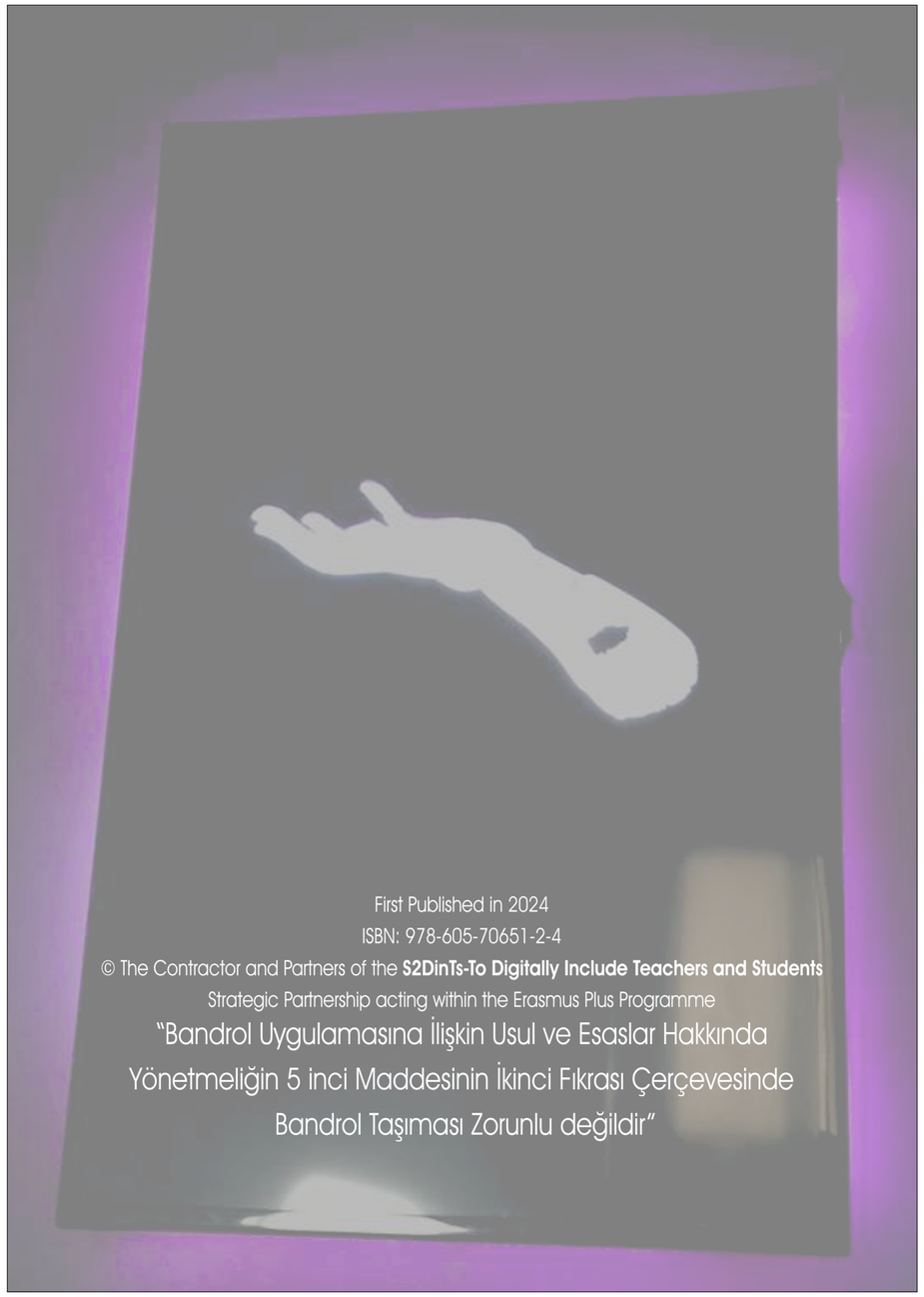


First Published in 2024
ISBN: 978-605-70651-2-4
© The Contractor and Partners of the **S2DinTs-To Digitally Include Teachers and Students** Strategic Partnership acting within the Erasmus Plus Programme
"Bandrol Uygulamasına İlişkin Usul ve Esaslar Hakkında Yönetmeliğin 5 inci Maddesinin İkinci Fıkrası Çerçevesinde Bandrol Taşıması Zorunlu değildir"

Digital Classroom at School

2024

# Digital Classroom at School: Contributions to Support Innovation

## Insights, practices and perspectives on the pedagogical use of digital technologies

José Carlos Bronze
Susana Januário
Gülden Ilin
Hakan Sari
(Eds.)

Co-funded by the European Union

# Digital Classroom at School: Contributions to Support Innovation

## Insights, practices and perspectives

## on the pedagogical use of digital technologies

José Carlos Bronze
Susana Januário
Gülden Ilin
Hakan Sari
(Eds.)

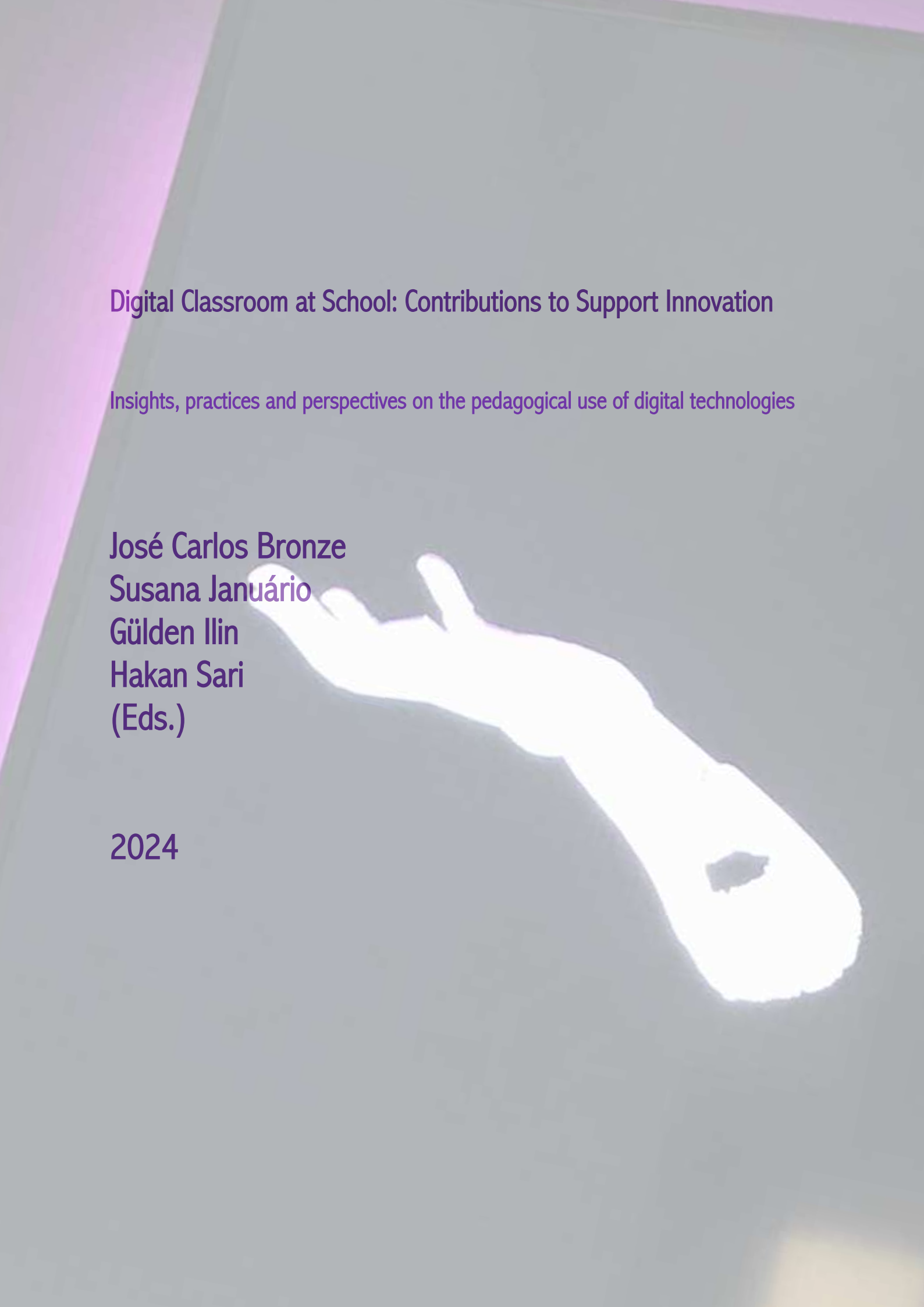
Co-funded by
the European Union

# Digital Classroom at School: Contributions to Support Innovation

## Insights, practices and perspectives on the pedagogical use of digital technologies

José Carlos Bronze
Susana Januário
Gülden Ilin
Hakan Sari
(Eds.)

2024



# "To Digitally Include Teachers and Students"

Edited by

José Carlos Bronze
Susana Januário
Gülden Ilin
Hakan Sari

Co-funded by
the European Union

All the content presented in texts are solely the responsibility of the authors. The ideas presented do not necessarily represent the opinion of the editors.

Attribution CC BY 4.0. International.

This book is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0. International License (CC BY 4.0). It is allowed to share, redistribute, adapt, remix, transform and build upon the content of this book. The appropriate credit must be given to the authors and editors.

More information: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0

Cover photo: Installation of Catarina Rangel Pereira, Vivarium Festival - 2019, @Maus Hábitos.

"S2DinTs - To Digitally Include Teachers and Students"
Contract No: 2021-1-TR01-KA220-000029574 - Strategic Partnership acting within the Erasmus Plus Programme; Coordinated by Çukurova University, Türkiye

First Published: 2024
ISBN : 978-605-70651-2-4

Printed in Istanbul, Türkiye at:

Özkaracan Printers and Binders,
Güneşli, Bağcılar, İstanbul

**Disclaimer:**

This publication was made in the scope of the Erasmus+ project 'S2DinTs – To Digitally Include Teachers and Students', contract number 2021-1-TR01-KA220-SCH-000029574. This publication was funded by the European Union under the above-mentioned contract established with the Turkish National Agency for the Erasmus+ Programme. However, views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), the Turkish National Agency or any other person or institution beyond the authors. Neither the European Union, the EACEA, nor the Turkish National Agency can be held responsible for them.

CONTENTS

PRESENTATION ..... 1
*José Carlos Bronze, Susana Januário, Gülden Ilin, Hakan Sari*

GAMIFIED LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR E-INCLUSIVE PRIMARY ENGLISH CLASSROOMS..... 5
*Cláudio Santos, Mário Cruz, Fátima Faya*

BEYOND BORDERS: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF IMMERSIVE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS IN LEARNING..... 23
*Celestino Magalhães, Marco Bento, José Alberto Lencastre*

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND LEARNING SCENARIOS IN PORTUGUESE SCHOOLS..... 36
*Angélica Monteiro*

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN THE BASIC AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS' CLASSROOM: CONTRASTING TEACHERS' VIEWS 54
*José Carlos Bronze, Susana Januário*

BEST & PROMISING PRACTICES ON DIGITAL CLASSROOM ..... 67
*Hakan Sari, Hamza Kaynar*

THE CLASH OF OLD AND NEW: EXPLORING INCLUSION IN TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL CLASSROOMS ..... 73
*Adelina Silva*

TRADITIONS OR INNOVATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM..... 92
*Simona Knezhevich*

A SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL FACE-TO-FACE TO DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS .....95
*Gülden Ilin, José Carlos Bronze*

AUTHORS..... 106

# Presentation

**Digital Classroom: Contributions to Support Innovation** was drawn up as part of the project S2DInTs - To Digitally Include Teachers and Students, an Erasmus+ co-operation partnership of seven institutions from Türkiye, Bulgaria, Romania and Portugal.

'S2DInTs' is a project addressing the subject of the Digitalization of the classroom, which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, suddenly became a "new normal" of compulsory implementation, regardless of teachers' preparation or readiness to perform it in the best possible way. The project's name points out the *inclusion* dimension into *digital literacy* for *teachers* and *students*. Such dimension aims to bring teachers into the digital era, to promote the teachers' full and pedagogical info-inclusion but also to include in the Digital Era additional relevant actors, such as the school students, and beyond it, to tackle society as a whole and to prevent discriminatory scenarios, such as cyberbullying (which seems to have significantly increased during the pandemic crisis). By generating a better school environment and keeping pedagogy and education properly running, particularly under such adverse circumstances as a pandemic generalised crisis, teachers will gain skills and competencies but also self-fulfilment and self-esteem. S2DInTs needs analysis was made during the implementation of previous projects, which made the partners perceive the dimension of the sudden changes and how educational actors may not necessarily be prepared to cope with such radical, while unavoidable, changes. Partners, including Schools, have kept a close watch on the development of the situation to collect elements that could support decisions and mitigation strategies. The evidence about the need for some "surviving tools" that could immediately relieve the digitalisation requirements - while not losing sight of the pedagogical insurance - was robust.

The project aimed to address and mitigate the lack of digital competencies in a complex social environment, such as schools, even sharpened by the COVID-19 crisis, looking to support a genuinely pedagogical environment in the e-classroom, necessarily provided by fully prepared teachers. In line with this, the specific objectives of the S2DInTs project were (i) to support the increase of digital competencies of teachers by providing them with the knowledge and tools to promote their online classes better, generating a friendly, inclusive, and better learning environment in the classroom; (ii) to support School Education to become more inclusive by upskilling teachers' digital competencies, and by enhancing students' participation in digital classes and their access in equal terms, regardless of any social context of disadvantage; (iii) to increase teachers' ability to understand and deal with the transition from the traditional classroom to the e-classroom, not only from a technical but also a pedagogical, sociological and human perspective, raising awareness of notions such as info-exclusion or cyberbullying.

To help achieve these objectives, the **Digital Classroom at School: Contributions to Support Innovation** proposal includes various contributions from different authors, both internal and external, to the partnership. This publication aims to emphasise the differences between traditional and digital methods in the classroom, demonstrating the educational relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of learning methods using digital

technology. It also seeks to systematise contributions based on research that can enhance understanding of the central question.

The use of multimedia and digital technology can enhance children's emotional development by promoting collaborative and inclusive learning environments. This is the proposal made by Claúdio Santos, Mário Cruz and Fátima Faya, who report on evidence from gamified learning experiences in English classes in primary schools in Portugal. In their contribution, **Gamified learning experiences for e-Inclusive Primary English classrooms**, the authors try to show that the practices developed result in greater productivity and commitment on the part of the students once they are supported by effective participation and interaction between teachers and pupils. The data collected has, therefore, made it possible to reiterate the advantages of gamified learning experiences.

In turn, Celestino Magalhães, Marco Bento and José Alberto Lencastre explore the potential of immersive virtual learning environments (IVLE). In **Beyond Borders: Exploring the potential of immersive virtual learning environments to engage students in learning**, the authors intend to prove that by allowing the creation of interactive and multi-sensory experiences, IVLE promotes students taking an active role in their learning process and improving their performance compared to traditional learning methods. At the same time, the aim is to verify that ILVE enhances the development of emotional (socio-affective) skills, promoting a greater sense of belonging and commitment. The study that supports the article presented involved sixty-three students from fourth, fifth and sixth-grade classes, with an average age of approximately eleven, and focused on maths, as generally attracting more attention to improving student engagement with the subject itself.

Angélica Monteiro shares a study carried out in primary school classes in Portugal. In **Digital technologies in primary education: opportunities, challenges and learning scenarios in Portuguese schools**, the author points out that, despite the consensus found on the potential of Digital Technologies (DTs) for developing skills and acquiring knowledge, there are still some challenges regarding the pedagogical use of DTs, such as the feeling that some teachers are unprepared to integrate these technologies, or the persistence of inequalities in access to and participation in digital environments among students.

**The Digital Divide in the Basic and Secondary Schools' Classroom: Contrasting Teachers' views**, by José Carlos Bronze and Susana Januário, aims to provide a comparative view of didactic practices based on traditional methods on the one hand and digital methods on the other, according to the individual experiences and perceptions of school teachers. This exploratory study has shown that the educational debate around using digital technologies to support pedagogical approaches and teaching practices at school is still ongoing. The use/adoption of digital methods continues to generate different positions, sometimes enthusiastic and sometimes reluctant.

In these two articles, the authors reinforce the advantages and benefits of digital methodologies in their articles "**Best & Promising Practices on Digital Classroom**" by Hakan Sari and Hamza Kaynar, and "**A Shift from Traditional Face-to-face to Digital Learning Environments: The Case in Türkiye after the Covid19 Pandemic and the Earthquake Disasters**" by Gülden Ilin and Jose Carlos Bronze. For the authors, digital classrooms offer a great opportunity for teachers to provide engaging, personalised and effective learning experiences for their students. It is argued that the digital classroom should provide students with a stimulating and innovative way of learning by enhancing the development of clear communication, interactive learning (based on collaboration and flexibility), structured content, personalised learning and assessment.

**The Clash of Old and New: Exploring Inclusion in Traditional and Digital Classrooms**, by Adelina Silva, and **Traditions or Innovations in the Classroom**, by Simona Knezhevich, compare traditional and digital teaching and learning methods, looking for differences, similarities, convergences and incompatibilities between the two. Both articles help us to understand the advantages of complementing traditional and digital learning methodologies, as the strengths of both highlight their important performance in improving learning experiences, promoting inclusion, and increasing student engagement and motivation.

José Carlos Bronze
Susana Januário
Gülden Ilin
Hakan Sari

# A Shift from Traditional Face-to-face to Digital Learning Environments: The Case in Türkiye after the Covid 19 Pandemic and the Earthquake Disasters

Gülden Ilin[1]
José Carlos Bronze[2]

## Abstract

Over recent years, the rapid advancement of Internet and wireless communication technologies has led to the emergence of diverse interactive multimedia networks, including mobile learning, mobile voice, and instant messaging (Lin, Chen, and Lui, 2017). In parallel with these advancements, education at various levels has witnessed a multitude of modes such as online or distance learning, synchronous and asynchronous network learning, digital or mobile learning, as well as flipped classrooms, and, although less prevalent now, television broadcasts, all of which play significant roles in educational contexts. Consequently, institutions have been actively adjusting to this new landscape to ensure effective adaptation.

Keywords: Distance learning, digital learning, flipped classroom

## Introduction

In the past years, the rapid revolution of the Internet and wireless communication technology has resulted in the emergence of various interactive multimedia networks, such as mobile learning, mobile voice, and instant messaging (Lin, Chen and Lui, 2017). In line with these innovations, we have been experiencing a variety of modes in education at almost all levels such as online or distance education, synchronous and asynchronous network learning, digital learning or mobile learning, together with flipped classes and, though relatively more dated, by means of television broadcasts which all have their share in educational contexts. As a consequence, institutions have long been taking steps to adapt themselves to the new situation as effectively as possible.

As learning is a process that should lead to relatively stable changes in the representations of attitudes, knowledge, and skills in the long-term memory of students,

[1] Çukurova University, Türkiye
[2] CIIE/FPCEUP - Centre for Research and Intervention in Education of the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences of the University of Porto, Portugal | up202103147@edu.fpce.up.pt | APLOAD Lda, Portugal | jose.bronze@apload.pt

digital or online modes may be considered as another branch that trigger such change. Active cognitive processing is a prerequisite for transferring knowledge to the long-term memory and it is crucial for effective and sustainable learning (Wouters, Paas, & van Merrienboer, 2008 in Sailer, Murböck and Fischer, 2021 p.104). In addition, although it is essential for both the providers and the users of these programmes to understand the factors that impact student satisfaction and performance in online courses Chitkushev, Vodenska and Zlateva (2014) and also with teachers who may not be as competent as their students in digital issues, it appears that the goals may not be fully reached in some contexts as the results from PISA and ICILS provide. These results reveal that the first evidence is that teachers are not yet succeeding in fostering learning activities, in which students actively use digital technologies (Fraillon et al., 2014, 2019; OECD, 2015). The problems in distance learning may not be limited to the above mentioned issues. Each context has its own variables that would contribute to or hinder the outcomes of the educational processes.

## Definitions and relevance to the research setting

As said above, when we have a deeper look at the issue, we find that there exist considerable discrepancies the sources that the institutions possess. Thus, in some contexts we see that the mode of online or digital education is developed and practiced on the basis of a carefully and effectively planned and established substructure while in other cases we find online or digital means as either subsidiary components to traditional practices if not to be practiced on a sudden inevitable necessity which we will dwell with in detail later in this chapter.

To begin with, it may be well worth looking over the key terminology we will be referring to throughout this chapter. For example, the term traditional face to face education, where customs, beliefs, or methods are ones that have existed for a long time without changing, means to define a classroom experience where students have access to only the resources their teachers select. There the predominant medium of instruction can be said to be the printed materials based on a predetermined curriculum and the teacher's choice and it is the teacher who moderates and regulates the flow of information and knowledge. Students are expected to continue developing their knowledge of a subject outside of school through homework exercises. In the traditional teaching methods, most of the time, teachers ask students to recite and memorize the content of the study and what they teach in the classroom and also students one by one recite the lesson when their turn comes. Except for those who are reciting, other students listen and wait for their turn. In such contexts, students' main resource is their teacher who only teaches them face-to-face. Teachers teach their lessons, students do the assigned work for correction, and grading, comment, and subject matter guidance are provided by qualified instructors. Corrected assignments are returned to the student. This sequence contributes to a sort of personalised student teacher relationship in education (Behzadi and Ghaffari, 2011).

The situation in Türkiye where more traditional educational practices take place resembles the above definitions. This sort of an understanding shows itself in online education programme evaluations. For example, in Inözü and Ilin (2007), we see that the students enrolled in the different departments of online programmes of a vocational school for higher education in Türkiye somehow poorly evaluate their programme as

the programmes lacked face to face teacher guidance. In line with this finding, in her study Ilin (2013) reveals that the third year students at the English Language Teaching department highly benefited from blending virtual learning environment and face-to-face instruction by means of Moodle in their Teaching English for Young Learners course. However, the most appreciated aspect of the procedure appeared to be the constant online and face to face teacher support. Ilin (2019) further writes about the views of the students at the vocational school for higher education in what ways, if any, online language learning component of their programme may be improved. Although the participants in that study were taking online courses at the university, they discussed that the programme would be more powerful if they had the chance to reach their teachers physically at least once a week or so, if the teachers guided, helped, assisted and assessed their learning, answer their questions when they needed and even taught them strategies for studying their lessons and preparing for them exams.

On the other side of the coin, online learning is a term that was first used in 1995 when the web-based system WebCT was developed as the first Learning Management System (LMS), which later became Blackboard. In that educational context, online learning was about using the LMS or uploading text and in portable document format online (Bates, 2014 in Singh, and Thurman, 2019). Since then, online learning has included many distinct and overlapping terms such as e-learning, blended learning, online education, online courses, the like. Digital education, on the other hand, is about using online resources in addition to traditional materials. Holzberger et al. (2013, in Lin, Cen Lui, 2017, p. 3555) regarded digital learning as delivery with digital forms of media through the Internet; and, the provided learning contents and teaching methods were to enhance learners' learning and aimed to improve teaching effectiveness or promote personal knowledge and skills. This type of educational setting saves time and gives students the freedom to decide their own day-to-day schedule. They are expected to progress at their own pace and attend classes from their homes, which allows for the flexibility to set their everyday routine and cultivate a more personal learning experience which at the same time gives them the responsibility to take control over their own learning.

## Distance learning in Türkiye

In the setting where this research was conducted, much before the pandemic, beginning in 1956 at Ankara University, Faculty of Law, the distance education started to train bank staff on law of banking in their immediate contexts (wikipedia.org/par.1). Following this educational programme, as the years passed, the number of the institutions and programmes both varied and increased (Kınık, 2014). For the time being, in Türkiye nine universities offer distance education at bachelor's degree while more than 13 universities continue distance education programmes at vocational level (tuzeronline.com par.1). However, as regards to primary and secondary education, distant means such as television broadcasts, distance or online lessons were used only during the time of the pandemic, when the schools were closed and people were not allowed to go out of their homes. During this period of time, due to the unexpectedly increased demand for the internet, although in some cases, suppliers failed to fully meet the emerging needs, distant and digital means for education appeared to be the only solution for education at all levels. When we look at the situation after the earthquake,

we find a similar pattern. In order to draw a picture of the happenings in educational matters at a region that was consecutively hit by disasters and reveal in what ways if any online and digital solutions served to their purposes from three contexts and seven stand points as will be presented in detail below. These are probable opportunities for accessing the online lessons, motivation, technical substructure, testing and evaluation opportunities, in school collaboration and cooperation.

## Türkiye after the Covid 19 pandemic followed by the earthquake that hit eleven cities

With the outbreak of Covid 19 pandemic in 2020, as we all experienced, almost all the established dynamics of the world, some irreversibly, have gone through a change. Wearing masks, keeping the social distance and washing hands more frequently than before defined to be the three major precautions that can be taken at an individual level. According to the prevalence of the pandemic, universal and local decisions were made to fight with the spread and some enterprises such as pubs, clubs, movies and theatres had to stop work while others as hospitals, health care centres, clinics, cargo and courier companies or catering and delivery services had to work overtime.

Norms and cultural understandings have changed as well. For example, contrary to the established routines of the recent past, visiting elderly family members has started to be viewed as dangerous rather than a sign of love and respect toward them as they are at the risk level. Instead of visiting each other at their houses, friends started chatting on the phone or communicating by means of social media. Shopping, holidays, plans for the future, wedding ceremonies, funerals, hospital routines, diet and sport types, household and personal cleaning procedures and many other things that we may not have cited here have all been directly affected by the pandemic and changed forms. Inevitably, education was not an exception to those. Thus, at all levels and forms the whole world witnessed a shift from an almost commonly agreed upon concept of education to a new understanding. This was what happened at macro level. Unfortunately, at micro level these were not the only things that led Türkiye to a deep trauma; even worse was soon to come.

While still trying to heal the consequences of the pandemic, another severe incident happened in Türkiye on February 6th 2023. A magnitude 7.8 earthquake followed by a magnitude 7.5 one on the very same day destroyed 11 cities and killed thousands of people in the southern region of the country. In the cities that were hit by the earthquake, many houses, government buildings, airports, hospitals, roads, bridges, factories were either damaged or completely ruined and schools, hostels and universities were severely devastated if not totally collapsed. The survivors of the disaster were placed in still standing youth hostels, schools, hotels, gymnasiums, congress centres, covered market places, container sites or temporarily pinched tent sites wherever possible or some people were transported to other cities that are believed to be safe. Under such conditions, in most cities, it was impossible to continue education like before as there were almost no remaining school or university buildings. At the same time, the main components of education; many teachers and students had been injured, lost their limbs, or their lives, their family members, relatives, friends, and neighbours. Shortly, people were neither physically nor mentally ready for education. In

the earthquake area where people were somehow trying to heal their wounds of any kind, at least for period time education appeared not to be the priority. This way, education in Türkiye was hit by a second major strike after the pandemic.

As said, education at all levels was seriously affected and thus, new rules and regulations were put into practice in order to prevent students from the negative consequences of this new situation as much as possible. The only thing that would positively contribute to educational inconveniences appeared to be putting together the essential components for online education in the earthquake area as quickly as possible.

The shift from face to face to online education was not that much challenging for some parties due to the experience they gained during the pandemic days while for others it was more than complicated as that led to a variety of difficulties. Some of the schools and universities were already equipped with the necessary substructure for online education as they already had a pandemic experience in the recent past. However, in the earthquake regions, most school buildings were totally ruined. Especially the rural areas that were hit were not ready for face to face education, it appeared that the only possible solution to bring back the school days for the students was by online means.

As this was the case, inevitably numerous questions were raised on whether or not the technical substructure would serve to its purpose adequately after the earthquake, whether the students were safe and somehow under custody, whether the teachers' and students' were ready for online education, or the students' and teachers' had any technological equipment to serve for online lessons, if we suppose that they were mentally or psychologically ready for any form of education.

As digital natives, in Prensky's words (2001), teachers and students at younger ages may be said to have been more advantageous as compared to the digital immigrants, that is, teachers or learners at older ages. People in relatively rural areas who were not familiar with technology had to adapt themselves to the new conditions and the way we conceptualised the words "education" or "lesson" have totally changed. However, there was more to do in the situation than Prensky simply put forth.

To put in a nutshell, schools were closed and online lessons started for students at all levels. When we look at the situation I more detail from the tertiary level, we see that students of the damaged universities were provided with options to take courses at different universities in the cities that the earthquake had not hit. In order for the students to be able to continue their education at the most possibly convenient university, the government turned the whole education system at the universities to an online form all around the country. Thus, lecturers of the universities started to teach online in this inevitably obligatory context.

Due to the drawbacks the pandemic and later the earthquake disaster brought to the lifestyles, education not only at universities but also at other levels had to undergo changes. For example, as for the economic consequences, private schools had their share in the two disasters that followed one another. During the pandemic, parents sending their children to private schools did not want to pay any more private school fees when their children were not even going to school but were taking online courses. Later, due to the earthquake online classes had to continue to take some time for everything to be organised to turn back to usual. As a matter of fact, with their 1.5 million students, 175 thousand teachers from all branches, and 50.00 staff private

schools play an important role in education in Türkiye. However, now it is estimated, at macro level, that at least 1000 of the 12809 private schools went bankrupt during this period of time. In addition, some of these schools lost a considerable number of students and thus, as they did not have adequate number of students to survive in economic terms, more than 900 schools had to close down (Sozcu, 2020). Some private schools were even put on sale with their remaining students (Cumhuriyet, 2021). A similar situation applied to the public school system that almost collapsed after the disasters as well. At regions that experienced the earthquake, public schools had to struggle with a variety of differences. As most school buildings were totally ruined, lessons were to be given online. However, with the damaged internet substructure this was not an easy job to handle. Telecommunication companies failed to provide the necessary services for a while and when the situation bettered a bit more, online education started. Luckier students from home, others from tents or containers that were designed as temporary houses attended the lessons. There were even students who were trying to attend lessons in the streets even at the top of hills nearby only where they were able to reach the internet connection. As a consequence of the disasters followed one another in the country, online education happened to be the only solution to continue education. If online possibilities were not available, education in the affected regions would completely stop and this could have been a third disaster that struck people there.

## Research aim

The picture we aimed to draw here may lead to discussions on whether or not the online means served to all educational and psychological needs of the students, whether or not all online decisions and educational activities were realised in the most fruitful ways during the disaster days. In order to answer these and other interrelated emerging questions, looking at what online, distance or digital learning actually mean and what kind of issues should be cared for in such systems served as a starting point in this study. In addition, this chapter aims to illuminate the desired conditions for online education and what actually happened in the context of Türkiye from the perspectives of three involved parties at different levels. The parties the data for this chapter were collected from consisted of a secondary school language teacher from one of the mostly affected regions, a private school teacher teaching English at primary and secondary levels at the earthquake region and the lastly, from an affected region, a university lecturer at the English Language Teaching Department. Semi structured questions on the opportunities for accessing the online lessons, motivation, technical substructure, testing and evaluation opportunities, and finally, in school collaboration and cooperation.

## Case 1. An English language teacher from a secondary level state school.

The first participant of this research is a male secondary school English language teacher, a Ph.D. candidate with six years of teaching experience. He works in the city which the earthquake most severely hit and he teaches students most of whom lost their families, relatives, neighbours or houses. With this psychological load on the shoulders of the teaching learning community in such a setting, as the teacher puts forth,

education and being together with peers and teachers, even in online or distance forms, may be the best rehabilitation for those who were affected. As for the probable opportunities for accessing the online lessons, the teacher states that most students were disadvantaged in this respect because most of the students deprived of shelter put aside technical equipment for the lessons. This leads to a lack of motivation in both students and teachers, still as he evaluates this was better than nothing.

Excerpt 1. Families lost their houses and belongings, they do not have computers or mobile phones but still, if we did not have the online or digital forms it would be impossible for us to reach the students at all. Especially, at earlier ages students need more concern and guidance. I feel myself luckier than many other teachers as our school is not ruined and it is possible for us to go in and get our books, sources and other necessary items. We experience technical problems, from time to time we do not have internet access. However, students knowing that the lessons are somehow continuing and they still have their school community they feel themselves connected to life again. Without online education, it would not be possible for us.

The teacher comments on the ways he utilises testing and evaluation procedures. He emphasises the psychological aspects rather than effective evaluation procedures.

Excerpt 2. Honestly, with all these difficulties we have been living here, I do not very much care about assessment. What I value in such a context is the well-being of my students. This appears to be a lost academic term. We are still lucky that we can reach at least some of our students by distant means. In the past, I used to benefit from digital aids. I used to benefit from Kahoot games, Quizlet, Padlet, Wordwall and the like. Today, I cannot use them. These used to help me with the assessment of my students as well as having a joyous time with them.

The teacher also underlines the importance of in school collaboration to further the quality of education and the teaching learning environment. As he puts forth, he is very motivated for organising face to face activities with his students maybe not within the school building but possibly in the garden of the school. His view was not at all appreciated by the headmaster as he found this idea dangerous in a region where thousands of aftershocks follow one another. The teacher, on the other hand, still thinks that this is not an unsolvable problem. As he views, the headmaster is a bit elderly and slow in making decisions and taking action.

Excerpt 3. I know that our headmaster is worried about the students and himself of course. If we come together with the students, another earthquake may come and we may reach to undesired situations. I can understand this. He may be right. But I am young and full of energy, I have my ideas to better my students' emotions. I can plan game like language learning activities, drama activities, we can plan picnics in the school garden, we can write scripts together with the students and perform plays. Parents may join us in all these activities, as observers or even participant observers.

When asked about what if online means were not possible in that context, his answer is made up of one sentence only.

Excerpt 4. I don't even want to think about it.

## Case 2. An English language teacher from a secondary level private school.

In the second case, a male language teacher with more than ten years of experience had more opportunities than the first teacher had because of two reasons. First, although this city was one of the places the earthquake hit and where some houses were ruined and people lost their lives, he was relatively safe and the school he was working at was a private one. In these respects, both teachers and students had more opportunities for reaching technical equipment, accessing the internet and the like. Like thousands of people who were affected, students' motivation was low and as some lost their relatives, friends or neighbours, attracting their attention to the lesson was not easy.

Excerpt 5. Normally, I used to prepare Kahoot games and I decided on the content myself. I knew a lot about my students' preferences and it wasn't difficult for me to do that. I was preparing everything in such a way that I would also evaluate my students' progress. But then, I was not sure about anything.

As already mentioned, this teacher had the necessary technical substructure at their school but due to the increased demand, internet access was sometimes not possible. Still, the teacher tried to contribute to the students in a variety of ways.

Excerpt 6. In fact, I do not use digital tools just for teaching languages. I reflect on a lot of things when I prepare my lessons. With my materials, I try to add to their personality and well-being, their world knowledge and motivation toward learning languages. I feel that I have to do this because they are young and they need guidance. I teach them and when I feel that they lose their motivation, I start a game but some students leave the lesson thinking that the lesson is over. So I lose my motivation.

The teacher complains that the students seem to be touchier than before. This makes him even more indecisive on what to do. The things that he normally does in the lessons before may break the students' hearts and lead to demotivation.

Excerpt 7. For example, we have a leader board and we see the ranking, the winners, the champions of Kahoot games but students may not always like to see the rankings and leave the lesson. I try to sustain their interest by means of game-like activities and I know that a little bit of competitiveness may be of help like cooperation but unfortunately I cannot achieve that all the time.

Despite the situation, this teacher finds himself luckier than many other teachers. He does not have technical drawbacks and in such a sensitive context, at least he does not need to worry about these. He is content with the in school cooperation and collaboration during these hard times. Still, he underlines the value of being psychologically, technically and practically ready for such unexpected situations. When asked about what would have happened if there was no chance for switching from face to face to online learning, he talks about student psychology rather than educational losses.

Excerpt 8. Being together with friends even on online platforms contributes to students' wellbeing. It would have been much worse without online means in terms of both education students' recoveries from hard times.

## Case 3. Teacher trainer from an English Language Teaching department

The final case of the study is a female lecturer from an ELT department of a state university. She has more than 20 years of experience. As one of the pioneering universities that started online programmes in Türkiye, the lecturer appears almost content with the substructure of the university. The experience of the faculty in online education dates back to the pandemic days. Thus, the lecturer, like her colleagues, did not have to worry about technical problems. In a similar vein with the other two teachers working in different contexts, she underlined the increased demand for the internet. However, in her case this led to very short term problems but in general, but on the other side of the coin, it was the students who actually experienced such problems.

Excerpt 8. Our university is situated in the earthquake region and very close to the cities that had the biggest damage. Most of our students come from those cities and they were seriously affected by the earthquake. Many of them lost their family members, relatives, neighbours and friends and the houses of a considerable number of students were ruined. For these students, attending lessons was technically very difficult because of what happened in their cities. Psychologically, it was even harder, if not impossible, for them to concentrate on the lessons, projects, assignments and so on.

This lecturer teaches lessons that require practical experience as well. In fact, students' presenting lessons in the form of micro teaching sessions was a part of the assessment procedure for her course. We see that she had not managed to find a way for this component of her course since the pandemic. She sounds somehow desperate when talking about it.

Excerpt 9. As a matter of fact, as a lecturer, I appreciate the possibilities that we have in my university in terms of online education. Of course, we live with some complexities. However, the only channel that we can reach our students is by online means. Switching to online possibilities saved our day during these two disasters but I still cannot figure out how to overcome some of the problems I have. For example, how am I going to implement micro teaching sessions in an online context effectively? How am I going to motivate my students to attend lessons and reflect on one another's performances? Some of my students are in very hard situations that prevent them from attending lessons, what am I going to do with them? I plan to give up on micro-teaching sessions and ask online projects from them as assessment but will this really help me to make appropriate evaluations? What if, for example, they cannot manage to send their assignments in time due to technical problems? How am I going to know the real reason why some students do not attend the lesson? I have so many questions to answer in my mind.

Working at a more organised institution, the lecturer cooperated and collaborated with the colleagues and administration to help and guide the students they were able to reach. Similar to the other cases, she deems switching to online education precious in terms of continuing the education, being able to interact with students and constituting a bond with them no matter where they are. However, although she is an experienced teacher, she finds herself inadequate under such conditions when it comes to motivating students, maintaining the quality of her lessons, and continuing the already existing procedures of her lesson among emerging many more unforeseeable variables. She has a long term hope to serve to the settlement of these problems.

Excerpt 9. This experience taught all related parties. If I were to talk about the ways adding online components to face to face educational settings before, I would be touching upon issues such as going through a needs analysis process to identify what we actually need in different contexts, decide what we lack at each site, basing the online components on the analysis revealed, planning and implementing teacher training activities, and so on. But today, I can say that departments of teacher education should embed courses that may lead to training teachers who are also able to act professionally in unexpected and undesired situations like disasters we experienced. We may add more courses that give ideas to prospective teachers on how to effectively deal with student psychology. Teachers from different disciplines may come together and work on elective courses that aid the teachers in these perspectives. These courses may be offered to in-service teachers as well in an organised manner.

When we look for answers to whether or not the online means served to all educational and psychological needs of the students, whether or not all online decisions and educational activities were realised in the most fruitful ways after the pandemic and the earthquake, in all three examples we see that the answer is not totally positive. Still, we also find that the teachers are somehow content and appreciative to online education opportunities. All three teachers value online education but in the context of such disasters, they underline their students' psychology and wellbeing giving them the priority. Thus, they evaluate online education from this perspective. In a study conducted in Finland by Kansansen et al. (2000) researchers revealed the fact that whatever the teachers do, they do it for the good of their students. They make their decisions putting the students' benefits in the first place and viewing the students as their priority at all times. The same study was replicated in Germany and in a different country, with a different education system, the researchers reached the same outcomes. Likewise, all the teachers who participated in this study, despite their different contexts had the same overriding purpose; whatever they tried to achieve was for making things better again for their students.

## References


Behzadi, Z.& Ghaffari, A. (2011). Characteristics of Online Education and Traditional Education. Life Science Journal, 2011;8(3)

Chitkushev, L., Vodenska, I., & Zlateva, T. (2014). Digital Learning Impact Factors: Student Satisfaction and Performance in Online Courses International Journal of Information and Education Technology, Vol. 4, No. 4, August 2014OI 10.12973/eurasia.2017.00744a

Cumhuriyet (2020, 11th Feb.). Retrieved from http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/salgin-ozel-okullari-vurdu-ogrencisiyle-devren-kolej-1812897 11.02.2021

İlin, G. (2013). Moodle: A way for blending VLE and face-to-face instruction in the ELT context. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 12(4), 103-112

İlin, G. (2019). Sustainability in lifelong learning: Learners' perceptions from a Turkish distance language education context. *Sustainability,* 11(19).

İnözü J., İlin G. (2007, May, 26-27). How do Learners Perceive e-Language Learning Programs in Their Local Context, EIL Conference, Seul South Korea, *Asian EFL Journal Proceeding* vol.9, issue.4, pp.278-286.

Kansanen, P., Tirri, K., L. Meri, Husu, J. & R. Jyrhama (2000). *Teachers' pedagogical Thinking. Theoretical Landscapes, practical challenges*. American University studies Peter Lang.

Kınık, A. (2014). Historical development of distance education and the situation in Turkey. Marmara University Journal of Communication • Issue: 21

ss/pp. 73-94 • ISSN: 1300-4050 DOI: 10.17829/midr.20142110299

Lin, M., Chen, H., & K. Lui (2017) A Study of the Effects of Digital Learning on Learning Motivation and Learning Outcome. EURASIA Journal of Mathematics Science and Technology Education ISSN: 1305-8223 (online) 1305-8215 (print) 2017 13(7):3553-3564

Prensky, M, 2001. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, On the Horizon, Vol. 9 No. 5, NCB University Press.

Sailer, M., Murböck, J., & F. Fischer (2021). Digital learning in schools: What does it take beyond digital technology? Teaching and Teacher Education. 103 (2021) 103346

Singh, V. & Thurman, A. (2019). How Many Ways Can We Define Online Learning? A Systematic Literature Review of Definitions of Online Learning (1988-2018). American Journal of Distance Education p.p. 289-306 https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2019.1663082

Sozcu (2020, 3rd April) . https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/egitim/kolejlere-corona-virusu-kilidi-kapida-5721763/

Tuzer (2024, 19th March). Retrieved from https://tuzeronline.com/blog/uzaktan-egitim/hangi-universiteler-uzaktan-egitim-veriyor#:~:text

Wikipedia (2024, 19th March) retrieved from https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uzaktan_e%C4%9Fitimin_tarihsel_geli%C5%9Fimi#:~:text