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## **Report from the International Scientific Conference *DLCC2017* in Cieszyn and Katowice, Poland, 16–17 October 2017**

The theme of the 9th edition of the International Scientific Conference DLCC2017: Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Distance Learning ([www.dlcc.us.edu.pl](http://www.dlcc.us.edu.pl)) was “Effective development of teacher’s skills in ICT and e-learning”; the conference also included reports from the IRNet project. The conference was held on 16–17 October 2017 in Cieszyn and Katowice. It was organised by the Faculty of Ethnology and Educational Science at the University of Silesia in Cieszyn. The co-organisers were: the University of Ostrava (the Czech Republic); the Silesian University in Opava (the Czech Republic); the Constantine Philosopher University in Nitra (Slovakia); the Twente University (the Netherlands); the University of Extremadura (Spain); the Curtin University in Perth (Australia); the Borys Grinchenko Kiev University (Ukraine); the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia (Russia); the Dneprodzerzhinsk State Technical University (Ukraine); Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Poland; Polish Pedagogical Association, Branch in Cieszyn; Polish Scientific Association of Internet Education; and IADIS – International Association for Development of the Information Society.

The conference took place on Monday, 16 October, at the Faculty of Ethnology and Educational Science in Cieszyn, and on 17 October in Kazimierz Lepszy Hall in the main Rector’s building at the University of Silesia in Katowice.

The conference included the following range of topics:

1. Effective development of teachers’ skills in the area of ICT and e-learning:
  - computer training for prospective and practising teachers in the area ICT and e-learning,
  - teachers’ and learners’ competences in distance learning and computer science,
  - distance learning and lifelong learning,
  - self-learning based on Internet technology.

2. E-learning and intercultural competences development in different countries:
  - legal, social, human, scientific, and technical aspects of distance learning and e-learning in different countries;
  - psychological and ethical aspects of distance learning and e-learning in different countries;
  - collaborative learning in e-learning.
3. E-learning methodology – implementation and evaluation:
  - European and national standards of e-learning quality evaluation;
  - evaluation of synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning, methodology and good examples;
  - MOOCs – methodology of design, conducting, implementation, and evaluation;
  - contemporary trends in world education – globalisation, internationalisation, mobility.
4. ICT tools – effective use in education:
  - selected Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 technologies;
  - LMS, CMS, VSCR, SSA, CSA ;
  - cloud computing environment, social media;
  - multimedia resources and didactic materials, video-tutorial design.
5. Theoretical and methodological aspects of distance learning:
  - successful examples of e-learning;
  - distance learning in humanities and science;
  - quality of teaching, training programmes, and assessment;
  - e-learning for the disabled.
6. E-learning in the development of key competencies:
  - key competencies in the knowledge society,
  - use of e-learning in improving the level of students' key competencies.
7. Alternative methods, forms and techniques in distance learning:
  - simulations and models in distance learning,
  - networking,
  - distance learning systems,
  - m-learning.
8. E-environment and cyberspace:
  - e-environment of the university,
  - smart technology in education,
  - Internet of things.

The conference was the essential event to summarise the results of the four years of the project entitled IRNet “International research network for study and development of new tools and methods for advanced pedagogical science in the field of ICT instruments, e-learning and intercultural competences” ([www.irnet.us.edu.pl](http://www.irnet.us.edu.pl)). The project has been realised in the framework of 7th Framework Programme, and financed by the European Commission and Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Prof. Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska (Faculty

of Ethnology and Educational Science) is a coordinator of the international consortium that includes ten institutions from nine countries. The idea of the project is based on the needs originating from the contemporary reality. It is the period of the dynamic process of globalisation, when theory and practice of e-learning as well as knowledge on multiculturalism acquire the significant sense. It is apparent that the implementation of new and innovative tools in the educational activity is the necessary condition in the development of society based on knowledge. These goals will not be reached effectively unless these innovative forms and methods in education, and distance education are implemented actively at all stages of education.

Over fifty scientific scholars from Poland and abroad participated in the conference, including members and professionals of the IRNet project, among others from the University of Ostrava (the Czech Republic), the Silesian University in Opava (the Czech Republic), the Constantine Philosopher University in Nitra (Slovakia), the Twente University (the Netherlands), the University of Extremadura (Spain), the Curtin University in Perth (Australia), the Borys Grinchenko Kiev University (Ukraine), the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia (Russia), the Dneprodzerzhinsk State Technical University (Ukraine), the Lusíada University (in Portugal), and many other universities. These universities involve RMIT University in Melbourne (Australia), the University of Lisbon (Portugal), the Abant İzzet Baysal University (Turkey), the University of Defence in Brno (the Czech Republic), the AGH University of Science and Technology in Cracow, the Medical University in Poznań, and the University of Technology in Gdańsk (Poland), and many others.

The guests and conference members were welcomed by the Dean of Faculty of Ethnology and Educational Science prof. dr hab. Zenon Gajdzica on the first day and by the Vice-Rector for Research prof. dr hab. Andrzej Noras on the second day of the conference.

The first day of conference included four sessions: the plenary session and three thematic ones. The lecture presented during the plenary session by Antonio Dos Reis (Portugal) together with Nataliia Morze (Ukraine), Olga Yakovleva (Russia), and Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska (Poland) was entitled "From Socrates behaviourism to digital constructivism."

The second lecture, entitled "How I'm training university professors to use video in classroom and online classes," was presented by prof. Filipe Carrera from the University of Lisbon in Portugal. The speaker shared the personal and long-standing experience in preparation and use of video in teacher training of the academic staff in Portugal, Ecuador, and many other countries in the traditional and online procedures.

The lecture entitled „Learning paradigms as input parameter for educational leadership” was presented by prof. Piet Kommers (the Twente University in the Netherlands), who is a well-known researcher in social-media, information

technologies, and e-learning, and the main editor and member of a few international scientific journals.

The fourth lecture, entitled “Support framework for online teachers at AGH-UST,” was given by prof. dr hab. eng. Jan Kusiak and Beata Tworzewska-Pozłutko, PhD (AGH University of Science and Technology in Cracow, Poland), who shared their experience concerning online trainings for academic teachers organised at AGH by the E-learning Centre, which is one of the first such centres in Poland and a leader among academic e-learning centres in Poland.

During the session for teachers “Application of new technologies and communication media (TiK) at school in the light of new core curriculum,” papers were presented by teachers-innovators from Poland and the Czech Republic; the papers were entitled “Quizlet – a new educational tool for teachers and students,” “The robot’s not so black as it’s painted” – a presentation of the project concerning information technology in primary education, “Information technologies in the operation of primary schools,” and “Universal teaching aid in the implementation of the new 2017 curriculum.” The papers enabled pedagogues to share their experience and examples of good practice.

On the second day of the conference, during the plenary session, there were two lectures. The first one – “E-pedagogy and e-learning” – was given by prof. dr hab. Nataliia Morze from the Borys Grinczenko Kyiv University (Ukraine), Vice-Rector on Informatisation, Correspondence Member of Ukrainian ANP, and the author of over 300 scientific publications, numerous textbooks, and monographs. Subsequently, speakers from the RMIT, Melbourne University (Australia), prof. Elspeth McKay and Allaa Barefah, PhD, presented a lecture entitled “Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching information systems courses: A Rasch-measurement approach by means of virtual classroom Adobe Connect application.”

Later during the second day of the conference, prof. dr hab. Iryna Sekret from the Abant Izzet Baysal University (Turkey) presented a paper using video recorded earlier by means of most modern applications and audio-visual tools. The paper was entitled “Designing the syllabus of the course ‘Internet technologies in translation’ with the reference to the translation competences and challenges of the market.”

On behalf of the international team: Nataliia Morze (BGKU, Ukraine), Olga Yakovleva (HSPU, Russia), Tomayess Issa, Theodora Issa (CU, Australia), Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska from the University of Silesia in Katowice (Poland) gave a lecture on the topic “Some methodological aspects of MOOCs developing,” in which the most important methodical foundations of MOOC “ICT tools in E-learning” were presented. MOOC is developed by the international IRNET consortium.

An important event during the conference was the round table debate led by Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska (the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland) and Magdalena Roszak (the Medical University in Poznań, Poland). The participants of the debate were numerous scientists and experts from various countries: Piet

Kommers (the Netherlands), Martin Drlík (Slovakia), Nataliia Morze (Ukraine), Maryna Romanyukha (Ukraine), Tatiana Pavlova (Russia), Elspeth McKay (Australia), Jan Kusiak (Poland), and Iwona Mokwa-Tarnowska (Poland). During the debate, experts answered current questions connected with the conference theme: 1) Teachers' and learners' digital skills in different countries – formal regulation and informal approach. Teachers' skills and ICT competencies in E-learning: recommendations; 2) The quality of e-learning and ICT competencies of teachers – ways of increasing effectiveness; 3) Innovative specialisations and MA programmes at your university in 2014-2017; 4) Internalisation of higher education. Present and future internalisation at your university; 5) From traditional university to Open and Smart University. Suggestions and recommendations.

Apart from thematic sessions, the important element of the conference were the following workshops attended by the conference participants: “How to implement a flipped classroom,” “Subjects on study: How to organize your students according to learning styles,” and “Teacher’s digital skills to be used in the school of the future.” The workshops were led by prof. Antonio Dos Reis from Portugal, the author of over 500 didactic videos on YouTube with over one million views, Nataliia Morze (the Boris Grinchenko Kyiv University), and Olga Yakovleva (the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia in St. Petersburg). The guests and conference participants actively participated in a discussion and interactive activities.

During the conference, the film concerning the most important results of the EU project IRNet, developed by Paweł Pawełczyk, the Director of Distance Learning Centre of the University of Silesia in Katowice, was also presented.

The International Scientific Conference Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Distance Learning has a tradition. During the cycle of events research results on ICT and e-learning are presented by authors from various universities from the Visegrád Group (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary), other European countries, and Australia, participating in the EU IRNet project. The participants contribute significantly to the research area concerning new technologies in education and in incorporating current technological trends in teaching-learning methodologies. It is worth noting that the conference favours exchange of experiences, strengthening international cooperation, common problems solving, implementing innovative methodologies, and creating a global educational space. During the conference numerous themes are discussed: further directions in international cooperation, new common scientific and didactic projects, or internalisation of development in the conditions of digitalisation and globalisation.

More information concerning conference can be found on the website [www.dlcc.us.edu.pl](http://www.dlcc.us.edu.pl).



*Figure 1.* Participants of the round table debate led by Eugenia Smyrnova-Trybulska from the University of Silesia in Katowice and Magdalena Roszak from the Medical University in Poznań with the following professionals and experts from different countries: Piet Kommers (the Netherlands), Martin Drlík (Slovakia), Nataliia Morze (Ukraine), Maryna Romanyukha (Ukraine), Tatiana Pavlova (Russia), Elspeth McKay (Australia), Jan Kusiak (Poland), Iwona Mokwa-Tarnowska (Poland). Photo by Andrzej Szczurek.



*Figure 2.* Participants of the DLCCV2017 conference and the EU IRNet project. Photo by Andrzej Szczurek.