

Background: Developing Responsible Global Citizens through language teaching.

In this blog, we will briefly consider how language teaching can help develop responsible global citizens, and how this can be of benefit in today's increasingly interconnected world.

One of the most obvious ways in which language teaching can help develop responsible global citizens is by enhancing learners' language proficiency and communication skills. Effective communication is essential for building relationships and resolving conflicts, and language learners who are proficient in different languages will generally have a greater ability to connect with people from diverse backgrounds. This enables individuals to build bridges across cultural and linguistic divides, and work towards identifying and achieving common goals. By developing their communication skills, language learners can therefore contribute to building a more connected, collaborative, and peaceful world.

Another of the key ways that language teaching can help develop responsible global citizens is by promoting intercultural empathy and competence. Most language learners develop an understanding and appreciation for different cultures and ways of life, which enables them to communicate more effectively and more respectfully with people from diverse backgrounds. Language teaching also encourages learners to engage with different cultural perspectives, to empathise with others, and to recognise and challenge common stereotypes and prejudices.

In addition to promoting communication skills and intercultural competence, language teaching can also help develop responsible global citizens by promoting so called '21st Century' skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. Language learners are often exposed to different perspectives and ways of thinking, which encourages them to question assumptions, challenge biases, and develop creative solutions to complex problems. Through language learning, individuals can also develop the ability to think critically and analytically, which are important skills when it comes to responding to the many complex issues facing our world today.

Language teaching can also help develop responsible global citizens by promoting a sense of global citizenship and responsibility. During their course, language learners may be invited to consider a variety of global issues and challenges, such as climate change, inequality, and conflict, and they can be encouraged to consider their role in creating a more just and sustainable world. By promoting global citizenship and responsibility, language teaching can inspire individuals to take action, and make a positive impact in both their local and global communities.

Language teaching therefore provides a context that can be used to help develop responsible global citizens. By promoting communication skills, intercultural competence, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, as well as a sense of global citizenship and responsibility, language teaching can help individuals navigate the many complex issues facing our world today and work towards building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

All that's needed is a framework that teachers and academic managers can use to integrate some of these issues into their course programmes. This is one of the main objectives of our transnational Erasmus KA2 project.