Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit

Table of Contents

About the project

The GUIDE project aims to support adults with learning difficulties in overcoming the obstacles they face in their professional lives and foster lifelong learning by making the learning process easier and more flexible. Adults with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, and ADHD, often face significant challenges when it comes to accessing education and training opportunities that would help them progress in their careers. This can lead to social exclusion and limited employment opportunities, ultimately hindering their overall well-being and quality of life.

Some dyslexic adults feel unable to cope with their difficulties, whilst others have found ways to get around their problems, but changing demands at work or a new venture in life can present tough challenges. According to the European Dyslexia in Europe, 15% of the population is dealing with dyslexia or some sort of learning disorder. From that 15%, about 9%-12% are navigating through life in a lot of non-dyslexia-friendly situations. Meanwhile, large numbers of people within that 15% are simultaneously suffering from other disorders as well p.e. 20-40% of the persons with dyslexia are also having dyscalculia. (https://ied.eu/project-updates/learning-difficulties-in-europe/). People with dyslexia think and learn differently from others and sometimes they feel as if their mind is 'differently wired'. The GUIDE project will address this difference by developing a microlearning methodology and toolkit customized for adults with learning difficulties.

Overall, the GUIDE project is a crucial step towards promoting inclusiveness and accessibility in adult education, addressing the needs of a marginalized group, and fostering lifelong learning.

Consortium

The project is led by "Microkosmos" Associazione Culturale Italo-Ellenica per la Formazione (Italy), in partnership with e-Nable Greece (Greece), Ustanova za Obrazovanje odraslih Dante (Croatia) and Asociația Institutul pentru Parteneriat Social Bucovina (Romania).

Purpose of the Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit

The purpose of the Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit is to focus on creating a methodology and associated tools designed to facilitate microlearning training for adult learners with learning difficulties (LD), such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia. The methodology will outline strategies, principles, and guidelines for effectively delivering microlearning content to the target group.

Developing a methodology and tools tailored specifically to the needs of adult learners with LD directly supports adults with learning difficulties to overcome obstacles in their professional lives and foster lifelong learning. By providing accessible and effective learning materials and techniques, the project aims to make the learning process easier and more flexible for them.

Adult learners with LD were also involved in the development process of the GUIDE methodology. By seeking input from the target group, the project aims to gain insights into their learning preferences, challenges, and effective learning strategies. This engagement ensures that the methodology is customized to the unique needs and preferences of adult learners with LD.

Engaging adult trainers and learners in **Transnational Learning Activities** to develop the GUIDE methodology and tools ensures that it is truly adapted to their needs and preferences. This engagement fosters collaboration and interaction between adult trainers and learners in transnational learning activities, aligning with the project's objective of engaging adult trainers and learners in collaborative efforts to produce effective educational materials and techniques.

The Principles of the Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit

The following Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit, tailored for adults with learning difficulties (LD), addresses the obstacles they face in accessing the labour market and navigating challenges in their professional lives. By breaking down complex information into bite-sized chunks, this methodology aims to empower learners to acquire essential skills, overcome barriers, and succeed in their careers.

The GUIDE Methodology has principles that prioritise accessibility, engagement, and effectiveness. Here are some key principles to consider:

1. **Accessibility:**
   a. Content adaptation: using simplified language, avoiding complex sentences, breaking down information into smaller chunks to aid comprehension and reduce cognitive load, using visual aids such as diagrams, infographics, and illustrations to supplement textual information.
   b. Clear navigation: organising the content logically, providing intuitive navigation such as clickable buttons or menu bars, and ensuring consistency in design and layouts.
   c. Alternative formats: we can provide audiobooks and text-to-speech software to facilitate reading, use dyslexia-friendly fonts such as OpenDyslexic, ensure ample spacing and larger font sizes, and offer color overlays or different background colors to reduce visual stress. Interactive and multisensory learning tools, which combine visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements, and simplified texts can be highly beneficial. Breaking information into smaller, manageable chunks,

using visual aids and organizers, and incorporating movement breaks or interactive activities can help maintain focus and engagement.

d. Interactive elements: incorporating interactive elements such as quizzes, drag-and-drop activities, and clickable hotspots to promote engagement and active participation, ensuring that interactive features are accessible to individuals using assistive technologies such as screen readers or alternative input devices.

e. Customisation: offering customisable settings such as font size, colour contrast, and playback speed to accommodate individual preferences and needs, allowing users to adjust the presentation format (e.g., switching between text-only and multimedia formats) based on their learning preferences.

f. Feedback: gathering feedback from individuals with LD, during the development phase to identify potential barriers and usability issues.

2. **Clarity:**

a. Conciseness: breaking down complex topics into smaller, manageable chunks of information, focusing on delivering key concepts in bite-sized modules, limiting each digital tool to a single learning objective or topic to avoid overwhelming learners with too much information at once, using bullet points, lists, or numbered steps to organise content and facilitate easy comprehension.

b. Language: using clear and easy-to-understand language, defining or explaining specialised terms or concepts, considering the reading level and the literacy of the target group.

3. **Engagement:**

a. Using interactive elements such as quizzes, and polls, incorporating storytelling techniques, real-world examples, or testimonials, including multimedia elements such as videos and animations, designing challenges, quests, or missions, including opportunities for self-reflection, fostering collaboration through discussion forums or group activities, knowledge sharing, online learning community.

4. **Personalization:**
   a. Offering learning pathways based on learners' interests and objectives, allowing learners to choose topics of interest, offering timely and relevant feedback to each learner by providing constructive guidance and suggestions for improvement, and providing supplementary resources and links to external sources.

5. **Multi-sensory elements:**
   a. Using high-quality images, diagrams, charts, infographics, incorporating animations or motion graphics, including audio to accompany the visual content, providing additional explanation to the text, embedding interactive elements, including gamification elements, providing interaction with the context by clicking, dragging, typing, or tapping, including practical exercises.

6. **Reinforcement and retention:**
   a. Providing opportunities for repetition and reinforcement to strengthen learning and memory retention using quizzes, assessments, and review activities.

7. **Flexibility and adaptability:**
   a. Designing flexible and adaptable content to different learning environments and contexts, providing options to access content on various devices and platforms, allowing learners to choose their learning paths and explore topics based on their interests and goals.

8. **Feedback:**
   a. Collecting feedback for improvement, using data analytics to track engagement.

The Methodology of the Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit

Needs assessment and goals setting:

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to understand the specific challenges faced by adults with LD in the labour market or their professional lives.
- Set clear learning goals based on the identified needs and aspirations of the target group, focusing on practical skills and employability.

The primary goal of the needs assessment is to gather insights and feedback from adult learners with learning difficulties (LD) regarding their learning challenges and effective strategies for overcoming them. This will be in the form of Vidcasts (A2.2) that offer practical tips and advice tailored to the needs of this target audience.

1. **Identifying participants:** Collaborate with local organisations, support groups, and educational institutions specialised in adult education and LD to identify adult learners willing to participate in the needs assessment. Ensure diversity in participant demographics, including various types of LD, age groups, educational backgrounds, and employment statuses (involve a minimum of three adults with LD and one adult trainer).

2. **Organising Preparatory Local Meetings** (A2.2.1), involving 3 adults with LD per partner organisation: Each partner organisation will organise a local meeting with adult learners with LD in their respective regions by facilitating open discussions where participants can share their experiences, challenges, and successes related to learning with LD, and encouraging participants to suggest practical tips, strategies, and accommodations that have helped them overcome obstacles in their learning journey.
   a. *Topics for discussion:* reading comprehension, time management, organisation skills, memory techniques, and self-advocacy, common challenges encountered in educational and professional settings, including stigma, accessibility barriers, and communication difficulties.

b. *Feedback collection:* Use feedback collection methods such as surveys (Google Forms or printed survey), using a 5-point Likert scale, to evaluate the participants' level of engagement and satisfaction.

c. *Documentation and analysis:* All partners will fill in a report using the semi-structured frame of the meeting (provided by e-Nable), by analysing the collected information and identifying common themes and areas of priority.

3. **Producing the video"What helps me learn?"** (A2.2.2), involving 1 adult trainer and 2 adults with LD: All partners will produce video materials that will help public audiences, professionals, and adult trainers to understand the obstacles that adults with LD face in their professional life and how they can learn.

a. *Technical aspects of video production:* Provide participants with an overview of the video production process, including cameras, lighting, and sound equipment. Moreover, use simple and clear language, incorporate visual aids to reinforce key points, use graphics to highlight important information or to guide the viewer's attention, use voice variation to emphasise important points, and vary the tone of voice to maintain interest. In addition, keep videos short and focused, with each segment addressing a specific topic. The video should last between 1 and 2 minutes. Ensure that the videos are accessible to all types of learners, with clear audio, subtitles, etc., but also visually appealing and easy to understand to serve as a tool for promoting the project and engaging more stakeholders.

See more on the A2.2.1 Preparatory Local Meeting instructions document

Content selection

During the content selection phase to create descriptions for 8 digital tools as part of the GUIDE Microlearning Methodology and Toolkit (A2.3), we must carefully consider the needs, goals, and interests of adult learners with learning difficulties (LD).

In this regard, we might consider the following:

- Identify learning objectives that the digital tools will help learners achieve by focusing on specific skills or knowledge areas relevant to the target group, such as literacy improvement, numeracy skills, job readiness, or life skills development.
- Examine existing curriculum or learning materials to identify topics or content areas suitable for conversion into Microlearning Nuggets by considering areas where learners with LD may benefit from additional support or reinforcement.
- Engage stakeholders, including educators, trainers, learners with LD, and experts in the field, to gather insights and feedback on the types of digital tools that would be most effective and beneficial.
- Ensure that the content and digital tools are accessible to individuals with LD. Choose formats and features that accommodate diverse learning styles and preferences, such as text-to-speech functionality, customizable settings, and clear navigation.
- Select the content for Microlearning Nuggets by identifying specific topics or concepts and choosing content that can be broken down into short, focused nuggets of information, each addressing a single learning objective or skill.
- Map content for the 8 digital tools by matching each selected topic or concept with an appropriate digital tool that aligns with the learning objectives and preferences of learners with LD, and considering the format, features, and interactive elements of each tool in relation to the content it will deliver.

Content creation

- Develop the descriptions of digital tools, highlighting their key features, functionalities, and benefits for learners with LD and clearly articulating how each tool supports the microlearning methodology and contributes to the overall learning experience.

Name	Digital tool #1 (The name should be concise yet informative, giving users a clear idea of the tool's purpose.)

Overview	Short description (A brief overview of the digital tool, highlighting its main features, functionalities, and intended use. This section should provide an introductory explanation of what the tool is designed to accomplish)			
Learning objective	1 learning objective (Outline the specific learning objective that the digital tool aims to address)			
Skills developed	Define the skills or knowledge areas that learners with LD will develop or enhance by using the tool			
Target group	Specify that it is designed specifically for adults with learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.)			
Key features	Accessibility	Multimedia elements	Interactivity	Personalisation
Instructions/ Integration				
Assessment and feedback	Describe the methods used by the tool to assess learner progress or specify how feedback is delivered to learners			
Technical requirements	Specify the technical requirements for using the digital tool, including supported devices, operating systems, internet connectivity, etc.			
Useful resources	Resources that support further learning of the topic			

Piloting phase

The Workshop for Adult trainers (A2.4), aimed at piloting the GUIDE Microlearning methodology and toolkit (A2.3) plays an important role in ensuring the effectiveness and suitability of the methodology for adult learners with learning difficulties (LD).

1. **Preparation:**
● Define the objectives and the outcomes of the workshop, aligned with the goals of the GUIDE project.
● Develop the workshop agenda, outlining the activities and the timeline.
● Select the training materials and resources based on the GUIDE Microlearning methodology and toolkit.
● Identify and invite adult trainers specialised in working with learners with LD to participate in the workshop (2 per partner organisation, 2 more from the host organisation).

- Provide necessary information and materials to participants in advance to familiarise them with the workshop objectives and content.

2. **Implementation:**

- Conduct an introductory session to welcome participants, get to know each other, and provide an overview of the workshop objectives.
- Present the GUIDE Microlearning methodology and toolkit, explaining its key components, principles, and how it addresses the needs of adult learners with LD.
- Facilitate hands-on sessions where participants can actively engage with the methodology and toolkit, exploring its features and functionalities.
- Organise practical activities and exercises to demonstrate the application of the methodology in designing microlearning content tailored to learners with LD.
- Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing among participants, allowing them to exchange insights, experiences, and best practices related to microlearning for LD learners.

3. **Evaluation phase:**

- Gather feedback through group discussions, individual interviews, or surveys to assess participants' perceptions of the GUIDE methodology and toolkit.
- Analyse the feedback data to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for methodology refinement.
- Evaluate the workshop's success in achieving its objectives and contributing to developing the GUIDE methodology for microlearning training of adult learners with LD.
- Document lessons learned, insights gained, and recommendations for further methodology enhancement based on participant feedback.
- Prepare a comprehensive report summarising the workshop's outcomes, including findings, recommendations, and next steps for the ongoing development and implementation of the GUIDE methodology and toolkit.
- Iterate on the descriptions and tool selections based on user input and observations from the testing phase.

Final descriptions

Once the enhancements have been implemented, a final version of the descriptions for all 8 digital tools will be compiled and included in the microlearning toolkit. These descriptions will serve as comprehensive guides for adult trainers, providing detailed insights into each tool's features, functionalities, and benefits. By integrating the workshop insights into the toolkit, we aim to deliver a robust set of resources that empower trainers to effectively support the learning journey of adult learners with learning difficulties, fostering engagement, accessibility, and lifelong learning.

Distribution and dissemination

Our primary focus is on delivering the Microlearning Nuggets through an intuitive and user-friendly platform. This platform will be designed to ensure accessibility for all learners, including those with learning difficulties, by incorporating features such as customisable fonts, screen readers, and easy navigation options. Additionally, we will prioritise flexibility, allowing learners to access the content conveniently. Compatibility across various devices, including desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones, will be ensured to accommodate diverse learning preferences and lifestyles. By leveraging technology to facilitate seamless access to the Microlearning Nuggets, we aim to empower learners to engage with the content effectively, promoting independent learning and skills development.

We will engage with online communities through social media channels, share informative content, and encourage discussion and interaction. Local stakeholders, including educational institutions, community centres, and other institutions or organisations, will spread awareness and facilitate access to the Microlearning Nuggets within their networks. The collaboration with relevant professionals will enhance the perceived value and reach. Moreover, we will amplify our message and extend our reach to diverse demographics and regions. This comprehensive dissemination will maximise the impact of the Microlearning Nuggets and ensure widespread access and adoption.
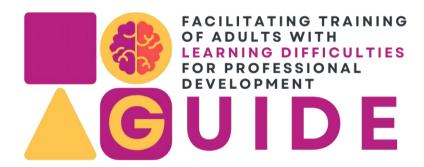
Continuous improvement

Our focus is on refining and enhancing the microlearning experience to ensure its effectiveness and relevance over time. By remaining proactive and responsive to changes in the learning landscape, we can ensure that our microlearning resources remain current, impactful, and aligned with the needs of our target audience.

GUIDE: Facilitating Training of Adults with Learning Difficulties for Professional Development

Project no.: 2023-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000160459