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His most recent publication is the co-edited volume Online Intercultural Exchange Policy, Pedagogy, Practice for Routledge. He has participated in many international projects including ICCAGE and recently coordinated INTENT - a project financed by the European Commission aimed at promoting online intercultural exchange in European Higher Education (www.unicollaboration.eu). He is currently coordinating the Erasmus+ Key Action 3 project Evaluating and Upscaling Telecollaborative Teacher Education (EVALUATE).

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**Entering the world of Virtual Exchange: Learning from Teachers’ experiences**

Telecollaboration, or ‘Virtual Exchange’ refers to the application of online communication tools to bring together classes of learners in geographically distant locations with the aim of developing their foreign language skills, digital competence and intercultural competence through online collaborative tasks and project work. Many recent studies have explored the potential of this activity for supporting collaborative language learning and developing intercultural competence in learners (Dooly & O'Dowd, 2012, Guth & Helm, 2010; O'Dowd, 2011, 2013).

This presentation presents a brief historical overview of telecollaboration and reviews what telecollaboration has contributed to intercultural education to date. It then goes on to focus on the challenges for educators and outlines the skills, attitudes and knowledge which are required to establish and carry out successfully an online intercultural exchange between university classes. Interviews with teachers who recently engaged in Virtual Exchange for the first time and critical incidents from their exchanges are used to illustrate how these competences come into play during telecollaboration.

**Background Reading:**


