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Seamless learning: how to connect better digital cultural heritage, teaching history and MIL skills

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Guest appearance from the Modern@ project transfer of knowledge visit



Few words about myself

- Digital transformation, user experiences and innovation in big digital cultural collections.
- Experience from University of Glasgow, University of Strathclyde, University of Malta and UCL
- Reintegrating in my native Bulgaria with a research grant which explores disruptive technologies in innovation labs in GLAM institutions.
- Currently also working on an UNESCO project exploring the place of MIL in school curricula in Qatar.
- Member of *Europeana Network Association Management Board* and of *DARIAH Scientific Board* (joining from 1.1.2022).





Topic to discuss

- Zou je haar kunnen vragen om met name de connectie te maken tussen het ondersteunen van leren en ‘boundary crossing’ d.m.v. (mobiele) technologie en haar werk in het cultural heritage & media literacy domein? (indien mogelijk met een link naar mobile & seamless learning design?).
- Connection between learning and boundary crossing of learning in and out of school (-> seamless learning)
- Domains: cultural heritage and media literacy
- Learning and unlearning
- Skills – Media and Information Literacy



Perspective

- Digital collections
 - Primary/secondary sources – dozens of millions of them!
 - Essential for all the Humanities, Arts, but also helpful for STEMs
 - Skills to search/use/analyse
 - Seamless learning in History as an example



Story from the past

- Dobрева-McPherson, Milena & Angelova, Galia & Agre, Gennady. (2015). **Bridging the Gap between Digital Libraries and e-Learning**. Cybernetics and Information Technologies. 15. 10.1515/cait-2015-0057.
- Needs of the education sectors are not taken into account when developing these big digital resources
- However, big digital libraries tend to look at education as a perspective use case
 - E.g. Europeana has an Education community
 - Formal but also informal!



Scenario 1 – formal learning

- There are some communities/ projects which showcase the use of digital libraries in education, e.g.



EuroClio

Inspiring History and Citizenship Educators

<https://www.euroclio.eu/project/teaching-european-history-in-the-21st-century/>

Scenario 1 – formal learning



Using political cartoons as evidence

How revealing is a political cartoon of imperialist attitudes before World War 1?

 Helen Snelson



Source analysis is a key skill of the historian. Political cartoons offer rich material for students of World War 1. By setting a source in context in this activity, students can infer about imperialism in the years before 1914. This activity enables students to formulate their own questions about a source and to research its context in order to use it as evidence. This activity can be done online or in the classroom with pre-downloaded material.

Scenario 1 – formal learning

Indicative age

14-16 years

Approximate time

1-2 hours

Learning outcomes

Acknowledgements

Activity designed by Helen Snelson from an idea by Bob Stradling, with the support of the Historiana learning and historical content teams and EUROCLIO trainees. The source used in this activity is from the Library of Congress, USA. The development is financially supported by the European Union and the Evens Foundation.

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Learning outcomes:

- Closely observe a political cartoon
- Use it to ask questions of the past
- Research the context to the cartoon in order to answer their questions and to use it as evidence
- Learn about imperialism before 1914
- Via class discussion, arrive at their own opinion on the enquiry question: 'How revealing is a political cartoon of imperialist attitudes before World War 1?'

Scenario 2 – informal learning



- Applicable also for history enthusiasts – the issue is how to reach them (communities of interest/practice; people with interest in genealogy)

The information literacy connection



Skills/competences

- The current focus on the history-related analysis
- There is an unused opportunity to also develop media and information literacy skills – e.g. search for similar material, identify and compare cartoons from different countries, organise and share contents
- i.e. there is more space for blending skills
- Potential use to form critical thinking in relation to misinformation

Most popular technological tools in use



- Digital storytelling
- Games
- Location based VR/AR
- Photoblogs

Typical approach: Use of personas

“Maria is a School teacher, comfortable with computers and the internet.

Happily Googles but also frequently having a specific target for her searches as she prepares for work. She uses her mobile to update her Facebook status, but mostly for calling and texting. Her aim is often to prepare for classes, but also to find new ways of motivating her pupils” –



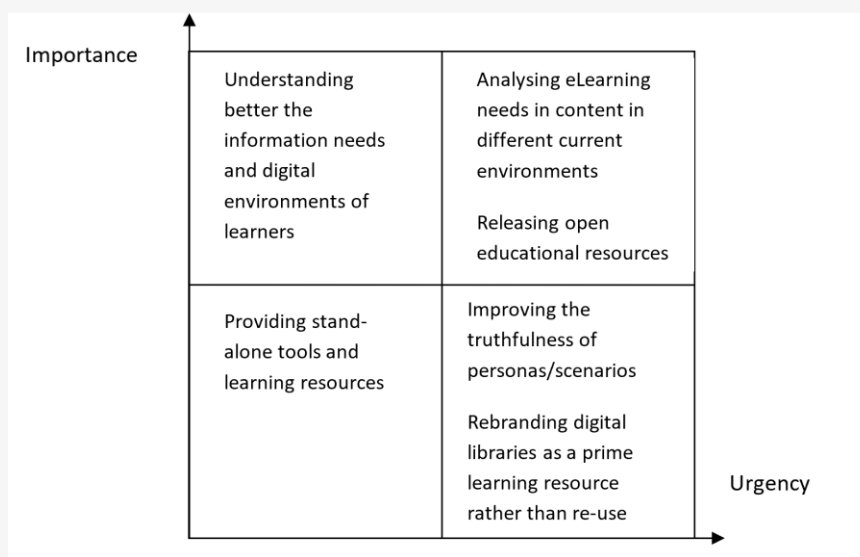
Personas (short version) from EuropeanaConnect (2010).

Some discussion questions



- How to combine in a better way subject competences with MIL competences?
- How to make the step from the formal to the informal learning?
- How to improve the design of seamless learning experiences in history?
- How to make use of the digital content available in digitised collections and integrate it better in the modern learning environments?

Is this summary of importance and urgency still valid (from Dobрева et al., 2015)?



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