THE CHAT, AN INCLUSIVE TOOL TO FOSTER PARTICIPATION

To foster different types of participation, we planned different
approaches for the use of the chat during the course Powerplay
2, that we evaluated for the Experiment Inclusieve Pedagogiek
and Didactiek.

We wish you can use these guidelines in future digital courses,
workshops, presentations or meetings. The chat has given greater
accessibility to our classes.

We would like to hear how it worked in your practice. Please,
share your results (or doubts) with us. These are our emails:
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ONE CHAT, MULTIPLE USES

Considering the variety of communication styles, the use of the
chat (Teams, Zoom) can serve to different purposes. For some
teachers it is headache to deal with the chat while they
give a presentation or explain an assignment. But the chat
can help smooth the participation of students that don't
speak up. Those that feel intimidated to raise their voice,
that don't find the right moment to intervene, that have a
bad day or are in a noisy place, all of them benefit from a
chat that serves inclusion.
Used with the involvement of the students as moderators
voluntarily reading the comments and questions when
accumulated, the chat can be inclusive instead of intrusive,
useful instead of unhandy.

We have gathered evidence to confirm that:

A Chat doesn't work in a classroom setting because it's been designed
for chatting in social media. If we don't activate the way to use it,
by explaining its different functions, the students don't make a good
use of it. Here, a diagram of the different functions, applicability
and results.

Use of the chat in two groups of students

Chat Function	Example	Result
Attendance Check	How are you?	Answers include time, name
Attention Check	Do you need a break?	Flexibility, class adjustment
Survey / Poll	How useful was the exercise?	Downloadable text file with instant feedback
Silent participation	I'm D and I'll be present in the chat because I can't speak	Accessible different participation, privacy
Conversation amplifier	I agree with P and I'd say that…	Increase of space for dialogue
Sharing references	I recommend this video (link)	Widening references
Fun moments	I have the same shirt!	Connecting, bonding, togetherness

Increase of participation

Virtual space as an inclusive space

Setting up who is in charge of the chat when the teacher is giving a lecture, or explaining an exercise, the chat helps the teacher to stay tuned with the climate in the class.

It's also an easy way to obtain immediate daily feedback/ data, for this, we have to prepare short clear questions, say them out loud, and write them in the chat. Then, give a few minutes to answer, save and download the chat.

The participation via the chat increased exponentially following our proposals. It was used as a way to add comments or ask questions during lectures, to encourage opinions about aspects that affected the whole group, to obtain answers and verify attendance.

SAVED CHATS FROM TWO CLASSES

28th may 2021/ classroom chat saved

10:23:48 From rosa to Everyone : How did you experience the peer-feedback session and the method?
10:24:38 From vera to Everyone : Helpful, even though felt a little underprepared. It was nice to speak to other people in a more personal environment, and talk with each others about the process of the projects. It inspired me, and hopefully helped others too. It was refreshing to see what other people where doing
10:24:41 From koen to Everyone : The Peer feedback sessions are a good initiative. I was there the first time together with Lisa (Police brutality group) and we got some good feedback and discussed that later within our own group. It's good to get new views on your project. Overall I really enjoyed it!
10:25:36 From bovan to Everyone : yes yesterday was very refreshing, even though we felt not really prepared, it was still nice to have this moment of contact/updates, it is motivating
10:25:44 From Snijders to Everyone : It's helpful to hear other views on your project, which gives you new inspiration and thoughts. It's also nice to see other people's work to get inspired by and to see how they interpreted the assignment
10:26:06 From zeeger to Everyone : Please mute yourselves if your typing this hard
10:26:25 From mirte to Everyone : We recieved good feedback that was really useful to us
10:26:57 From zeeger to Everyone : Haha no problem10:27:36 From anh ngo to Everyone : We have a good and helpful feedback from other team. We know what's our next step and plan to work on it right after the feedback sessions.
10:28:46 From vera to Everyone : What I also really enjoyed, and mentioned a bit before, was the chance to speak to other people more closely. I feel I didn't really get a chance to get to know people from this power play class since its an online course

10:28:47 From Eva to Everyone : With our peer groups we helped each other out with giving new ideas etc. It was a nice conversation and very helpfull
10:29:12 From Naomi to Everyone : feedback was good. It helped our group to continue working. We were quite stuck, but because of the feedback we have an overview, ideas and a good division of tasks again
10:30:32 From Szalay to Everyone : The feedback sessions were nice and it was great to exchange some ideas with other people. It was also refreshing to think about solutions for other people's projects and get inspired by their way of thinking.
10:31:17 From zeeger to Everyone : It was nice to talk more about the project then only splitting up class to update about each project

10:40:35 From rosa to Everyone : Is it possible for some of you to turn your camera on?
10:40:58 From Eva to Everyone : Sorry I have to mute my mic because my roommate is having a meeting for her work and is talking. But I feel a lot of anxiety when other people have their camera's off and I have mine on for example, I feel uncomfortable to talk.
10:42:44 From koen to Everyone : Completely understand your side as well. There is one simple explanation to me having my camera off, I don't have a webcam cause I am working on my desktop. My desktop has a more stable internet connection (cable) than my laptop.
10:45:03 From Wi to Everyone : I also completely get your perspective, but my reason for not turning on my camera all the time is cause I don't feel comfortable always. Sounds kinda dumb but I always have my camera on with my major class cause I know those people but I feel a bit anxious sometimes when I don't know anyone in a class, but I try to turn my camera on for a bit during every class
10:45:14 From Wi to Everyone : hope it makes sense haha
10:45:54 From bo to Everyone : I mostly have my screen on because I like to see my peer students bc it feels more like an actual class, so I think; maybe they feel the same, so that's why I turn it on. And if people don't, still, if they are participating in the chat, to me that's totally fine because everybody has their reasons. But also Pablo and Rosa emphasized in the beginning that they would appreciate it for us to turn on the cameras, so I respect that, and if I was a teacher I would feel very useless if they were only black screens, very disrespectful indeed
10:45:55 From vera to Everyone : thank you for sharing, I think its important for us to communicate this
10:46:06 From bo to Everyone : *camera
10:47:06 From bo to Everyone : And also what you said about facial expressions and that they are very telling/ important
10:47:44 From Wi to Everyone : With my last practice I must say I felt a lot more comfortable because we had some classes in real life. I know you can't help it, but to me its very discouraging when every class is online
10:48:41 From vera to Everyone : Yeah online classes are far from ideal, I want to make the best of it, but I get where you are coming from
10:49:17 From keö (they/she) to Everyone : i definitely see what you're saying and feeling too. it's definitely anxiety-inducing to already be in a new class but online it feels way more intense!

Dear teachers,

My name is D and I will soon be participating in the practices powerplay. The reason I am sending you this email is because I would like to briefly explain my situation. I have been ill since last year and have been diagnosed with a functional neurological disorder. So there are days where I stutter or where I am not understandable and some days and most recently I am speaking slightly more clearer. I also don't feel comfortable in front of the camera. So I hope during classes that you understand that my camera is off. Also, I thought it would be smart to tell you in advance that I can't go to school without guidance because I am walking very difficult, and I can't travel far places, so I hope it's possible to follow this practice entirely online.

I hope for your understanding.

D

Dear D,

Thanks for sharing with us your personal situation; I think I can speak for all of us in saying that we understand your concerns about the digital classroom and we feel for you. You can definitively follow this practice entirely online. Ours is an inclusive approach to teaching, also for online courses, meaning that we try our best to make the course accessible to all the participants regardless of any able-bodiedness or other characteristics that might affect their performance. We are actually doing a practice-based research to evaluate if the way we have conversations and stimulate participation is inclusive to the different characteristics and needs of the engaged students. We use the chat, a pad, and other digital tools in order to hear all your voices and perspectives in a way or another.

On the other hand, if you prefer to do the assignment on your own, it's perfectly fine. Just inform us, and we will consider your project as an individual project. Not many adjustments are necessary to work on your own. You will need to create a channel and a hotglue site as the teams do.

We hope this is sufficient to answer your doubts, and don't hesitate to contact us and ask for guidance.

Loking forward to meet you,

10th May 2021/ teacher notes after the Kick-off

During the kick-off we explained that D would be participating only via text, and we asked her to introduce herself on the chat. Which she did nicely. We asked if she wanted to share her situation and she did. Some students, aware of her effort, thanked her and wrote welcoming messages on the chat. Another student with a health condition wrote also his presentation on the chat.
D's silent participation generated a greater use of the chat than ever.

11th May 2021/ teacher notes after the class

We started the class with this question on the chat:

> How did you experience the kick-off? Use only adjectives (in your
> favorite language).
> *Adjective: a word that <u>describes</u> a <u>noun</u> or <u>pronoun</u>: "Big",
> "<u>boring</u>", "<u>purple</u>", and "<u>obvious</u>" are all adjectives. (Cambridge
> Dictionary).

We mentioned they could write this in their own language because
sometimes we lack these types of words in our second or third
languages. This was the way to receive some inputs about the first
class and to see who was present. Out of 28 students on the list, 25
answered. Most of them were positive: exciting, interesting,
interactive, informative, open, empathic, comfortable. Only a few were
negative: confusing, long, tiring. This functioned as an integrated
poll to compare results with the previous group kick-off.

We watched together some of the videos they made. We could comment on
the effect of music, the choice of voice over, aspects of image
composition, visual metaphors… participation was good, both via spoken
words and via the chat. We moved constantly to check and read and
comment on the chat because it really functioned for participating in
the conversation. It was awesome.

Very interesting things to note about the use of the digital tools: D
commented on the chat how she used a voice over generator for her video:
"it was a way for me to use a voice, because I can't use my own".

8th June/ feedback on the course from D:

Powerplay I have experienced as eye opening, I had to find other ways
to make myself useful. For my speech, I had to use the chat box to
communicate with the teachers and other students. Which was very
convenient on one hand but felt very distant and inhuman on the other.
Because when you speak verbally you can answer more quickly, you can
hear the emotion behind a sentence and get things through more
quickly. But when your fingers imitate your mouth, it doesn't feel
like it should.

I described powerplay as eye opening also because it was a space for
discussing and providing opportunities to allow others to find a way
that suited them. By this I mean that I was given the space to take
the classes in a way that suited me. It was also quite special to see
that my shortcomings were not seen as parts that would hinder me
during the practice, both by myself and by the teachers. It was more
about me turning these deficiencies into additions in my project.
Overall, it was very helpful, valuable and educational.