

have been equipped with ICT. It includes training courses for teachers on the use of technology in education.

With regard to the relation between negotiation skills and sport training practice, Turkey has underlined the importance of sports to improve negotiation skills at both physical and psychological level.

### **Practices in negotiation training at school and in business**

In **Italy**, no training practices for teachers and/or students have been developed, although in the last decade Italy has been forefront of innovative training tools, such as role-playing and simulation tools for soft skills training. However the ability to negotiate is considered essential to be successful in all interactions with other people, it can improve self-confidence and business performance. Some of the teachers interviewed have clearly highlighted the key role of learning activities to improve students' abilities to communicate effectively. More specifically teachers mentioned following learning advantages:

- Recognize negotiable situations;
- Proceed estimating carefully the counterparts;
- Appreciate and analyse behaviours and psychology related to negotiation;
- Control and rectify one's own negotiation style;
- Organise meetings in a creative way.

In Italy training practices related to negotiation skill have been developed mainly by Universities or private training providers and enroll people supported by the organization they work with. Sometimes negotiation courses are organized by Universities as post-graduate courses or brief courses (e.g. Politecnico di Milano<sup>7</sup>) and by private organizations for business/employed people. These courses are not computer based, and aim to provide negotiation techniques for communication with stakeholders.

No specific training practices, regarding negotiation skills, have been established in **Spain**. This subject is covered psychological courses on communication skills included in teachers initial training, which are more theoretical than practical. In the school context, the subjects of mediation and communication seem more familiar, compared to the business environment. The difficulty lies in the ways of identifying indicators able to

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<sup>7</sup> Cfr. <http://www.mip.polimi.it/mip/it/Executive-Education/Programmi-a-catalogo/Operations-and-Supply-Chain/Supply-Chain-Purchasing-Management/Corsi-brevi-degli-Acquisti-Supply-Chain-Management/Tecniche-di-Negoziazione.html>

represent quality and attitudes related to negotiation abilities.

The target group has suggested that indicators to evaluate negotiation skills could be considered at different steps of the negotiation training process:

- 1) Preparation: phase when you acquire all the documentation, facts, data and information necessary to bring others into agreement;
- 2) Exchange information and disclose necessary details with the other parties;
- 3) Design of a strategic route map;
- 4) Closure

In **Turkey** no specific training practice linked to negotiation and communication skills have been developed involving schools. The following possible indicators to evaluate negotiation skills have been suggested by the target group involved in the research:

- Being able to listen and focus on what others are saying
- Being able to establish trust
- Communicate effectively
- Being able to understand what others want to achieve

### **On- role-playing computer based simulations games**

In **Italy**, we can acknowledge two most significant online multiplayer role-playing tools for negotiation, decision making and conflict resolutions have been developed within EU projects. The SISINE<sup>8</sup> project (**S**istema **I**ntegrato per la **S**imulazione di **N**egoziatore) funded by the EU Leonardo Program in 2004, has developed an e-learning platform and a teaching methodology to conduct negotiation role-playing games. The system provides a 3D multiplayer training environment that enables learners to interact real time to each other, through the mediation of avatars and a conversational interface of textual chat. In addition to the normal functionality of Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MORPG), the platform offers specific learning features that allow trainers and tutors to set up games, intervene during game play, record specific phases of a training game, observe the interactions between participants, and invite to the reflection of the dynamics occurred.

The EUTOPIA MT project funded within the TOI Leonardo Framework in 2008 has developed a more sophisticated version of the SISINE e-learning platform.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://ercim-news.ercim.eu/en71/special/the-sisine-project-developing-an-e-learning-platform-for-educational-role-playing-games>

Created in 2010, PALMA (Palestra Manageriale) is a single player serious game software in which the learner plays the role of a business man that has to persuade a collaborator (a computer agent) to carry out a work assignment. Each single interaction consists in the selection of a sentence among the available range of sentences describing a specific situation. At the end of the game players receive an automatic feedback on their performance. Palma has been developed to train users to be aware of the complexity of interpersonal skills involved in communication process: leadership, negotiation, persuasion, etc. WIN WIN MANAGER is instead a multiplayer negotiation business game which can be entirely played on the Internet without the need of installing any specific software. It gives players the opportunity to obtain the best profit from the game itself. WIN WIN MANAGER is finally used by companies to evaluate new recruits in a more efficient and cheaper manner.

In **Spain** the research project called eAdventure<sup>9</sup> aims at facilitating the integration of gaming simulations in educational processes in general and Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) in particular, developed at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Users can use the graphical editor to create the games or directly access the human-readable source documents that describe the adventures using XML markup. With eAdventure, anyone interested can write an educational “point and click” adventure game (utilizing the cursor of the mouse to interact with objects displayed on the screen).

In **Turkey** no relevant training initiatives and projects have been reported.

## **Target group needs**

### **Italian high-school context**

From Italy, teachers and students were interviewed. They use technologies in their everyday life, but also for educational aims and are aware that role play games are part of everyday life, even if negotiation skills trainings, online role-play or computer based simulation are not used in Italian schools. All participants are aware of the importance of negotiation skills for their life and suggest it would be important to improve them by training, seminars, courses or online games.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.entropykn.net/technology-enhanced-learning/serious-games/>.

Respondents from Italy think that the relational skills that are particularly involved in negotiation processes are: “communications and active listening” and “critical and creative thinking” followed by “empathy” and “emotional stability”, while the less chosen skill is resulted “result orientation”.

The advantages of online games are mainly their technological characteristics which make the training possible anytime and anywhere, but the disadvantages are linked to the lack of human face-to-face relationships that is perceived as very important and influencing in negotiation. Moreover students thinks that the use of the ENACT tools could make learning fun and engaging: “it could be funny!”

Finally, respondents agree that “training is required to help development of communication and negotiation skills” and “specifically designed computer games supporting the development of negotiation skills can be very beneficial”

### **Managers and employees from Spain**

The majority of interviewed managers and interpreter/translator state to be “extremely aware” or “moderately aware” of their negotiation skills. Comparing professional and personal spheres, negotiation skills are perceived more important for work related activities than for personal relationships. However, the organisation they work with, do not provide any courses related to soft skills in their training programme, therefore the involvement in the ENACT project is perceived as an important opportunity. A clear understanding of interlocutor’s interests, and the research of acceptable solutions to the parties involved in negotiation processes is considered as a crucial aspect of successful negotiations both in professional and everyday life. With regard to the communication style employed, managers and employees tend to use different styles, perhaps depending on specific given situations, such as: active listening, open communication, attention to body language, passive behaviour with difficulty to express personal opinions when involved in large meetings, and say “no”. Therefore assertiveness seems to be a crucial aspect to be addressed with training.

“Communication and active listening” and “empathy” are considered the soft skills mainly involved in a negotiation process. Moreover, the features “online” and “role-play” are considered as added values: “online allows flexibility and save time on transports” and “role-play is much more dynamics, than traditional methods[...] people take part in the learning process by playing a role. Deepening the concept of negotiation skills, managers identified the links between “sell/trading” and “negotiation” immediately.

Negotiation skills are also essential to be competitive on the market: “in the negotiation process for a contract, when you have other competitors, this requires you are able to offer the most suitable solution for the customer, negotiating the reward...”.

### **Athletes and young teachers from Turkey**

The teacher interviewed seems moderately aware of their negotiation skills and their importance for professional and personal life. The definition of negotiation given by both the two students and the teacher is very interesting: negotiation involves “persuasion and exchange of idea”, as well as non-verbal variables: “body language and having eye contact are important in negotiation”. Another aspect emerged from the interviews is that negotiation is essential “for self-defence”.

The students interviewed had the opportunity to attend face to face training courses on communication, team work, and leadership but never on negotiation skills. They claimed that would be particularly interesting to deepen the negotiation process within the athletes’ peer to peer relationships, as well as coach-trainer and athlete relationship, and consider role-playing as a valuable learning technique to use in this direction.

With regard to the communication styles adopted during a negotiation process, responses range between assertive, aggressive and passive behaviors, as respectively. Also for Turkish respondents, “communication and active listening” is the soft skill particularly involved in a negotiation process, while the skill considered as less involved is “judgement and decision making”. Also other soft skills such as “team working”, “problem solving”, “creative thinking”, and “empathy” are valued as significant components of successfully negotiation processes, therefore important to be taken into consideration within training.

### **Final remarks**

Data from the three Countries seems to reveal that there is an increasing use and application of technology in schools; however, the research has highlighted that there is a gap between recommended educational practice and current practice in schools, application of technology as well as teacher training.

With regard to negotiation and soft skills development in education, very little has been done related to the subject, although the increasing awareness of the importance of those

skills. Similarly, despite of a growing interest in vocational training in soft skills as critical to both organizational and personal success in the workplace, it seems that a lack of funds prevents a wide offer of dedicated training courses

The overall results of the 10 semi-structured interviews with the group targets of the three Countries, clarified as the definition of the key elements related to the concept of negotiation varies between target groups and age range.

In business context where time is limited the ability to identify problems, develop problem-solving and manage time effectively in order to efficiently perform designated results, are the aspects more appreciated within a negotiation process.

Respondents aged between 14 to 30 years old tends to consider negotiating skills more related to effective communication and active listening, and particularly important for ensuring professional growth, rather than result performance.

The findings indicate high level of importance assigned to negotiation skills and more in general to soft skills. While students and teachers (Italy and Turkey) consider that negotiation skills can help managing different kinds of life situations, both at work and in personal relationships, for managers and employees (Spain) negotiation skills are perceived more important for work related activities than for personal relationships.

The ENACT project could therefor help to promote and implement best practice related to the use of technological learning tools for enhancing training, learning and development of relational skills designed specifically for the target groups.

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