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IZVJEŠĆE S TEČAJA

AI Tools and Inclusivity in Education

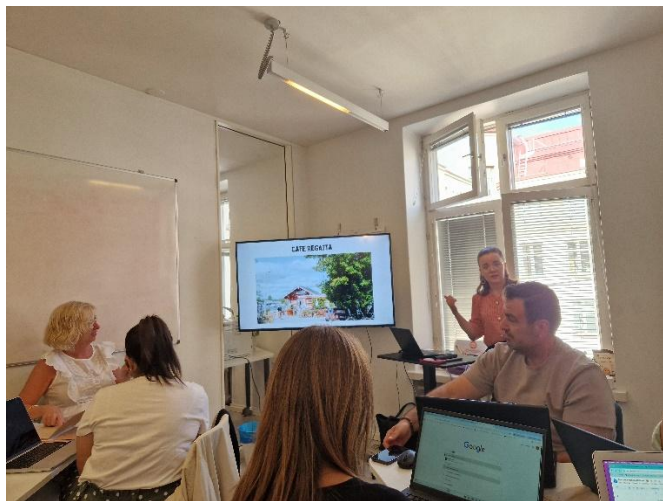
Helsinki, Finska

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I recently had the chance to take part in a week-long teacher training course in Helsinki, Finland, focused on the connection between artificial intelligence (AI) tools and inclusivity in education. The main goal was to explore how AI can help teachers support students with diverse needs—such as dysgraphia, ADHD, hearing issues, or dyspraxia—so that every learner has equal opportunities to succeed.

Day 1: Icebreakers, Culture, and AI Basics

The week began with introductions and icebreakers, including a fun activity called “*Find Someone Who*” that helped us quickly connect with fellow teachers from across Europe and beyond. Our trainer, Mia, also gave us a taste of Finnish culture—seafood, saunas, the philosophy of *sisu*, and nature-filled adventures. We presented our own schools and backgrounds before diving into a short history of AI and its growing role in education.



Day 2: AI, Bias, and Inclusivity

We looked deeper into how AI reflects stereotypes. For example, when asked to generate images of a Finnish teacher or students, AI produced narrow, stereotypical results that reinforced biases around culture and ethnicity. This sparked discussion on the risks of overgeneralization and the importance of teachers being mindful in how they use AI. A highlight was learning about the **Moomins**, Finland's beloved literary characters, who embody inclusivity and acceptance—an inspiring reminder for our teaching practice.



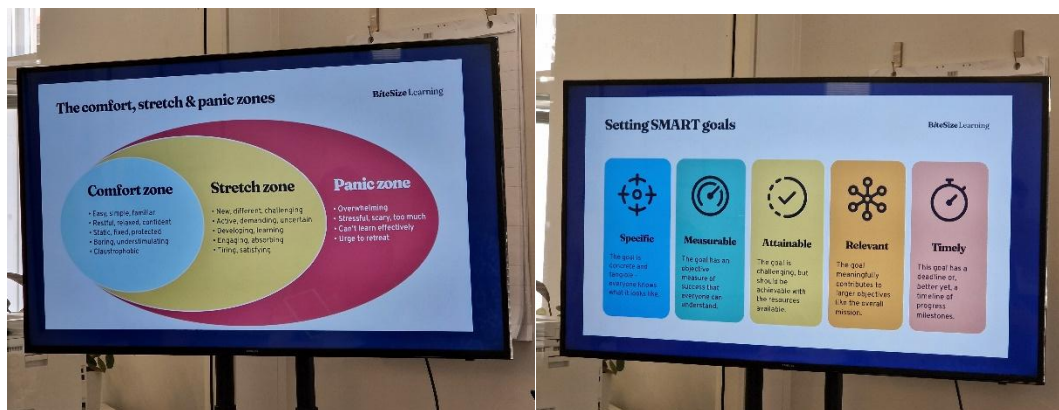
Day 3: Exploring AI Tools for Accessibility

The third day introduced practical tools designed to support inclusivity, such as **Microsoft's Interpreter Agent**, which provides real-time translation and even mimics a speaker's voice in another language. Sharing insights with colleagues highlighted how such tools can bridge gaps for students with language or communication challenges. Outside class, exploring Helsinki's UNESCO-listed Suomenlinna island provided a peaceful break.



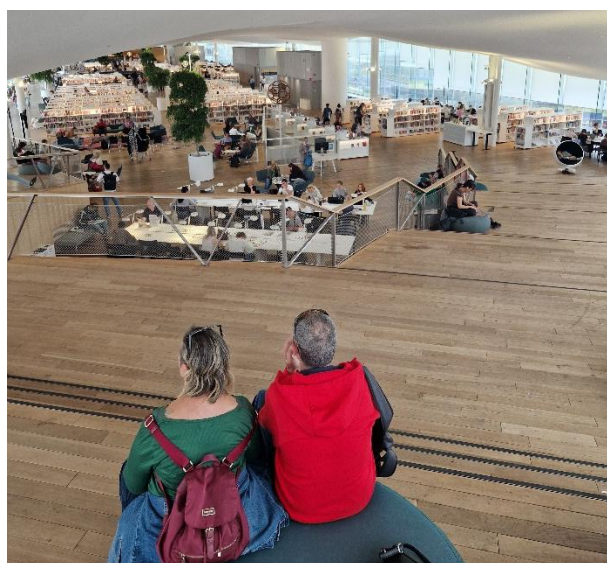
Day 4: Teaching Strategies and Finnish Education

This day focused on teaching models that foster growth. We learned about **SMART goals** (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely) and how to set clear learning objectives. Another key concept was the **stretch zone model**, which encourages teachers to challenge students beyond their comfort zone without overwhelming them. We also studied Finland's renowned education system, admired worldwide for its equality, accessibility, and respect for teachers.



Day 5: Action Plans, Practice, and Oodi Library

The final day took place at **Oodi Library**, a modern cultural hub in Helsinki that feels more like a community center than a traditional library. After a tour, we focused on practical exercises, such as designing lesson plans that balanced comfort, stretch, and panic zones. In groups, we tackled case studies—like supporting a student with hearing difficulties—by combining empathy, classroom strategies, and AI tools such as real-time subtitles and visual aids. We also discovered additional teaching resources like Suno, Magic School, Edpuzzle, and Diffit. The course ended with certificates, celebrations, and heartfelt goodbyes.



Reflections

The course was not only informative but also inspiring. I left with a deeper understanding of both the promises and limitations of AI in education, and with new strategies to make my own classroom more inclusive. What stood out most was the balance between theory and practice: we didn't just talk about inclusivity, we practiced it through activities, group work, and case studies. I also appreciated how cultural elements—like the story of the Moomins, Finnish traditions, and the visit to Oodi Library—were woven into the program, showing how inclusivity extends beyond classrooms and into everyday life.

Perhaps the greatest value was the exchange of ideas with teachers from different countries. Hearing their perspectives, challenges, and creative solutions reminded me that inclusivity is a global effort, and AI can play a meaningful role when used thoughtfully. I returned home motivated to apply what I learned, experiment with new tools, and continue pushing myself into the “stretch zone” as a teacher—just as I hope to encourage my students to do in their own learning journeys.

