



## METHOD “TELL TM“ AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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### Abstract

Innovation and creativity at all level of education is very important, especially, working with social vulnerable groups. The strategic objectives are focused on adult education, strengthening of the core competences, such as language, digital literacy, emotional awareness.

New innovative method “Technological, emotional and linguistic literacy through music” (TELL TM) was tested internationally in the context of the project Erasmus+. It opened creative inclusive ways in adult education and established three level communication by musical, technological, language learning means.

### Abstrakt

Innowacyjność i kreatywność na wszystkich szczeblach edukacji jest bardzo ważne, zwłaszcza, praca z grupami społecznymi w trudnej sytuacji. Cele strategiczne koncentrują się na edukacji dorosłych, wzmocnienie kompetencji kluczowych, takich jak język, umiejętności obsługi komputera, świadomości emocjonalnej.

Nowa innowacyjna metoda "technologiczny, emocjonalne i językowa alfabetyzacji poprzez muzykę" (TELL TM) testowano na poziomie międzynarodowym w ramach projektu Erasmus +. To otworzyło twórczych sposobów integracji w kształceniu dorosłych i ustanowił trzy komunikację na poziomie od muzycznych, technologiczne, środki do nauki języków obcych.

### Santrauka

Inovacijos ir kūrybiškumas yra labai svarbu visuose švietimo lygiuose, ypač, dirbant su socialiai pažeidžiamomis grupėmis. Strateginiai tikslai yra orientuoti į suaugusiųjų švietimą, stiprinant pagrindines kompetencijas, kaip antai, kalbos mokymasis, kompiuterinis raštingumas, emocinis sąmoningumas.

Naujas novatoriškas metodas "Technologinis, emocinis ir kalbų raštingumas per muziką" (TELL TM) buvo išbandytas tarptautinio projekto "Erasmus +" kontekste. Jis atvėrė kelią į kūrybišką įtraukijį suaugusiųjų švietimą ir nustatė trijų lygių bendravimą muzikos, technologijų, kalbų mokymosi priemonėmis.

Key words: adult education, music, technology, language

Słowa kluczowe: edukacja dorosłych, muzyka, technika, język

Raktiniai žodžiai: suaugusiųjų švietimas, muzika, technologijos

**Topicality.** Strengthening core competencies, such as language, digital literacy, ability to learn in adult education, is an important factor that helps to adapt to changing environmental conditions, improve the quality of life. In the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training “Europe 2020” the member states are invited to successfully integrate all learners into the educational system, including those with special needs. The strategic objectives raised in this document speak not only of education for all, but accentuate innovations and creativity at all levels of education. Theoretical background for innovative interdisciplinary method “TELL through music” created by Lithuanian researcher Aldona Vilkelienė was tested internationally during project ERASMUS+KA2 “TELL through music” (later - “TELL TM”) together with the Greek, Cyprian and Czech partners adult educators, who have highlighted the general range of problems of their target groups. They consist of seniors coming across with difficulties in learning because of weakened sight and the disabled with vision deficiency, adult learners with intellectual and hearing disabilities. Deaf people are also considered as a target group. The authors of the project discussed the ways of how to inspire and attractively motivate those adults to lifelong learning and help them to improve their core competencies. This implied the objectives of the research:

To explore the motivation of adult learners to develop core competencies (IT and English language) using music and artistic expression (movement, colors) as emotional regulation and educational tool;

To test training and education services provided by the adult education institutions using interdisciplinary method “TELL TM”.

Research method: questionnaire and comparative descriptive analysis, content analysis. The results gained by adult educators from 4 EU countries were analyzed by researchers dr. Ioannis Makris (Greece) and prof. dr. Aldona Vilkelienė (Lithuania).

### “TELL TM” approach: structure and dimensions

According to H. Gardner, the person has the wide variety of skills that can interact with each other. The adult education of postmodern age increasingly gains interdisciplinary nature, focusing on visualization, development of information technologies, when globalization processes, promoting mobility and employment in other countries, enable adults to learn new languages. Epistemological basis of the method “TELL TM” is multidimensional nature of human intelligence. Multidimensionality can be evident during artistic activities with the different target groups (intellectually disabled, deaf, visually disabled people, seniors).

**IT, emotions, language through music (arts).** According K. Michaelidis (2016), music and musical means of expression is a way to enhance senior’s learning procedures and the reasons for music’s success lie within the brain. Sound waves come into our ears and from there they transform into nerve impulses. These impulses are then sent out to areas in the left and right temporal lobes for processing. The functions that are used to process music and singing are stored in the brains other functions that include emotion, memory and language (Ortis, 2008, p. 206). The attractiveness of learning is enhanced by the means of emotional nature - music, achieved through such computer programs as Karaoke Player; listening to the musical masterpieces by application of the music encyclopaedia computer programs; educational games, exercises, computer drawings inspired by the music.

**Language.** Increasingly, on international and national level the positive effect of arts in teaching of various disciplines, including foreign languages, is accentuated. Adult educators are looking for ways to improve the quality of education not only by aesthetic, but also by taking advantage of some of the specific characteristics of art expression. There is a particular connection between language and music. Some parallels can be found on the semantic, especially phonetic level. The prosodic essence of language is directly related to prosodic essence of music, songs. The phonetic aspects of coherent language reveal themselves in changing of volume, tone, height, dynamics, timbre, intonation peaks and low tides of their elements, and all these things are the most typical for music (Ilčiukiene, 2011).

**Rhythm.** Rhythm is guided by communication between people (every language has its own unique rhythm that forms the basis of the intonation of voice and the emphasis placed on different syllables in various languages – even sign language has its own rhythm). Since time immemorial, rhythm has been the basic means for expressing emotions (already in ancient times drums and other percussion instruments for beating out certain rhythms were an integral part of various rituals to bring out strong emotions in people – this is true even today (Vilkeliene, 2005).

**Color.** Color has impact on people, though it may vary from culture to culture. While perceptions of color are somewhat subjective there are some color effects that have universal meaning.

Colors in the red area of the color spectrum are known as warm colors and include red, orange and yellow. These warm colors evoke emotions ranging from feelings of warmth and comfort to feelings of anger and hostility. Colors in the blue side of the spectrum are known as cool colors and include blue, purple and green. These colors are often described as calm, but also call to mind feelings of sadness and indifference. There is research that establishes that color may affect mood and behavior (Elliot, Moller, Friedman and others, 2007).

**Educational and communicative dimensions.** The interdisciplinary “TELL TM” approach highlights three-level communication. The first level is self-knowledge. The main motive of life is

to maintain, actualize and stimulate the organism's skills. It can be developed by musical, IT, language learning means. Personal identity and self awareness through art therapy methods, means of synergistic nature help the individual to understand the environment, to recognize his feelings, complex experiences and to stimulate relationships with others, to balance connections with the nature. Creation in the group through interdisciplinary approach "TELL TM" allows each team member to feel unique - one member of the group prefers music, another - the expression of emotions by other means (language, visual elements, poetry).

According all international team, partners opinion (A. Vilkelienė, E. Ingelevičius (Lithuania), I. Makris (Greece), M. Paphaterapontos (Cyprus), T. Sokolovsky (Czech Republic) toward theoretical background of TELL TM approach, three level communication (personal, interpersonal, group) and several stages/ steps educational actions can be used with the target groups:

- different musical parameters, for example, melody, rhythm, musical instruments;
- different arts – drama, painting, poetry, play, singing, dance, theatre;
- different language – English language, deaf communication gestures, native language words;
- computers, tablets, mobile phones and other electronic devices and IT programmes.

### **Research results**

The pilot research aim was to reveal how core competences such as IT and foreign language of adult disabled are developed. The questionnaire and comparative descriptive analysis was carried out in order to learn more about skills and core competences of the disabled adults or seniors with the visual and other difficulties.

Our sample is composed:

- a) **Lithuania** 27 participants. 3 man and 24 women. The 4 was from 21-40 , 21 from 40-60 and 2 from 60 and more. One was student, 15 musicians 2 adult learners and 11 other professions.
- b) **Cyprus** 10 participants 6 men and 4 women. The 3 was from 21-40, 6 from 40-60 and one 60 and more
- c) **Czech Republic** 11 participants. 1 man and 10 women. The 9 was from 21-40, 1 from 40-60 and 1 from 60 and more. 7 was students and 4 trainers
- d) **Greece** 13 participants 12 woman and 1 man. 4 was musicians, 2 Psychologists, 2 Occupational therapists so and 4 students and one adult learner The 10 was from 21-40 and 3 from 40-46.

First, international team of researchers asked their target groups to mention situations where they use IT knowledge and skills.

Table 1

**Comparative table (by decreasing order by country) of the preferences of all countries.**

	Lithuania	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Greece
↓	Read news on the internet			
	Do payments bank	Use Skype	Do payments bank	Use skype
	Use skype	-	Use skype	Use Power point
	Other	-	Use power point	Other
	Use power point	-	Other	Do payments bank
	Play internet games	-	Play internet games	Play internet games

From the table above we can see that adult with disabilities in all countries use the technology for reading news on the internet and less to play internet games. Also Lithuanian seniors and deaf adult from Czech Republic use more the technology to do bank payments that Cyprus seniors and adult disabled in Greece Greece that use more Skype.

Foreign language skills as a core competence were researched as well.

Table 2

### Question : How often do you speak in English?

Comparative table					
	Lithuania	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Greece	Total population (all countries)
Every day	-	30%	-	23,08%	9,84%
Every month	-	50%	45,46%	15,39%	19,67%
1-2 times per year	44,44%	20%	18,18%	23,08%	31,15%
Never	55,56%	-	-	38,46%	32,79%
Other	-	-	36,36%	-	6,56%

Table 3

	Count	Cumulative - Count	Percent - of Valid	Cumul % - of Valid	% of all - Cases	Cumulative % - of All
-500<x<=0,000	4	4	6,55738	6,5574	4,21053	4,2105
0,000<x<=,5000	0	4	0,00000	6,5574	0,00000	4,2105
,5000<x<=1,000	20	24	32,78689	39,3443	21,05263	25,2632
1,000<x<=1,500	0	24	0,00000	39,3443	0,00000	25,2632
1,500<x<=2,000	19	43	31,14754	70,4918	20,00000	45,2632
2,000<x<=2,500	0	43	0,00000	70,4918	0,00000	45,2632
2,500<x<=3,000	12	55	19,67213	90,1639	12,63158	57,8947
3,000<x<=3,500	0	55	0,00000	90,1639	0,00000	57,8947
3,500<x<=4,000	6	61	9,83607	100,0000	6,31579	64,2105

Missing	34	95	55,73770		35,78947	100,0000
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The results prove, that adult disabled in Lithuania and seniors don't have many opportunities to communicate in English very often. Most of them ( 55,56% ) don't speak English at all. Czech adult respondents are deaf, so for them sign language and native Czech language is more important for the everyday life skills. Greek adults with intellectual disabilities every day speak English very rarely (23,08%) while seniors in Cyprus use English language every day and every month.

Testing the method TELL TM" hypothetical idea was to use music and arts as a tool increasing communicative skills using IT and foreign language skills at the same time arts play a therapeutic and cognitive role. Learning more about arts adult people with disabilities relax and feel more comfortable. Therefore question "What does music (arts) mean for you?" revealed different positions: for Lithuanian seniors music means relaxation, but for Greek, Czech and Cyprus adults knowledge and activities with music and arts is a way to understand more about arts. So it was important to find out what artistic activity is the most desirable for adults and to compare it between 4 countries.

Table 4

**Comparative table (by decreasing order by country) of the preferences of all countries.**

	Lithuania	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Greece
↓	To sing songs	To play musical instruments	To dance	To learn more about folk music and national culture
	To play in the theater	To learn more about folk music and national culture	To play in the theater	To dance
	To dance	To learn more about European music and culture	To play musical instruments	To play musical instruments
	To know more about classical composers	To dance	To learn more about European music and culture	To sing songs
	To learn more about European music and culture	To sing songs	To sing songs	To understand classical music
	To understand classical music	-	To know more about classical composers	To learn more about European music and culture
	To learn more about folk music and national culture	-	To learn more about folk music and national culture	To play in the theater
	Other	-	To understand classical music	To know more about classical composers
	To play musical instruments	-	Other	Other

As we can see from the table X priority is very different - from singing (Lithuania) to playing music instruments (Cyprus), dancing (Czech Republic) and learning more about folk music and national

culture (Greece). But all respondents from all countries were unanimously when they answered the question “What activity do you do in order to improve your mood?”. Their answer was “I listen to the music”.

The questionnaire results confirmed that method TELL TM can be developed using music or other arts as a tool not only to develop IT, foreign language skills, but as a therapeutic and relaxing activity for adult with disabilities or seniors

## Reflections

Artistic exercises were created, shared and tested in partners countries with the adult learners. Music teachers and adult educators evaluated 2 artistic exercises from each country. The exercises were tested during local seminars, discussed and assessed, and opportunities of application and optimization for other groups of learners were estimated. The participants performed artistic exercises, wrote their reflections, which were analysed and generalized by the project researchers. Main themes during content analysis were emphasized as the result of the reflections.

Table 5

### Adult educators attitude toward method TELL TM and its components

Theme	Subtheme	Illustrating statements
1. Psychology of music and emotions	1.1. Music represents state of emotions	...we have used the activity where participating teachers have expressed themselves how they feel today and they have chosen some emoticons which are representative of their state of emotions (M. P.).
	1.2. Artistic activity improves social evaluation	Our teachers were interested in the fact that individuals with hearing problems had managed to act in a professional way and the artistic activity was an interesting video to them in order to get more information on the background of rhythm and performance for people with particular difficulties, such as the target group of hearing impaired. (M. P.)
2. Social and communicative role of music	2.1. Music and language	...wherever it is about the perception of music or written or verbally spoken communication (e.g. expressing emotions verbally), deaf people have problems not only with spoken, but also written expression. (T. S.)
	2.2. Rhythm and its practical function	All teachers repeated the names of the 4 seasons with a particular rhythm based on the feeling we get from each season. This was done sometimes in Greek and sometimes in English language. (M. Paphaterapontos, seminar material, Paphos, 2016).
	2.3. Socio-cultural aspect of interdisciplinary learning	I noticed that people like to listen story about songs. Traditional songs have an important history and symbols. But its much more better to give song texts when you want to teach a new song and speak about this song especially if this song is in English language. (A. Vilkeliene, seminar material, Alytus, 2016).
3. IT and visualization	3.1. Seniors and visualization.	Seniors are not used to visualization and IT. Give more time for Powerpoint presentations. Most of seniors have visual problems. Big and colourful letters, signs on the screen are helpful. They dont like complex tasks. It is better to divide tasks into small groups.(A. Vilkeliene, seminar material, Alytus, 2016).
	3.2. Visualization with intellectually disabled learners	Visualization of rhythm – the perception of rhythm is important not only for deaf people, but for everyone, especially, for the intellectually impaired. You can visualize music and show it in the historical context, you can use rhythm and visualization to

		express the atmosphere of the seasons and the personal relationship of the participant to various natural phenomena and life situations – use percussions or just “banging” the palms on the table or clapping and adding nonverbal communication (facial expressions, body movement, etc.) (I. Makris, Athens, seminar material, 2016).
	3.3. Visualization through IT or movement	Usability for the hearing-impaired target group is primarily as an inspiration under the condition that the specific artistic activity includes music visualized by movement or by translating it into sign language (T. S.).

Combining the improvement of core skills during artistic activity raises many challenges. Comparative research highlighted the importance of main skills developed using different arts. These skills are based on psychological, social and cultural background of adult education.

## Conclusions

The interdisciplinary “TELL TM” approach highlights three-level communication by musical, IT, language learning means. The first level is self-knowledge. The main motive of life is to maintain, actualize and stimulate the persons skills. The most important features of personality becoming, starting with corporeal feeling, self-awareness, ego-building, takes place in the early life and at young age. By analysing his inner world, obtaining information from the surroundings, the individual changes: his *self*-image changes, the own identity is discovered and developed.

The language of artistic symbols creates the aesthetic game field, where the ideas are born, the artistic emotions are experienced and the interpersonal relationships are created. Personal identity and self awareness through art therapy methods, means of synergistic nature help the individual to understand the environment, to recognize his feelings, complex experiences and to simulate relationships with others, to balance connections with nature.

Creation in the group through interdisciplinary approach allows each team member to feel unique - one member of the group prefers music, another - the expression of emotions by other means (language, visual elements, poetry). Thanks to the artistic tools, creative work in the group becomes the symbolic expression of common ideas, which unites people and creates a positive emotional spectrum. Thus, interdisciplinary nature of “TELL through music” approach requires explanation of the default four components and their role in the adult education.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the present study, results provide some insight into how different adults in different countries assess core competences, such as IT, foreign language and emotional literacy. Although some differences were found, the two groups, seem to share a common attitude toward IT – Greece and Cyprus use more time for Skype while Lithuanian and Czech adults use internet for practical issues – bank payments.

Results from this study confirm the prevalence of arts and music, as it was observed and reported by adult learners and adult educators. Therefore it can be confirmed that method TELL TM including IT, arts, language studies and emotional literacy can be used in adult learning for development core competencies in very attractive way. Finally, in the case of authorship, the findings reported here highlight the therapeutic role of arts that can be applied in adult learning as

a tool for relaxation.

Ultimately, results from this study help to expose educational issues and national differences within comparative research that may warrant further investigation.

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