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E-LIVE tasks for virtual exchange consist of a sequence of subtasks organised in three phases:
preparatory (pre-task), task performance (interaction) and post- task.

Exploring Cultures Through Literature

Task summary

Topic	Books & Culture
Target group, CEFR level, Communication	Student teachers English as Lingua Franca, C1, Synchronous
Summary of activities	Participants will meet in Spatial VR to exchange perspectives on literature. Each student will present a pitch about a (favorite) book from their country that they have already read. The session will involve summarizing the book, asking questions, and exploring cultural differences and similarities.

Learning goals	**Intercultural goals** The student teachers will learn to: ● Develop the ability to view situations through others' perspectives. ● Gain insights into another person's literary culture. ● Cultivate empathy by understanding the thoughts and emotions of others. ● Formulate culturally sensitive questions related to the topic. **Linguistic goals** Summarisation skills: ● Practise condensing a book's plot, themes, and main ideas into a clear and concise spoken summary using one's own words. ● Develop the ability to structure information logically, ensuring coherence and clarity in delivering the pitch. Conversation management: ● Improve skills in initiating, maintaining, and concluding conversations effectively in a cross-cultural context. ● Learn to navigate turn-taking, active listening, and polite interruptions to maintain a natural flow of dialogue. Question formulation and response: ● Practice crafting thoughtful, culturally sensitive, and grammatically accurate questions about a partner's book. ● Build skills in answering questions fluently and elaborately, ensuring engagement and mutual understanding. Discussing cultural insights: ● Enhance vocabulary and expressions related to literature, culture, and personal experiences to articulate cultural significance and personal connections to the chosen book. ● Practise explaining cultural references in a way that is accessible to someone from a different background. Expressing opinions and insights: ● Develop the ability to share and justify personal opinions about the book in a clear and respectful manner. ● Build confidence in discussing and comparing perspectives, fostering a two-way exchange of ideas. Adapting language to context: ● Learn to adjust language complexity and style to match the partner's language proficiency (B1-C1 range). ● Develop sensitivity to cross-linguistic influences and learn to explain or rephrase ideas for better understanding. **Digital goals** The student teachers will: ● Develop proficiency in VR tools for education by gaining hands-on experience with VR platforms such as SpatialVR and Meta Quest, learning how to set up, navigate, and use these tools effectively for educational purposes. ● Understand how to manage technical aspects such as inviting peers to VR spaces, ensuring sound quality, and utilizing visual aids (e.g., book images). ● Develop digital literacies and competencies for efficient and meaningful collaboration. ● Develop reflective practices on technological use in education by analysing the advantages and limitations of VR for educational exchanges, reflecting on how such tools can enhance or challenge traditional methods. ● Build confidence in navigating and applying evolving digital tools, a key skill for educators in a rapidly digitizing world.

	Pedagogical goals Student teachers will: ● Gain practical experience in using literary works as a tool for exploring cultural identities, perspectives, and values, enabling pre-service teachers to apply this approach in their future classrooms. ● Practice managing discussions in multicultural settings, focusing on how to guide learners in navigating cultural differences and similarities through literature. ● Learn to design and facilitate interactive tasks that encourage mutual learning, critical thinking, and cooperative exchange between peers. ● IDevelop skills in leveraging VR technology for engaging and immersive educational activities that enhance intercultural and linguistic learning outcomes. ● Facilitate deep engagement with texts: Practice guiding discussions that move beyond surface-level summaries to explore thematic, cultural, and emotional layers within literature. ● Reflect on the Impact of Virtual Exchange: Critically evaluate the use of virtual exchange platforms like Spatial VR for creating meaningful language and intercultural learning experiences, with a focus on literature. ● Develop empathy and perspective-taking by experiencing firsthand how discussing personal and cultural connections to literature can foster deeper understanding and empathy, preparing pre-service teachers to encourage these qualities in their future students.

Possible Final Products of the Task Session	**Reflection Journal:**
	● Each participant writes a detailed journal entry reflecting on the session, focusing on linguistic, cultural, and personal insights gained. The journal could include:
	  ○ A summary of the partner's book and its cultural significance.
	  ○ Key discussion points, such as differences and similarities between the books.
	  ○ Reflections on the VR-mediated interaction and how it affected communication.
	Collaborative Presentation (PowerPoint), Poster (Canva) or Audio/Video recording:
	● Create a joint presentation summarising both books and highlighting the cultural comparisons discussed during the session.
	● Include images, quotes, or key takeaways from the conversation to make the presentation visually engaging and content-rich.

Assessment	The task is assessed in the reflection in the class with other students and in the reflection form.
Tool suggestions	Spatial in Meta Quest / Desktop
Authors	Student teachers from Utrecht University. Adapted by Kristi Jauregi-Ondarra (Utrecht University)
Validated	By the virtual exchange project conducted between student teachers from Utrecht University and German Hochschule

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Preparation activities

Task elements	Activities and/or related skills
Familiarisation with the tools	Make sure you know how Meta Quest and FrameVR function before the first meeting with your peer. (Online tutorials: Meta Quest 3 & Spatial): ● You have an account in Spatial ● You know how to speak, move in the virtual world ● You have checked the sound and your microphone is working (make sure you know how to unmute it) ● You know how to record the session (Check it previously with your teammates).
Preparing for the meeting	Make sure you stay in contact with your partner and agree on a moment in which you both can carry out the task successfully.
Familiarisation with the task topic	Read the task description carefully and make sure you understand what the task is about.
Selecting a book	● Choose a book written by an author from your own country in your native language. ● Write a brief summary emphasizsing the main points and plot.
Planning questions	o Prepare a list of questions to ask your partner about their book. o Reflect on what you'd like to share about your own book.

Interaction

Task elements	Activities and/or related skills
Recordings	Prepare the recordings in Quest / desktop
Engaging in discussion	● Exchange greetings. ● Discuss who starts first. ● Present and discuss your chosen books. ● Compare and contrast the themes, characters, and cultural significance of the books. ● Create a collaborative artifact presenting comparing and contrasting the cultural elements of the two books discussed. Highlight shared themes, differing cultural perspectives, and any new insights about each other's literary traditions.

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Reflect on the exchange	Conclude with reflections on the VR experience, the conversational task, and any insights gained (linguistic, cultural, personal, or technological)

Post task

Task elements	Activities and/or related skills

Final products	Reflection Journal:
	● Each participant writes a detailed journal entry reflecting on the session, focusing on linguistic, cultural, and personal insights gained. The journal could include:
	  ○ A summary of the partner's book and its cultural significance.
	  ○ Key discussion points, such as differences and similarities between the books.
	  ○ Reflections on the VR-mediated interaction and how it affected communication.
	Collaborative Presentation (PowerPoint), Poster (Canva) or Audio/Video recording:
	● Create a joint presentation summarising both books and highlighting the cultural comparisons discussed during the session.
	● Include images, quotes, or key takeaways from the conversation to make the presentation visually engaging and content-rich.