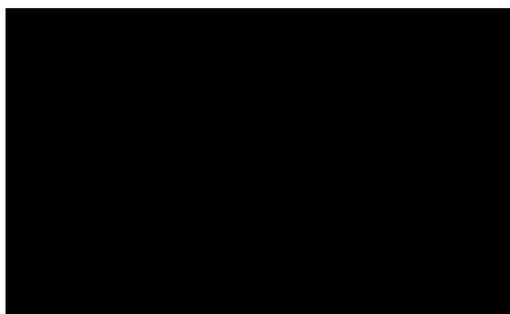
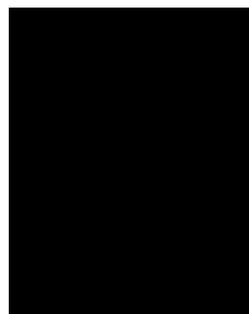


**IX BUENAS PRÁCTICAS DE INNOVACIÓN DOCENTE
EN EL ESPACIO EUROPEO DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR**

UNIVERSIDAD SAN JORGE | DANIEL JIMÉNEZ SÁNCHEZ (COORD.)

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Colección Innovación Docente, n.º 9

1.ª edición, 2022

Diseño de portada: Enrique Salvo Lizalde

Diseño interior: Distopic Studio

Imprime: Copy Center Digital

Impreso en España - *Printed in Spain*

Depósito legal: Z 507-2022

Ediciones Universidad San Jorge

Campus universitario Villanueva de Gállego

Autovía A-23 Zaragoza-Huesca, km 299

50830 Villanueva de Gállego (Zaragoza) Tel.: 976 060 100

ediciones@usj.es cultura.usj.es www.usj.es

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Transcultural Nursing: An innovative approach to teaching the importance of culturally safe care

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1. Introduction

“Transcultural Nursing: A European Priority, a Professional Responsibility” (TC Nurse) is an Erasmus+ Project that was led by the Universidad San Jorge (USJ) and was active between September 2018 and August 2021. The project brought together lectures and students from four different countries (Spain, Belgium, Turkey and Portugal) to deepen their knowledge of the importance of providing culturally safe care in modern European healthcare settings. The project has addressed fundamental problems and deficiencies concerning social inclusion in our societies by critically analyzing current practices in healthcare settings as well as actively developing new and innovative curricula to be used in higher education nursing programs. By combining academic research with innovative approaches to teaching, TC Nurse has made contributions to the scholarly literature and the curriculum.

Now that the project has officially come to an end, we wanted to review its goals and show its impact, especially in terms of pedagogical innovation and good teaching practices. The project not only focused on improving students’ knowledge about an important and underappreciated area of nursing (a focus on content), but also developed new teaching methods and materials to do so (a focus on methodology). In this regard, the project has obtained some noteworthy results that we believe will be of use to university lecturers dedicated to teaching transcultural care. Since English and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology were central to TC Nurse, the project also has other important lessons that will be of interest to teachers working in other higher-education programs.

2. Transcultural Nursing and TC Nurse's mission

It has been more than 30 years since the appearance of Madeleine Leininger's groundbreaking book *Culture Care Diversity and Universality* (Leininger & Reynolds, 1991), which is a foundational work in the study of transcultural nursing. The goal, to put it simply, of transcultural nursing is to provide culturally competent care to all members of society, a task that has proven to be an ongoing challenge, especially in terms of the care provided to patients from certain minority backgrounds. To offer this care, professional nurses must take into account and appropriately respond to their patients' social, political, ethnic, linguistic and religious identities. Instead of understanding these cultural aspects as having of little to no relevance in the healthcare system, transcultural nursing theory forcefully argues that understanding them is actually crucial for providing good care and ensuring safe and effective communication between patients and nursing professionals. Patients do not leave their culture behind when entering a hospital, and healthcare workers must learn to deal with this diversity in an empathetic and respectful manner that ensures that all patients receive the care that they deserve.

Despite some critiques of transcultural nursing, Leininger's work has led to new ways of thinking about the interaction between health, culture and care. Furthermore, this field of academic research is in line with core EU values outlined in the Lisbon Treaty to foster social inclusion. However, in our increasingly interconnected world where the forces of globalization and forced migration have continued to spark demographic changes across Europe, we worry that our healthcare systems have not lived up to all the values enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, nor have they properly enacted the best practices that have been recommended by researchers working in transcultural nursing. Furthermore, despite the fact that transcultural nursing theory is a well-respected and crucial area of research in nursing, it has not been afforded sufficient attention within nursing curricula in higher-education institutions. If future nurses are not properly educated and taught about the importance of providing culturally safe care nor trained in how to give that care, it seemed likely that serious problems would go unsolved.

These perceived shortcomings provided the spark that created TC Nurse. The project brought together likeminded researchers and educators from four institutions of higher learning: Universidad San Jorge, Spain; Istanbul Aydin University, Turkey; Artis Plantin Hogeschool Antwerpen, Belgium; Instituto Politécnico de Portalegre, Portugal (in

the project's final year, the Universidad de Zaragoza joined the project as an associate partner). This group set two major goals for itself:

1. To foster the development of social, civic and transcultural competences, and critical thinking, not only amongst participant nursing students and teaching and clinical staff, but also amongst key stakeholders and decision/policy makers at local and regional levels in all participating countries.
2. To tackle discrimination, segregation, racism, bullying and violence in healthcare through the undertaking of preliminary research in this area, and the subsequent creation of a multinational blended-learning module in transcultural nursing.

Accordingly, the team planned a series of three international intensive programs for nursing students (with a proposed total of 120 participating students over the three-year lifespan of the project) that would not only provide students with a solid background in transcultural nursing but would also offer a space where students could actively begin to develop the skills that they will need in the future to provide patients with culturally competent care. All instruction was carried out in English using the CLIL methodology (Darn, 2006), with which instructors across USJ have long had experience, thanks to the work and support of the Instituto de Lenguas Modernas.

In the rest of this paper, we will turn to how the TC-Nurse team accomplished these goals, briefly explaining our intensive programs for students (and the methods to prepare them) and several of the project's intellectual outputs. Due to the nature of the volume in which this chapter appears, we wish to highlight the use of CLIL in TC Nurse and the development of a new learning model to promote the acquisition of cultural competences as part of international training for university students.

3. TC Nurse Intensive programs: from in-person to blended learning

During each year of the TC Nurse project, the team carried out research activities and planned intensive summer school programs for undergraduate nursing students, in which 6 students from each partnering institution would meet in person and spend a week together. During this time, students would take a profound look at transcultural nursing and proven best practices for providing culturally competent care. Originally, these events were all meant to be held in person so that students could

actively develop necessary social and professional competences through sustained interaction with peers from different cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. In other words, direct interaction with students from other countries was conceived of as an important opportunity to start putting some theory into practice since it would afford the opportunity to engage and work with people from significantly different cultural backgrounds. Likewise, being in a context where everyone had to communicate through a foreign language and belonged to a minority rather than majority group provides an important, albeit limited, chance to empathize with minority groups and experience first hand the challenges of being in an unfamiliar context.

While the first intensive program was carried out as planned in Portalegre (Portugal), the second two could not be held in-person because of COVID 19. Accordingly, the second and third summer schools were held online using a blended format. At first, the team worried that an important aspect of the training would be lost: would students still be able to interact and form partnerships with foreign peers to the same extent as they would be able to when meeting in person? This concern was amplified by another important consideration: since the materials had already been prepared and vetted to be used in a physical classroom setting, would they be as effective in an online environment?

Fortunately, careful planning and the willingness of students to engage and “put themselves out there” led to extremely successful learning experiences in which students participated, interacted and grew as individuals and a group. The team was able to confirm these positive outcomes, thanks to a series of questionnaires that students filled out after each day’s sessions, as well as a series of focus groups in which students and teachers participated after completing the TC-Nurse course. Among the important findings, we learned that for some students, engaging with peers with the help new ICTs tools and platforms was preferable to meeting in person since they had more tools to help them communicate in a foreign language.

The success of these blended summer schools is an important finding for the project. It suggests that with motivated students and dedicated teachers as well as sufficient planning and online resources, we can indeed plan and execute successful international learning events from home. Accordingly, the TC Nurse experience offers some further support for a growing movement to expand “Internationalization from home” (Soria & Troisi, 2014). In addition to physical mobility programs

that entail higher costs and are generally accessible to smaller number of students, new learning technologies, methodologies and initiatives can also provide quality experiences for students to develop important intercultural skills that are essential to thriving in today's globalized labor market. This, of course, is not to say that traditional mobility programs are any less important or effective, but simply that developing technologies can provide other worthwhile educational experiences which bring people across distant geographies closer together.

From its inception, the TC Nurse team had conceived of these intensive programs as opportunities to workshop and pilot a blended-learning module that could later be used by the partner organizations and beyond, when project funding was no longer available. This was seen as a key means of ensuring that the project's work would continue to have relevance after its formal completion. By being forced to move online sooner than expected, the team was able to confirm that this sort of module can indeed be successful.

4. TC Nurse and CLIL

If we want to create learning experiences in which students from culturally different backgrounds will work together collaboratively, it is practically a given that many learners will have to communicate through a foreign language. This was certainly true for TC Nurse during which all events were conducted in English, which was not the mother tongue of any students and only a small minority of instructors. Teaching in English has become an increasingly common educational practice across the globe and has been seen as an important 21st century skill (García, 2011). This is surely the case in Spain where we have a range of different bilingual programs from pre-school to higher education (Anghel, Cabrales & Carro, 2016).

Teaching content through a foreign language, however, is much more complicated than merely translating content into a new language. Instead, if this approach is to be successfully implemented, it requires the training of teaching staff, the careful preparation and selection of didactic materials, support structures for students and a shared motivation and desire to take on a cognitively challenging task. The specific pedagogical approach used in this project is known as Content and Language Integrated Learning. This is a methodology that been thoroughly theorized and developed thanks to the work of scholars like Do Coyle and David Marsh (2010) (among many others).

The TC Nurse team was able to address this challenge in large part because Universidad San Jorge has been a leader in using the CLIL methodology in many of its undergraduate programs. Lecturers at USJ teaching in English receive special training provided by the University's Instituto de Lenguas Modernas, which offers teachers two different levels of CLIL training and certification. Additionally, project members from the Instituto Politécnico de Portalegre were also experts in the CLIL methodology.

As alluded to above, preparing such bilingual learning experiences requires a good deal of planning. The first step is to provide instructors, who are experts in a specific field of study and are competent users of the English language, with training in CLIL. For this reason, during each year of the TC Nurse project, there was special training for the instructors who would be teaching in that year's intensive summer program. For the first two years of the project, this training was held in-person and carried out over a two-day period, whereas the third and final training had to be held online, which also allowed teachers more time to learn both synchronously and asynchronously. This was another silver lining of being forced online: without the pressure to complete a training within a narrow time gap, learners were able to take their time and more deeply reflect before finishing assignments.

While some TC Nurse teachers already had experience with CLIL, many did not. For this group, the CLIL training events were indispensable. These sessions also served as initial workshops where that year's instructors for the summer program could pilot their activities and receive special feedback on how to make material accessible for students with lower linguistic competence as well as encourage them to participate in learning activities (a process that is called "scaffolding" [Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010; Reiser & Tabak, 2014]).

In addition, each of the four participating institutions had its own learning culture, meaning that students were expected to engage in different ways and perform certain types of tasks to be successful. In other words, what it means to be a good student can vary from one country to the next: some partner institutions tended to use more "traditional" methodologies where students play a more passive role, whereas others were more comfortable using more active methodologies that require higher levels of participation and opinion sharing. These cultural differences are meaningful and could be discussed and taken into account during the CLIL training to help prepare instructors.

One of the project's intellectual outputs is a practical guide dealing with the implementation of CLIL in higher education. As the project's CLIL team has argued in the manual, a good deal of the academic literature about CLIL is rather theoretical in nature and does not always offer teachers practical advice about how to pace and manage learning in a bilingual setting. Therefore, the TC Nurse team has drafted and published a manual to help teachers working in bilingual education (Crean, Coelho & Coelho, 2021). The manual is structured around the experience of teachers and students during the TC Nurse intensive programs. Specifically, the CLIL team conducted a series of focus groups with students and teachers as well as asking learners to complete daily questionnaires about their experiences, as mentioned above.

The production of this manual is an important result for this project and is bound to be a useful resource for all teachers seeking to improve their ability to teach students through a foreign language. The manual, like all other project results, is freely available on the project website.

5. Structuring learning: development of the CCMEn model

The TC Nurse project was not the first to bring students together from different countries to promote the acquisition of cultural competencies. Accordingly, the team planned its first intensive summer course on a slew of different theories and models that have been published previously. However, there was no one model that perfectly fit TC Nurse's needs or characteristics. Accordingly, after the first intensive summer school, the team decided to draft its own model which is called The Teaching and Learning Cultural Competence model (Antón-Solanas *et al.*, 2020). The model combines cutting edge research on CLIL and socio-emotional learning to put together a coherent and plan to improve cultural competence in a multicultural setting during short-term training programs. Due to space restrictions the model cannot be fully explained here but can be read about in detail in the article cited above. Here we can only provide the briefest of outlines.

The model combines the learning and development of interpersonal skills with professional ones. Specifically, units are dedicated to the following pairs of skills: self awareness & cultural awareness, awareness of the other & cultural knowledge, social skills & cultural sensitivity, and finally culturally mindful behavior & culturally safe practice. Students will work on these topics collaboratively over a week-long course through a shared second language (English). While each day is dedicated to a

different pair of concepts, they all build on and complement one another. Unlike other learning models, the CCMEn model recognizes that studying these issues and acquiring the desired competences is a process that cannot be completed in a short period of time. The model, then, takes this into account and is based on the idea of the gradual process of acquiring new concepts and deepening self-knowledge.

The model was employed during the second and third summer programs with great success, as was shown by student and teacher responses in questionnaires and focus group interviews. Using the model, we believe, improved students' ability to grapple with new concepts, by putting them into practice and making forward strides on their journey to provide patients with culturally safe and competent care.

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Project resources

Project learning platform: <<https://learning.tcnurse.eu/>>

Project website: <<https://tcnurse.eu/>>

Project CLIL manual: <<https://tcnurse.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Practical-guide-for-HE-teachers.pdf>>

*Este libro se terminó de imprimir en Zaragoza
el 14 de junio de 2022 con motivo de la celebración
de las X Jornadas de Innovación Docente de la
Universidad San Jorge*