Learner-centred Approach Teacher Development Framework: Multiliteracy Skills and Competences

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Abstract
The article aims to present the *Learn & Lead Innovation* training program, designed to support lifelong teacher development in professional competencies. This program is structured around two core components: (1) the Learner-centered approach (LCA) and (2) the enhancement of personal, metacognitive awareness, and leadership skills. The training process and its six-level scoring system, tailored for each defined skill, are comprehensively outlined. This explanation is further complemented by a detailed discussion of the LCA Teacher Development Framework, which includes specific criteria for each developmental level. The primary aim of the program is to establish an international network of LCA practitioners and model LCA schools, thereby fostering a collaborative platform for the exchange of best practices and shared learning experiences.
Key words: teacher training, teacher development scales, learner-centered approach, Learn & Lead innovation

Introduction

The quality of education in Slovakia, as well as in some other European countries, has become increasingly concerning, with some aspects even deteriorating. Although learners tend to accumulate a relatively high level of knowledge, their ability to apply it in real-life situations is often limited, as is their proficiency in critical thinking and problem-solving. This perspective is supported by a wealth of empirical evidence and numerous research findings (e.g., European Commission *2020*, ERIC 2018, OECD 2021, Lojová et al 2015, Smetanová 2024).

Education within mainstream schools, characterized by a long-standing tradition of conventional teaching methods, has been in need of reform for many years. This entails transforming the transmissive-instructional teaching paradigm focused dominantly on the teaching process and content into a more innovative approach focused on learners and learning processes rooted in humanistic principles. Such an approach emphasizes not only the development of learners' cognitive domains but also the affective ones, reflecting the complexity of mental functioning. The significance of these domains is supported by contemporary research in neuroscience (e.g. Blakemore & Frith 2005, Jensen 2008, Phelps 2006, Schumann 2004).

To foster the multiliteracy skills and competencies essential for life in the 21st century—such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, teamwork, and self-regulation—it is necessary to adapt not only the content but also the teaching approaches and methods, the classroom atmosphere, and teacher-learner relationships. This includes redefining the roles of both teachers and students.

This article aims to present a teacher training program designed to address these specific needs. The program has been developed, implemented within in-service teacher training, and continuously refined to its current form. The need for this training has become particularly urgent given the ongoing curricular reform in Slovakia, which includes adopting LCA as one of its fundamental principles.

Given the consistently positive feedback from participants, we aim to disseminate it more widely to educators who may find it beneficial. At present, the collected feedback is being systematically analyzed and synthesized.

Development of the learner-centered approach teacher development framework (LCA TDF)

Between 2010 and 2024, Harmony Academy s.r.o., in collaboration with various European institutions[1] , undertook several projects aimed at the professional and personal development of teachers, trainers, and managers. The overarching objective was to sustain and update teachers' skills and competencies, enhance their self-management and leadership abilities, and cultivate a growth mindset. The projects were structured around three interconnected frameworks working in synergy: the implementation of LCA, alignment with the model of excellence based on the European foundation for quality management model (The EFQM Model - EFQM), and the Learn & Lead Innovation concept (LLI). These frameworks were developed through a series of Erasmus+ KA1, KA2, and Grundtvig projects.[2] These initiatives have culminated in the development of the project "2020-1-SK01-KA203-078306 Upgrade with LCA (ULCA) and the ongoing project "Creating a network of excellent ULCA Schools" (2023-2026). The LCA framework is grounded in the foundational principles of humanistic education, specifically drawing on Carl R. Rogers' philosophy (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994), which has been further developed by numerous educators and researchers (e.g., Lojová 2022, Nunan 2013, Weimer 2013). The EFQM model serves as an essential framework for supporting schools in continuous quality improvement, equipping them with strategies to respond effectively to change. The LLI framework equips managers with essential tools for maintaining educational quality and supports trainers in delivering in-service professional development for teachers.

A core task of these projects was the development of the LLI educational program for teachers and school managers, designed to facilitate a structured, competency-based career pathway toward excellence. This program is structured around two primary components:

1. The Learner-centered approach
2. The enhancement of personal and metacognitive awareness and leadership

The program is designed to cultivate and rigorously assess professional competencies in LCA while also advancing teachers' metacognitive awareness, self-management, and relational skills. Structured as an intensive two-week course, the program integrates both theoretical and practical dimensions. The first part is dedicated to the principles of LCA competences designed to facilitate an in-depth understanding and application of LCA methodologies in the classroom. The second part focuses on developing teachers' learn and lead competencies of a "smart" individual.

A key intellectual output of these projects is the development of a structured framework for the systematic enhancement of professional skills: the LCA teacher development framework (LCA TDF) which sought to establish a well-defined career

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[2] The foundation project “Learn & Lead” (2010-2012) was followed by more projects such as “Learn & Lead for Parents” (2013-2015), “Be life long learning” (2014-2016), “Learning, training and working for better perspectives and employability” (2015-2017), “Happy School 2020” (2018-2021), “Transforming the traditional language school by innovating its business model“ (2020-2022), and “Promoting a knowledge-sharing culture in learning organisations” (2021-2024)

progression path for teachers. The criteria outlined provide detailed descriptors for each level, illustrating a teacher's progression in both components. The LCA TDF categorizes teacher development into three principal stages, each with two substages, resulting in six incremental levels from novice to expert teacher. The stages align with the European Profiling Grid for language teachers (https://egrid.epg-project.eu/) and encapsulate the phases of a teacher's professional journey as follows:

- **1.1 – 1.2 Competent Replicator**: Early career development stage, focusing on basic professional competencies (Score: 0–26 points, 33%).
- **2.1 – 2.2 Aware Practitioner**: Intermediate stage, marked by a growing awareness of pedagogical practices and skill development (Score: 27–52 points, 66%).
- **3.1 – 3.2 Expert Facilitator**: Advanced stage, demonstrating a high level of expertise and efficacy in teaching practices (Score: 53–72 points, 100%).

Scoring system:

The LCA TDF framework consists of 12 areas, split equally between six core areas for the LCA and six for LLI competences. Each area is divided into six stages, each stage corresponding to an assigned point value (e.g., 1.1 = 1 point, 1.2 = 2 points, 2.1 = 3 points, etc.), leading to a maximum score of 72 points. This structured assessment framework enables teachers to evaluate their competencies across diverse domains, accurately gauge their current developmental stage, and receive targeted feedback for areas requiring enhancement. The point-based system not only provides a quantifiable measure of progress but also establishes clear criteria for advancement. All project participants completed a self-assessment to identify their current stage of development within the LCA framework and determine specific competencies for further enhancement. In subsequent project phases, their progress was systematically monitored through both peer and self-evaluation to ensure that ongoing training aligned with individual needs.

The following chapter presents detailed descriptors of the core skills and competencies required at each stage. These descriptors have been meticulously developed and continuously refined in collaboration with experienced teaching practitioners. Within the subsequent NELCA project, observation and evaluation sheets were designed and utilized. Participants who had completed the LLI educational program delivered lessons that were observed, analyzed, self-evaluated and evaluated by both their peers and LLI experts. Based on this analysis, the trainees, under the guidance of an expert, developed an action plan to advance their professional skills. Their progress is being continually monitored.

The learner-centered competences

LCA, as a core component of the LCA TDF, is structured around six guiding principles that encompass the entire content of the LCA training program:

- Active learning
- Learning content
- Cognitive and affective domains
- Classroom climate and learning atmosphere
- Evaluation and feedback
- Teacher's role, relationships with learners

The following section provides a concise explanation of the guiding principles and presents the competency scales outlining teachers' developmental levels. As Level 3.2 is consistent across all twelve competences, it is described only once and not repeated for each individual area.

Active learning

Active learning as a fundamental component of LCA is grounded in the theoretical framework of constructivism, where learners actively construct their own body of knowledge. This is achieved by processing perceived stimuli and information, which they analyze, categorize, link, and integrate into their existing knowledge systems and mental structures. Given their diverse individual determiners, learners ascribe meaning to new information in a manner unique to each individual. Recent advancements in neuroscience provide extensive evidence supporting this principle. The brain's intrinsic and continuous function to create and expand neural networks underpins the natural human inclination to be active and to engage in lifelong learning. This ongoing neural activity is driven by the brain's constant search for appropriate stimuli to build new associations and seek meaning.[3] In instructional methods, the active role is transferred from the teacher to learners who actively search for information, seek solutions, and solve problems. They engage higher-order cognitive processes by formulating their own questions, setting hypotheses, critically analyzing information, summarizing, generalizing, and engaging in manipulation and experimentation. Active learning is also driven by natural curiosity, which is intrinsically linked to the desire to discover. Teachers are responsible for providing tasks that challenge learners' full cognitive capacity as well as affective domains. The outcomes include not only the acquisition of new knowledge but also increased joy in discovery, enhanced self-confidence, and a greater sense of self-realization. In the absence of these opportunities, learners may experience boredom, frustration, and demotivation.

Levels of competence

Level 1.1

The teacher has foundational knowledge of methods that promote active learning.

Level 1.2

The teacher applies basic methods to foster active learning.

Level 2.1

The teacher effectively maintains learner motivation, engaging them in cognitive activities through tasks that promote exploration, problem-solving, brainstorming, discussion, experiential learning, and research. The teacher uses strategies to stimulate curiosity and imagination, offers targeted support, and organizes group work to enhance collaborative learning.

Level 2.2

The teacher creates an environment that supports creative, immersive engagement in tasks. They guide students in adopting effective strategies for identifying and solving problems. Additionally, the teacher minimizes behaviours that lead to passive participation, fostering a more engaged classroom atmosphere.

Level 3.1

The teacher serves as a mentor to less-experienced colleagues, inspiring them to adopt active learning approaches. They observe colleagues' teaching and provide constructive feedback focused on strategies to activate and engage students.

Level 3.2

The teacher offers counselling and professional support to colleagues. They conduct demonstration lessons followed by analytical discussions, lead seminars on student engagement strategies, and contribute improvement proposals to their institution. In

[3] Study in: Croisile, 2006; Schumann et al., 2004; Blakemore & Frith, 2005; Kellogg, 2012; Jensen, 2008; Lojová, 2021.

doing so, they help build a culture of continuous enhancement of teaching practices across their school and beyond.
Active learning is intrinsically linked to the selection of learning content, a topic explored in greater depth in the subsequent subchapter.

Learning content
For learning to be effective, the content must be both meaningful and relevant to the learners. Consequently, it should be personalized, enabling learners to connect new information with their existing knowledge base, thereby creating multiple associations and a more complex cognitive network. Personalization is a critical factor in meaningful learning[4]. Learning tasks and activities should be designed to reflect or simulate real-life challenges that learners are likely to encounter. By doing so, learners can develop multiliteracy competencies and skills that are naturally applicable both within and outside the school environment. Cognitive psychology and neuroscience provide a robust scientific framework for understanding the mechanisms that underlie meaningful learning and memory functioning. They offer evidence that the brain is inherently designed to network and seek meaning. The complexity of these networks directly correlates with the depth of understanding and retention. Optimal learning occurs when the brain is required to activate multiple connections—when a greater number of associations are elicited, the new information becomes more firmly integrated into the learner's knowledge base. Moreover, neuroscience unequivocally demonstrates that mechanically acquired, irrelevant knowledge is not processed at a higher cognitive level and therefore easily forgotten[5].

Levels of competence
Level 1.1
The teacher understands foundational approaches for structuring and adapting learning content to enhance its relevance and meaning for learners.
Level 1.2
The teacher applies basic methods to structure and adapt learning content, making it meaningful and relevant to students' experiences.
Level 2.1
The teacher engages learners in personalizing the content, guiding them in organizing their knowledge and applying it in real-life contexts.
Level 2.2
The teacher encourages students to integrate new knowledge with their prior experiences and actively seek additional materials that support their learning and empowers learners to adapt content to ensure it resonates with their interests and prioritizes depth and understanding over mere accumulation of facts.
Level 3.1
The teacher mentors novice colleagues, encouraging them to adopt strategies that enhance the relevance of learning content. They observe peers' teaching and provide constructive feedback, focusing on making content meaningful, interdisciplinary, and relevant.
Level 3.2
The teacher offers professional guidance to colleagues, conducts demonstration lessons followed by in-depth analyses, and leads seminars on content personalization. They contribute to institutional improvements aimed at creating a cohesive, relevant curriculum within their school and other educational settings.
In addition, by prioritizing relevant and personalized learning, educators enhance motivation, critical thinking, and lifelong adaptability.

[4] E.g. Griffiths & Keohane, 2001; Lojová, 2022
[5] E.g. Croisile, 2006; Schumann et al., 2004; Paradis, 2004, 2009

Cognitive and affective domains

When a teacher facilitates active learning of meaningful and relevant content, learners engage deeply, activating various components of their cognitive and affective capacities. This holistic engagement enables learners to realize their full potential and fulfil their need for self-actualization, which is the strongest motivational force. Findings from neuroscience uncover the neurophysiological correlates of both cognitive and non-cognitive phenomena involved in learning. They increasingly confirm the holistic nature of mental functioning, demonstrating the interconnectedness of various brain systems and the mutual dependence of their operations.[6] The emotional systems are typically activated in interaction with perceptual, cognitive, or motor systems. It is thus evident that emotions not only modify the quality of cognitive functions but can also entirely dominate conscious brain activity. Research suggests that there exists an optimal level of emotional engagement for the efficient functioning of cognitive processes, thereby maximizing learning outcomes. Numerous studies consistently support the hypothesis that positive emotions are optimal for the formation of neural networks, which are essential for memory retention and the comprehension of relationships. Conversely, negative emotions have detrimental effects on the creation and retrieval of memory associations (Arnold, 2002; Gkonou et al., 2017, Juríková, 2024).

Levels of competence

Level 1.1

The teacher recognizes the importance of affective factors in learning and possesses foundational knowledge of cognitive processes.

Level 1.2

The teacher applies methods and strategies to boost student motivation. They balance cognitive and affective processes in their teaching, and cultivate cognitive development in practical ways.

Level 2.1

The teacher facilitates higher-order cognitive skills. They guide learners in understanding relationships, foster critical thinking, and are attuned to learners' individual needs, interests, emotions, attitudes, and perspectives.

Level 2.2

The teacher provides intellectually challenging tasks that encourage learners to increase their efforts and strive for growth. They are adept at identifying learners' talents and potential, leveraging these within the subject area to encourage both skill and personal development.

Level 3.1

The teacher mentors novice colleagues, modelling a balanced approach that integrates cognitive and affective domains. They observe and provide constructive feedback to colleagues, with an emphasis on harmonizing cognitive and emotional aspects of learning.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Effective learning is clearly a dynamic interplay between cognitive and affective domains. Within this context, the classroom climate and learning atmosphere play a pivotal role in shaping learners' engagement, motivation, and overall academic success.

[6] E.g. Arnold, 2002; Barret & Wager, 2006; Gkonou et al, 2017; Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007; Lewis, 2005; Phelps, 2006.

Classroom climate, learning atmosphere, and classroom relations

A positive classroom atmosphere is a crucial component of LCA as it profoundly influences various aspects of the learning process, including learners' perceptions, thoughts, emotions, attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance. In addition, it helps learners feel valued, respected, and motivated. The social climate, along with its associated emotional dynamics, is a complex phenomenon shaped by numerous psychosocial factors. Classroom relationships are multifaceted and intricate, necessitating openness, fairness, and mutual trust and respect. While all participants contribute to the overall atmosphere, the role of the teacher is critical. Teachers play an essential role by fostering a positive mindset and adopting a positive and encouraging approach toward students. By creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive classroom climate, teachers encourage risk-taking, stimulate curiosity, and promote active participation. A teacher's enthusiasm and passion for the subject can have a profound effect – energize and inspire learners. Furthermore, it is essential for teachers to establish a strong rapport with their students; they must feel the teacher's love and genuine care. The foundation of this positive mindset lies in the teacher's overarching approach to learners, which emphasizes recognition of their strengths and positive attributes and respecting their diverse needs, backgrounds, and abilities. Additionally, the teacher fosters a sense of community, collaboration, and inclusivity among students. This supportive climate enables learners to feel secure in expressing their ideas and learning from their mistakes, thereby fostering a resilient and engaged classroom culture.

Levels of competence

Level 1.1

The teacher understands key factors that influence the social climate and foster a positive learning atmosphere.

Level 1.2

The teacher actively creates a positive learning environment, ensuring that students feel safe and supported. They display a warm and caring attitude, view students positively, and openly communicate empathy.

Level 2.1

The teacher establishes and sustains a supportive and stress-free classroom climate, encouraging positive relationships both between teacher and students and among students themselves. They manage their own emotions, fostering cooperation and teamwork over individual competitiveness. The teacher fully accepts learners' unique characteristics, identifies their strengths, and uses them to help students develop their potential in the subject. Discipline is maintained naturally and respectfully.

Level 2.2

The teacher creates an environment that promotes the self-actualization of learners within the subject. They proactively prevent and address negative behaviours and are adept at handling or guiding students through conflict resolution. The teacher works to prevent conflict situations and is proficient in facilitating constructive solutions when conflicts arise.

Level 3.1

The teacher provides support and guidance for problem-solving within the classroom and helps colleagues develop effective strategies for maintaining a positive classroom climate. They mentor novice teachers, model an active approach to classroom management, and provide constructive feedback focused on preventing negative behaviours and fostering natural discipline.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

A positive classroom climate is fundamental to effective learning and is shaped by multiple factors, among which continuous feedback and evaluation play a significant role.

Evaluation and feedback

Informed by Carl Rogers's philosophy, teachers are encouraged to approach learners as unique, valuable, and capable individuals. This perspective fosters an environment where learners are accepted for who they are, with an emphasis on identifying and cultivating their strengths. Since each individual has distinct abilities, learners are not expected to excel equally in all areas, and their performance is not evaluated in a competitive manner. When learners are encouraged, supported, and positively evaluated, they experience a sense of recognition, trust, and value, which enhances their motivation, fosters their self-esteem, and helps them overcome barriers to success. Mistakes are seen as an integral part of learning. Feedback is constructive, continuous, and process-oriented, emphasizing growth rather than focusing solely on outcomes, helping learners achieve their personal best. Moreover, teachers place emphasis on self-assessment and peer assessment to foster critical thinking and responsibility. Disciplinary issues are addressed not through punishment, but by reinforcing desired behavior. The psychological foundation of this approach is well-established: humans inherently seek positive emotions, a sense of accomplishment, recognition, and self-actualization.

Levels of competence

Level 1.1

The teacher understands foundational principles of assessment, and principles related to reinforcement, such as reward and constructive feedback versus corrective guidance.

Level 1.2

The teacher applies appropriate assessment techniques that focus on learners' engagement in the learning process, valuing their effort and dedication. Feedback is primarily positive, encouraging, and demonstrates a belief in each learner's capacity for growth.

Level 2.1

The teacher employs assessment strategies that enhance intrinsic motivation, reinforce a positive self-image, and build learners' self-esteem and confidence. They foster learners' abilities to engage in critical self-reflection and peer evaluation.

Level 2.2

The teacher provides detailed, constructive feedback, highlighting learners' strengths and guiding them toward the fullest development of their potential. They establish an environment where objective, critical, and constructive self- and peer assessments are valued.

Level 3.1

The teacher mentors novice educators and inspires colleagues by modelling an active, LCA to assessment. They monitor and provide constructive feedback to colleagues, emphasizing methods that motivate learners and help build their self-esteem through effective and supportive practices.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Effective evaluation and feedback constitute a vital dimension of the teacher's role and significantly enhance the quality of teacher–learner relationships.

Teacher's role, relationships with learners

In LCA, the teacher's role undergoes a significant transformation from being the primary source of knowledge and sole authority to becoming a facilitator, coach, and partner. This shift redefines the traditional hierarchical dynamic, where learners were passive recipients of knowledge, to a more collaborative and interactive learning. As a facilitator, the teacher establishes an environment conducive to active participation and deep engagement; they create conditions that allow learners to explore, discover, and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills; they encourage peer teaching and cooperative learning wherein students challenge one another's thinking, and collectively construct knowledge. In the role of a coach or mentor, the teacher guides students in developing metacognitive awareness, fosters learner autonomy, independent thinking, self-confidence, self-regulation, and a growth mindset. This role is critical in promoting self-directed learning, as learners are encouraged to take ownership of their educational journey. A partnership between teachers and learners is characterized by mutual respect, trust, and shared responsibility in the learning process. This approach fosters participation in decision-making, open communication, and promotes a classroom culture where every learner feels they belong and their contributions matter. Learners feel safe to express their thoughts without fear of judgment and, in turn, respect the teacher's expertise and guidance.

Levels of competence

Level 1.1

The teacher understands the principles behind establishing and maintaining natural authority, which fosters respect and trust and sets a positive tone in the classroom. Additionally, they recognize the importance of engaging with parents or guardians to build a supportive learning environment.

Level 1.2

The teacher actively applies strategies that build a respectful and trust-based partnership with learners, they establishes a natural authority. They also initiate positive communication with parents or guardians.

Level 2.1

By demonstrating genuine care and a commitment to learners' success, the teacher skilfully facilitates learning in ways that allow learners to fully develop their potential. They create an inclusive atmosphere where learners feel comfortable expressing their opinions and attitudes; involve learners in classroom decision-making, promoting a sense of accountability for their own learning. Additionally, the teacher builds partnerships with parents or guardians.

Level 2.2

The teacher guides learners in self-discovery, helping them to build a positive self-image, self-esteem, and confidence. They encourage learners to explore their own learning strategies and styles, fostering metacognitive awareness. The teacher collaborates with parents or guardians.

Level 3.1

The teacher provides guidance to novice educators and serves as a role model for colleagues, promoting an active LCA. They observe colleagues and offer constructive feedback focused on effective facilitation of learning, building partnerships with students, and cultivating autonomy in learners. The teacher also encourages colleagues to engage parents or guardians as partners in the learning process.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

The effectiveness of learning in LCA is deeply influenced by multiple interconnected factors, including active learners' participation, the personalization of content, the balance between cognitive and affective engagement, the classroom climate, the role

of evaluation and feedback, and the evolving role of the teacher. The outlined competency levels illustrate a structured progression in these areas, empowering educators to create dynamic, learner-centered learning environments. By integrating these principles, teachers not only enhance academic outcomes but also nurture adaptable, self-directed learners equipped with the skills necessary for continuous growth and success.

The Learn & Lead competences

While LCA principles are focused on the teaching-learning process, the competences outlined in the LLI framework within the LCA TDF focus on educators' personal and professional attributes. The competences are structured around six key domains.

- Self-awareness
- Guiding teachers' development
- Communication and collaboration with colleagues and school management
- Communication and cooperation with parents or legal guardians
- Resilience and stress management
- Global context orientation

Self-awareness

By fostering self-awareness, the framework encourages educators to reflect critically on their beliefs, biases, mindset, and areas for growth. Inspired by Daniel Goleman's (2003) social-emotional intelligence leadership competencies, self-awareness forms the core of effective personal and professional growth. Through intentional self-reflection and self-actualization, individuals learn to maximize their strengths and address challenges, enhancing their resilience, adaptability, and capacity to inspire others.

Levels of Competence

Level 1.1

The teacher is aware of the need to learn about their strengths and weaknesses.

Level 1.2

The teacher seeks the tools (tests, professional articles, courses) for self-learning, develops self-reflection skills.

Level 2.1

The teacher knows their strengths and weaknesses (talent, assertiveness, empathy, intuition, perseverance, patience, flexibility, expertise, critical thinking skills, ability to take decisions etc.), purposefully grows to achieve full self-actualization.

Level 2.2

The teacher has mastered the strategies for utilizing their strengths and compensating for weaknesses; with their initiative-taking encourage and inspire others.

Level 3.1

The teacher provides incentives for self-reflection and the development of metacognitive awareness to colleagues.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Guiding personal and professional development

Based on Stephen R. Covey's (2010) principles, this competence fosters a commitment to lifelong learning and growth, both personally and professionally. Individuals cultivate an initiative-taking approach to self-improvement, setting clear

goals for development and establishing regular habits of learning. As they progress, they actively seek opportunities for skill enhancement, encourage others toward self-education, and take the initiative in creating development-oriented activities.

Levels of Competence

Level 1.1

The teacher feels the need for personal and professional growth, is ready for lifelong learning and growth both professionally and personally.

Level 1.2

The teacher actively seeks opportunities for their further development and is able to set goals for their professional development.

Level 2.1

The teacher participates in various educational events and seizes self-learning opportunities.

Level 2.2

The teacher has developed regular habits of education and self-learning, encourages others to self-education.

Level 3.1

The teacher provides incentives for self-education; initiates educational and project activities focused on professional and personal development.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Communication and collaboration with colleagues and school management

The competences in communication and collaboration are essential for fostering a cooperative environment that enhances educational outcomes. They foster continuous improvement and innovation through mutual respect, conflict resolution, and leadership development. By utilizing Virginia Satir's (2010) personality iceberg model, educators can enhance interpersonal relationships and navigate team dynamics, while Peter Senge's (2012) learning organization concept emphasizes the significance of collective learning and adaptive change. Key competences include applying effective communication strategies, active listening to diverse viewpoints, and valuing others' contributions. By completing tasks reliably, resolving conflicts, and nurturing a positive work atmosphere, educators can cultivate a collaborative spirit. Additionally, they can develop leadership skills through initiating cooperation and managing interdisciplinary teams.

Levels of Competence

Level 1.1

Knows the principles of effective communication; is open to cooperation.

Level 1.2

Applies the principles of effective communication, can perform tasks in a team.

Level 2.1

Listens to and respects the opinions of others, can appreciate the efforts of others and compromise, reliably completes their work in a team; resolves conflicts effectively,

Level 2.2

Can collaborate effectively, accept the distribution of roles, actively participate in the management of teamwork; can create and maintain a positive working atmosphere.

Level 3.1

Can initiate cooperation with others, develop their leadership skills; is able to manage and coordinate interdisciplinary groups; searches for innovative cooperation with partners outside the school.

Level 3.2
(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Communication and cooperation with learners' parents or legal guardians

Effective communication and cooperation with learners' parents or legal guardians are vital for fostering supportive partnerships, reinforcing community support and contributing to student success. Teachers should remain open to cooperation, actively listen to parents, respect their opinions, and appreciate their efforts, all of which help build strong partnerships. Educators must share both positive and negative feedback with parents, proposing constructive solutions when necessary. Additionally, they should engage parents informally, organizing after-school activities that encourage family involvement.

Levels of Competence

Level 1.1

Knows the principles of effective communication with parents, is able to inform about learner's achievements and progress on regular basis.

Level 1.2

Applies the principles of effective communication with parents; is open to cooperation with parents.

Level 2.1

Listens to and respects the opinions of parents, can appreciate their efforts, develops, and maintains partnerships with parents (makes parents aware of how to progress).

Level 2.2

Shares positive and negative findings with parents and proposes solutions.

Level 3.1

Can cooperate with parents on informal level, organizes free time activities after school with families.

Level 3.2

(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Resilience and stress management

Resilience and effective stress management are fundamental to navigating the inherent challenges of the teaching profession, helping educators maintain well-being and foster a positive learning environment. Based on the work of Karen Reivich and Andrew Shatté (2002), it emphasizes the importance of effective strategies for handling stress, frustration, and conflict while adhering to principles of psychological hygiene. Educators should actively apply these strategies in both their professional and personal lives to enhance their resilience and frustration tolerance, recognize burnout signals, and maintain empathy and emotional awareness. By preventing and managing workplace stress without affecting their pedagogical effectiveness, they can care for their overall well-being.

Levels of Competence

Level 1.1

Knows effective strategies to manage stressful situations (stress, frustration, conflict), and knows the principles of psyho hygiene.

Level 1.2

Uses strategies to manage stress both in work and personal life, adheres to the principles of psych hygiene.

Level 2.1
Increases their resistance against stress (resilience and frustration tolerance), can recognize signals of burnout syndrome; is emphatic and aware of their own emotions.
Level 2.2
Can prevent stressful situations in workplace, manages stress without an impact on the efficiency of their pedagogical activity, can prevent burnout syndrome, cares about their overall well-being.
Level 3.1
Can initiate early intervention aimed at prevention of stressful situations in workplace, actively participates in creating positive interpersonal relations and positive working atmosphere.
Level 3.2
(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Global context orientation

Based on Jan Košturiak's (2014) insights, a global context orientation highlights the importance of linking education to the broader socio-cultural, economic, and political realities. Educators should actively engage with current affairs, integrating relevant updates into their pedagogical activities—shaping content, methods, and resources accordingly. They must examine and enhance their competencies in line with societal needs, including analytical and critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, and emotional self-regulation. Innovating teaching materials and initiating project proposals expand interdisciplinary relations and foster a holistic understanding of educational contexts.

Levels of Competence
Level 1.1
Is aware of the need to link education with the wider socio-cultural, economic, and political context.
Level 1.2
Is interested in current affairs, updates, and links their pedagogical activities with current events.
Level 2.1
Examines and considers the possibilities of developing their competences in accordance with the needs of social development.
Level 2.2
Develops their competences in accordance with the needs of the development of society, inspires and encourages colleagues in the given field.
Level 3.1
Innovates teaching materials, initiates, and submits project proposals in the field, expands interdisciplinary relations and activities.
Level 3.2
(As in chapter 2.1.1)

Conclusion

The Learn & Lead Innovation training program supports lifelong teacher development through a structured, competency-based pathway grounded in the European Foundation for Quality Management model. It promotes continuous quality improvement by equipping educators with strategies to navigate change and build professional competencies aligned with the LCA. Emphasizing both cognitive and affective development, the program fosters self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and multiliteracy skills essential for 21st-century education.

In response to Slovakia's ongoing curricular reforms, which require widespread upskilling of in-service teachers, LLI offers timely and targeted support. Developed in collaboration with European institutions, the program reflects a shared commitment to pedagogical excellence.

Looking ahead, LLI aims to expand its impact by establishing model schools as training hubs for pre- and in-service teachers and building an international network of LCA practitioners. This vision promotes global collaboration and innovation in education.

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