

Holocaust education online

Digital teaching materials of public educational institutions, public collections and non-governmental organizations

1. Introduction

Education of the 21st century faces great challenges regarding its topics, tools, and methods. Whereas the framework of education in Hungary changes very slowly, the new ‘digital’ generation requires different contents and approaches. Printed books are not any more the ultimate repositories of knowledge and information, and neither is the teacher the exclusive conveyor of knowledge. This is why it has become urging to compile digital and online teaching materials for all different school subjects.

One may find it difficult to make a difference between digital and online teaching materials. A digital educational material can be any kind of electronically or digitally stored intellectual product that is capable of transmitting knowledge or information.¹ Digital materials are multi-layered and have different ‘generations’: it can be a scanned book or an educational video that allows nothing but a passive viewing. The second generation of such materials include content developed by digital tools for computer or smartboard use. It frequently includes the use of multimedia tools and lend themselves for interactive workshops – often they are completed with methodological guidance making them usable as independent (supplementary) teaching materials. The third generation digital materials are aligned with the National Core Curriculum and include multimedia and interactive activities. They are independent teaching materials in places where the process of learning and assessment is not disunited. Teaching materials of the fourth generation are collaborative and interactive contents: products are not authored by a narrow group but allow the cooperation of different, even international groups.²

The platform of a digital educational material can be a closed system not accessible for outsiders: like our personal computer or a CD-ROM. ‘Digital’ and ‘online’ – these are not exclusive categories because Internet can also become the dedicated platform of a digital educational material. Online materials thus can be digitalized and available on the Internet; or educational materials that were originally developed for an Internet-platform and students in general can work on the activities and reflect on questions directly on the Internet-based platform.

The present paper provides a non-exhaustive list of the digital and online teaching materials targeting Holocaust education which are:

- first or second generation digital teaching materials but also available on the internet
- third or fourth generation digital teaching materials consisting partly or fully of online activities
- activities originally prepared and developed for an online surface which can only be completed online

¹ Definition of the digital teaching material is retrieved from the website of the Mérei Ferenc Fővárosi Pedagógiai Intézet (www.fppti.hu)

² Ibidem

Out of the numerous teaching materials of public educational institutions, public collections and non-governmental organizations, we only study the most popular ones among educators and which are the easiest to access.

2. Online teaching materials

2.1 Centropa³

Since 2011, this non-governmental organization performing in different countries with the mission of social history research presents the history of Central and Eastern European Jews of the 19th and 20th century through personal stories and, principally, via contemporary photos. The primary sources are not exclusively gathered with the aim of archiving but also to develop teaching materials based on them. These materials also include short films, travelling exhibitions, as well as other types of products. Teachers prepared lesson plans and programs to these materials using oral history methods: these are available on the website of the organization.

The Centropa website is well-organized and states its objectives clearly. However, it is difficult to find what the organization actually does, what the qualifications of the staff is and how they are related to the topic.

One can easily find the educational materials under the menu 'EDUCATION', and then 'TEACHING MATERIALS'. Authors, countries (though it is restricted to Hungary) and films also appear to be searchable. Lesson plans can be explored separately, but the quality and elaboration of the educational materials is uneven: not all the educational materials come with lesson plans.

The lesson plans on the website usually include the introduction of the author, the learning aims, the work form and necessary tools. Several lesson plans are incomplete: some have no detailed lesson plan or they do not credit used sources, which makes it difficult or impossible for educators to use these materials in class.

2.2 Haver Informal Jewish Educational Foundation⁴

The main activity of Haver Foundation is to organize sessions about Jewish identity for secondary school students. According to the objectives published on their website, they wish to dispel misconceptions existing in society about Jews, and to educate youth to be open as well as to accept cultural diversity hoping that this would stop prejudices and antisemitism.

Besides the interactive sessions, the website features various materials which can be used for educational purposes. Under the tab 'Zsidóságrol' (About the Jews)⁵ teachers can find useful summaries and descriptions. For instance, in its dropdown menu named 'Ünnepek' (Holidays) they can find detailed

³ Retrieved from: <http://www.centropa.org/hu/home>.

⁴ Retrieved from: <http://haver.hu/english/>

⁵ This module is only d by the Hungarian version of the website (*translator's note*)

description about Jewish holidays: about their history, origin, content, and about the significance of the given holiday in the past and today. They often add textual resources and questions for further reflection on the subject. The dropdown menus 'Kultúra' (Culture) and 'Vallás' (Religion) offer only short descriptions with no activities or resources, while the dropdown menu 'Negyed' (Quarter) offers a summary about the Jewish Quarter of Budapest with maps and photos indicating secondary sources too.

All in all, the website of Haver Foundation proves to be helpful although background materials are incomplete for teacher and student use. They cannot be considered as an online educational material as neither detailed lesson plans, nor work samples are disclosed.

2.3 Zachor Foundation for Social Remembrance⁶

The mission of Zachor Foundation, an educational non-profit organization, is to raise the awareness of students and teachers of current social phenomena like racism, prejudices and antisemitism. They use primary sources containing personal stories to fight prejudices. The published sources and educational materials centre around the history of the Holocaust, the Foundation strives to get young people understand the traumas of the 20th century by developing and publishing personal memories. They encourage them to accept diversity and help them develop empathy.

Their website contains educational materials under the tab 'OKTATÁSI ANYAGOK' (Educational materials). The website states as a starting point that the educational activity of the organization is in line with the guidelines of the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance), an organization that supports political and social decision-makers in commemorating and educating about the Holocaust both on a national and international level.

The website contains interactive educational materials, worksheets which can be used in the classroom or individually and students can complete them at home. These activities principally concentrate on testing students' previously gained chronological, topographical, and conceptual knowledge, while they are also linked with the primary sources incorporating personal testimonies.

Sources are accompanied by questions to elicit close reading. Some questions are strictly text-based, others develop students' critical thinking skills (e.g. when they have to respond to a situation, or discuss different options or dilemmas, etc.). Alternatively, some other activities encourage students to further research.

On the one hand, these questions contribute to the understanding of the text, but they also foster research activity, and display historical events from a personal point of view. During classroom work with the materials it is possible to initiate discussions of debated questions and interpretations, but the specific questions are also usable for individual work.

Furthermore, the website of Zachor Foundation features photos and documents as well as a glossary to explain notions, and a timeline to complete personal stories. These background materials serve the teachers well when preparing a lesson or the students when they do research.

⁶ <http://zachor.hu/>

The website offers multimedia materials as well (e.g. 'Gyerektörténet, 1944-ből' – A Child's story from 1944).⁷ This resource is built around a video of 33-minute video which contains segments of two Hungarian language video-testimonies from the Visual Historical Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation. The learning aims are clearly articulated in the lesson description: that authors of the materials intend to review the topics of discrimination, persecution, responsibility and aid giving with the students of 14 -18.

The video itself is very interesting, well edited and sometimes archival photos are displayed during the interviews (e.g. about people mentioned in the video). The 33 minutes may seem a bit too long in one sequence, but students are provided with guiding comments and questions, so it is easier for them to follow. The lesson plan is detailed, easy-to-follow, and the attached documents (source materials, opinion cards, background information, timeline, worksheets, etc.) provide full support for the teacher in working with the material. The methodology facilitates individual, pair, or group work, as well as whole-class guided discussion. Personal opinions, the discussion of individual ideas also plays an important role. Similarly, educators are provided with ideas for next step activities.

2.4 USC (University of Southern California) Shoah Foundation⁸ – the Institute for Visual History and Education

The English-language website of the Foundation informs us that the activity of the Institute is based on the collection (the Visual Historical Archive) established by film director Steven Spielberg after shooting the film *Schindler's list*. This archive (originally named *Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation*) was established to take and archive video testimonies of Holocaust survivors. The archive currently contains over 53000 video testimonies in various languages taken in different countries with Holocaust survivors and witnesses, rescuers and aid providers, liberators. The original collection has recently been completed with testimonies of witnesses of other genocides (e.g. genocides of Rwanda, Nanking, and of the Armenians).

The USC Shoah Foundation's mission is to develop multimedia educational materials based on testimonies from the Institute's Visual History Archive, which help students understand the history, the causes of the genocides of the 20th century, and sensitize them to be empathetic with the suffering of other people, promote tolerance and the respect of human rights, and in the meantime develop their critical thinking skills, empathy, and media literacy.

Hungarian teaching materials are easily accessible through the Institute's separate Hungarian language portal (see tab 'OKTATÁSI ANYAGOK' – Educational Materials). With the exception of one single material (entitled 'A városban születtem...' – Born in the city that became Auschwitz), all the materials contain learning aims, the target group, necessary tools, a methodological description, and a detailed lesson plan. The teaching materials are built around one or more video-testimony clips.

Teaching materials approach the topic of the Holocaust a layered manner, and more importantly, they adhere to the approach that emerged in Germany in the 60s and 70s considering the teaching

⁷ Retrieved from: <http://zachor.hu/cikkek/gyerektortenet-1944-bol>

⁸ <https://sfi.usc.edu/hungarian>

of the Holocaust (also) as a genuine starting point. These teaching materials go way beyond teaching about specific events, persons and data of the Holocaust. Instead they prefer to stress on what students can learn from the genocides of the 20th century. They personalize these chapters of history rather than considering the events as pure data or facts. Students can become aware of the fact that victims, rescuers and even perpetrators of the Holocaust were all different people from various social classes, with diverse age, status, and conditions: exactly like themselves (see teaching materials 'A baba' – The Doll and 'A Wallenberg-lecke' – The Wallenberg Lesson). They can consider on their own or discuss in pairs or in groups, what choices one can have in difficult situations. Non-evident questions like what are the most important values to live by personally or what are generally the values determining human condition boost critical thinking.

Teaching materials on the Hungarian language portal of the USC Shoah Foundation are diverse in topics, methods, and approaches. They can be used outside the History class in Literature, Foreign Language, Ethics and to Homeroom classes too. The detailed lesson plans, the source materials, the ready-for-use worksheets, instructions and keys make it easy to use for every educator. These materials were partly prepared by teachers participating in the USC Shoah Foundation professional development programs. Experts of the Foundation give professional support throughout the lesson development process for educators. The materials are piloted in real classroom situations where students provide feedback. All these elements contribute to the right approach and richness of methodology of the materials.

The teaching materials on both the website of Zachor Foundation and the Hungarian portal of the USC Shoah Foundation prove to be very useful when teaching about the Holocaust. They apply modern multimedia tools which are close to the generation of the 21st century growing up in digital culture. Both organizations offer well-developed and easy-to-follow teaching and reference materials for teachers which are recommendations allowing educators to choose several other pathways of working with them. All the teaching materials overstep the data-driven teaching of the events of the Holocaust: on one hand, the events are presented in a personal perspective bringing the trauma of the victims closer to the students, on the other hand they do not simply study causative relations in the name of some kind of positivist historical perspective. Instead, moral dilemmas and impacts of traumas are exposed to the students in order to develop their empathy and to promote responsible citizenship. We therefore should keep in evidence the special merit of these resources: they are not only targeting History educators, but every teacher that believes this topic is important to teach about.

2.5 *IWitness*⁹

IWitness is an online learning platform recently launched in Hungary. IWitness is a separate educational platform developed by the USC Shoah Foundation. It contains 1500 full length interviews of the Visual History Archive. Registration is free and available for all educators. There is a growing number of (full) interviews in Hungarian language – currently there are 20 of them, but it keeps growing and though the platform itself is in English language, no real language skills are required to use the Hungarian language content. Those who don't speak English at all are supported by a built-in

⁹ Retrieved from <http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI>

Google Translate program. The platform contains ready-made activities in the Hungarian language as well. If someone wishes to develop an own activity within IWitness – it is also possible in any language including in Hungarian. IWitness is an online platform where video testimonies, resources, glossaries, biographies help to develop activities and share them with students and groups. The site has its own built-in video-editor program. Video interviews are not downloadable but additional material (text, images, etc.) can be uploaded (all the content is under the supervision of the USC Shoah Foundation, so an inappropriate content may be removed).¹⁰

Although the published activities available for all registered members do not contain traditional lesson plans, but they mark the target age group, the subjects, the length of time needed to complete the activity and they are standards-based: all curricular alignments are listed. Each material is embedded in the constructivist theory of learning and divided into four parts which lead the teacher and the student through the course of the activity. These four phases (Consider, Collect, Construct and Communicate) allow students to watch videos testimony clips selected around specific topics or concepts, to do individual research and collect additional testimony clips and to do creative work by individually interpreting testimonies (Information Quest, Mini Quest) or even to create their own video essays (Video Activity). In the last section of each activity students can share thoughts and experiences with teachers and classmates. IWitness activities can be done as part of classroom work, but also at home as students and teachers can be connected through the Internet. This allows student groups to work collaboratively even if they are not in the same country, provided they have a common language, which makes IWitness a great collaborative teaching and learning method.

Spreading of the IWitness program might be hindered by bad technical conditions in Hungarian schools (bad computers, the lack of fast internet connection), whereas from a methodological point of view it grants us with one of the most up-to-date form of teaching both for teachers and students. Its multimedia tools motivate student and stimulate self-expression, creative thinking and an overall development of literacies and competencies, e.g. of text interpretation. The structure of the activities represents the principles of constructivist pedagogy which is, at present regarded as the most modern pedagogical approach internationally. The interdisciplinary approach of IWitness allows educators of any subject the use it within the frames of any lesson or activity – in class or as a homework assignment. Students can choose from among the activities and/or testimonies according to their interest. Certain answers can only be viewed by themselves, others can be shared with the rest of the group. Students can prepare their own video essay, which is not a very challenging activity for the digital generation, but something they gladly get immersed in. Similarly to other multimedia materials of the USC Shoah Foundation, IWitness does not exclusively concentrate on the history of genocides either¹¹, but offers a wide range of possibilities to discuss social, ethical, political and psychological questions inevitable for the youth growing up in today's democracy.¹²

¹⁰ Retrieved from: <http://iwitness.usc.edu/SFI/Activity/Detail.aspx?activityID=922>

¹¹ Recently video interviews of with witnesses of the Rwanda genocide have been added to the Archive.

¹² For instance human rights, discrimination, antisemitism, dehumanisation, passivity, etc.

2.6 DEGOB (*Deportáltakat Gondozó Országos Bizottság – National Committee for Attending Deportees*)¹³

Basically this website consists of published chronicles, glossaries, and a significant database of names. It operates in tight cooperation with the website www.holokausztmagyarorszagon.hu. It is advertised to be an online archive, and testimonials are indeed searchable. Individuals cannot be searched, while locations (like Auschwitz) can. It is a valuable resource, but it is far from being an educational material. It does not give any reference point for putting these materials into practice –this is not even among the defined goals of the organization.

2.7 *A Holokauszt Magyarországon – The Holocaust in Hungary*¹⁴

The Holocaust in Hungary is a website for both teachers and students with an extremely rich content. It offers a huge resource of maps, diagrams, glossaries, photos, documents, timeline, historical narratives for teaching and learning about the Holocaust. Even a virtual visit to the Auschwitz concentration camp is accessible.

The site offers a teaching material for teachers and students which cannot be accessed online, from the site, but as a separate CD-ROM. However, the educational material linked to the content in the CD-ROM is available on the site. Authors of this material (though they are not named), strive to present and to make understandable the processes leading to the Holocaust, the social psychological background processes. Understanding these factors can help prevent the Holocaust to happen again.

The CD-ROM represents a rich treasury of life stories, events, texts, photos, extracts of films, documents, and interactive maps. The teaching material (recommended curriculum) on the website of The Holocaust in Hungary helps teachers use these resources. The material features interesting activities, games that place education about the Holocaust in a wider context. It goes beyond the presentation of historical events and deals with the phenomena of discrimination and identity, after some preliminary exercises, with Jewish religion and traditions as well as with the topics of emancipation, assimilation and integration. It is to mention that the platform contains background texts to be used in education while it is lacking specific lesson plans. The use of these materials might be challenging for non-history teachers. The curriculum deals with Nazi racism and antisemitism, the history of Hitler's ideology, and the phases of the Final Solution, as well as with the decisions and choices of perpetrators, collaborators, resisters and rescuers, and additionally deals with what the world could know about the Holocaust. This topic is important because the discussion of these issues can serve as an opportunity for educating to become active citizens: one of the activities is for instance that students have to figure out what can be done on an international, local, and individual level if human rights are violated.

The teaching material revealed by the curricula is fairly diversified from a methodological point of view too: they include individual, pair or group work, students can analyse sources (both texts and images)

¹³ <http://degob.org/>

¹⁴ <http://www.holokausztmagyarorszagon.hu/> – website only available in Hungarian

through guided discussions, they can do free associations, generate ideas, and compare the past and their own lives. The summary lesson also plays a significant role: students can review what they have learnt and what the lessons are, and they can revisit the questions answered and unanswered alike. The only thing missing is the possibility for individual closing and reflection, but the curriculum is only a suggestion which lets teachers introduce their own approach. As the teaching material (at least on the website) does not contain worksheets, the teachers have to prepare these themselves; and also: transcripts of the source texts are missing, there are only photocopies which makes the reading a real effort. The biggest problem with the implementation of the curricula is that it is planned for twelve lessons; whereas the National Core Curriculum dedicates altogether 16 History lessons for teaching the entire history of the Second World War and the Holocaust. This means that literally and officially one single class can be devoted to the teaching of the Holocaust. It is of course possible to deal with the topic during classes of other subjects, or to link it with other history topics, but it is fairly challenging to incorporate the 12 lessons into the actual curricula. Moreover, these lessons build on one another, so it would be a mistake to separate them.

2.8 Using short films in teaching about the Holocaust

In the multimedia age of our days it is quite common to use short films to bring certain historical periods or topics closer to students. Numerous films have been made about the Holocaust: there is a great variety. There is not enough space here to discuss these films in details but it is important to note that a serious pedagogical mistake is made if we try to be 'done' with teaching about the Holocaust by watching a film. It makes no sense to do so without careful preparation, without some educational material or without at least a proper discussion. It is difficult to integrate films in the lessons anyway, as they are usually quite long. Therefore, it is advisable to view and discuss short films instead. There are several examples on online platforms, though the results of our findings are far from being reassuring. Below I wish to illustrate the case with two examples.

2.8.1. March of the Living Foundation¹⁵

The March of the Living Foundation was established in 2003-2004 by young people and actors György Kézdy and József Székelyi. The major goal of their events is to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to advocate social solidarity and democratic political culture. They also endorse education: they organize sessions at schools; it is however unclear what their methodology and professional background is.

Their website does not include teaching materials – true: neither the founders nor the members are educational experts. It is therefore even more surprising that a few years ago they recommended a video clip as educational material. Unfortunately the video clip later became quite popular.

¹⁵ <http://www.eletmenete.hu/>

Dani Rosenberg¹⁶

Although it is absolutely not a teaching material in the traditional sense, the March of the Living Foundation Hungary developed the video clip Dani Rosenberg created by Tamás Pajor with the aim to make it into educational material. The clip with several well-known performers singing in it was screened for students at the Holocaust Memorial Day in 2013 at the Urania Film Theatre Budapest¹⁷. It was recommended by various religious leaders, Christians and Jews alike: they suggested that it should be included in the National Core Curriculum. This illustrates well how good will can cause a lot of damage.

The text, the music and the clip itself is sentimental and pathetic, providing a fictional and fake historical picture built on stereotypes. Besides the excessive simplification, the stereotypical names, the visually detached scenes and the manipulative music, the story in the song reveals the sacrifice of a Hungarian boy dying in the end for his Jewish classmate. The problem is that such a story cannot be presented as typical during the Holocaust. Though many ordinary people rescued persecuted people by risking their own lives, yet doubtfully in such a manner. What is more, the majority of the Hungarian population was rather characterized by other attitudes: by being active perpetrators or passive bystanders. Thus, it is a fundamental distortion of the facts to interpret this story as a characteristic example for the relationship between members of the Jewish and non-Jewish Hungarian population during the Holocaust. The clip aims at manipulating the students (by the lyrics, the catchy melody and through the popular performers). The majority of students, however, will immediately sense that they are being manipulated emotionally, that they are being exposed to some kind of morale. They will hence either distance themselves and become indifferent, or, in a worse case, resist. And that cannot be our goal under any circumstances. Despite the intention of the authors and the supporting organization, that clip cannot be considered as an online, or as any kind of teaching material at all.

2.8.2. Tell your children...

Shot in 2007, the short film of András Salamon is a moving and thought-provoking work.¹⁸ The five-minute long, black-and-white movie shot with elements of a documentary, tells the story of a little girl, who successfully escapes an arrow cross shooting at the Danube by jumping into the river. She then successfully swims out. In the following scenes she appears as an old lady attacked by skinheads spilling beer on her. Perhaps the most important question posed by the film is whether past repeats itself and whether we can avoid it by talking about the traumas of the past. The film, as expected, lends itself to several discussions. However, for several reasons, we should use it during classes with precaution. It is for instance advised to clarify from the very beginning that though based on testimonies, this film is not a documentary even though it is based on personal memoirs. We have to be clear about it as certain inconsistencies might make the inauthentic. The film can evoke strong emotional reactions from students, so it is also recommended to make the viewing optional. Last but not least it is highly recommended to avoid view the film with students without discussion and reflection.

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddJJH72xDJ0>

¹⁷ http://hvg.hu/itthon/20130110_Tananyagnak_szanjak_az_Elet_Menete_videok

¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKpznsxZews>

The film is accompanied by a teacher's guide and a teaching material. Unfortunately, this material turns out to be unusable from several aspects. From the one hand, it does not meet the criteria of a lesson plan or curriculum, it is rather a set of recommendations (it has already been moved from the website of the Holocaust Memorial Center Budapest, but it is still available in the form of printed booklet as a supplement to the DVD). The material is full of inconsistencies and repetitions. Questions are posed in the first part of the material that are then repeated in the second part without any special reason.

The film analysis forming part of the material is clearly for teachers, as well as the text about the cultural philosophical approach of the Holocaust. The authors did not clarify the target audience of the material: the text is rather complicated, pedantic, overloaded with technical terms and abstract premises, and what is more, the text is completely unnecessary to interpret the film. When, eventually we learn from the material that this text was indeed meant to be read by students – the ordinary educator totally loses ground: who is targeted by this material? Only media teachers can understand the film analysis because of the numerous technical terms.

There is much more potential in the short film, for example for developing critical thinking – but not in this form and manner. It is a pity that the teaching material is underdeveloped and unusable: a film as excellent and inspirational, posing so many questions as this short film is, something that needs so much attention and in classroom use can only be completed with a well-reasoned, easy-to-follow and accurate teaching material, which is in accordance with formal requirements too.

2.9 Tanulizátor¹⁹

The website of Tanulizátor can be freely accessed after registration. By clicking on the menu at the bottom of the page with the tab 'RÓLUNK' (About us) we learn that this website is primarily for middle-class (grades 5-8, between 10 and 14 years of age). The developers turned the materials of the National Core Curriculum into 15 minute-videos for almost each subject. The video about the Holocaust is integrated in the 7th grader History section. Each video comes with quiz containing a set of questions.

The names and photos of the developers are published on the website but we have no information about who they are: educators, researchers, or educational experts?

According to their objectives they would like to ensure equal rights in education: the materials they developed for the website are available for everyone anywhere, and in all the schools. At the same time, the project claims to modernize educational materials, as the videos and the website itself can be accessed through computers, laptops, tablets, etc.

The video on the Holocaust features a young lady with an inexpressive face who tries to condense the history of the Holocaust into 15-minutes. A TV screen is placed next to her where a Prezi presentation is running: very text-heavy with some photographs.

¹⁹ Retrieved from: http://ofi.hu/sites/default/files/attachments/a_holokaoszt_az_iskola_es_a_tanar_0.pdf

The text she recites is all in all adequate and logically structured. The content is fair too: for instance, they mention the responsibility of the Hungarian authorities and people as well. However, there are several minor errors, inaccuracies, non-layered and simplistic statements. But all these mistakes cast into shade besides the methodological blind alley: even if it's a video with online access, it does not become a teaching material, especially not a modern one as it does not convey a new type of perspective or understanding. The content of the video is basically the condensed version of the text book without reading and interpreting source materials and explaining important concepts.

2.10 Sulinet Digitális Tudásbázis – Sulinet Digital Knowledgebase²⁰

On the website of the Sulinet Digital Knowledgebase (SDT) the Ministry made the full educational material accessible, structuring it into sixteen subjects for the twelve grades. The structure is based on the electronically-accessible teaching material on this web platform. The real educational support however, are the supplements containing exercises and activities, tests and quizzes and methodological guidance for teachers and students separately, a glossary, images, videos, and other online sources: animations and links – all related to every single topic. In addition, lesson plans describing the ideal teaching process are also included. More experienced educators are also advised to use the platform as it helps them make their classes more interesting and varied and they can assign home activities for their students which might be motivating for them simply because they are online.²¹

The methodological recommendation of the lesson on the Holocaust: 'introduces the tragic story of the Holocaust with the help of texts, sources, and visuals for teachers and students alike'. However, no explanations are added and it does not put anything in a wider historical context.

There are only few pictures attached and they all depict heaps of corpses which is not only controversial to a great extent, but also definitely contraindicated in teaching about the Holocaust. The display of such images causes displeasure for most of students (and adults), thus their reaction could not only be a lack of sympathy with the victims, but even a rejection of the subject. Although we should not relativize the horrors of the Holocaust, it proves to be inefficient to overwhelm students with statistical data. Teachers should rather find a balance between revealing the actual facts of the Holocaust and interpreting these within an emotionally tolerable frame.

The introductory text is completed with three source texts: The Wannsee Protocol, a forced labour decree, and several extracts from the Auschwitz Protocol. No questions, or activities are linked with these texts, nor it is explained, why exactly these three sources have been selected.

When clicking on the tab 'Fogalmak' (Notions), only a list of notions appears: namely the terms which, according to the Frame curriculum, every student should know. There are two notions (Crystal Night and Genocide) which are marked as previous knowledge. I doubt that this is sufficient to understand the history of the Holocaust.

²⁰ <http://tudasbazis.sulinet.hu/hu/tarsadalomtudomanyok/tortenelem/az-i-vilaghaborutol-a-ketpolusu-vilag-felbomlasaig/a-ii-vilaghaboru/a-holokauszt>

²¹ <http://et3r.ektf.hu/blended-learning/blended-learning-tamogatas/sulinet-tudasbazis-sdt/>

When clicking on the tab 'Gyűjtemények' (Collections), we find a quiz ('The new order' in Europe) featuring one single activity: abbreviations and full names of different Nazi military and political organizations should be matched. Students who love the topic of World War II would presumably fill it in anyway, but this is not the most essential piece of knowledge for that topic.

All in all, it seems that the teaching material about the Holocaust is not completely ready yet: it was therefore a mistake to post it like this.

2.11 Árkádia – Irodalom Oktatási Portál (Arcadia – Literature Education Portal)

The module featuring on this website set up by Mária Bíró Balogh explores the question how the Holocaust can be illustrated by art and how can we process the events of the Holocaust assisted using art. The defined target group is the 12th grade.

The description of the teaching material provides details of the preconditions, required competences, tools, and the number of lessons. The methods include individual, pair, and group work alike. The description is clear and easy-to-follow. The students also receive a separate description. However, it cannot be considered as online teaching material because students eventually do not do the activities online.

The teaching material mostly uses literature (prose and poem), as well as film sources. In addition to close reading, association games and the analysis of specialized literature in aesthetics are also included.

This remarkable teaching material, however, can only be recommended for students with outstanding abilities. Complex texts and literary sources are to be interpreted – most of these are not even included in the core curriculum. Students are offered several creative activities – yet these activities also require exceptional competencies. It is useful that the material devotes ample time for self-reflection and formulation of personal emotions and thoughts not only at the end of the assignment but throughout the whole process as well. It is clearly stated in the description as a learning aim to help self-assessment and self-expression. This material in conclusion aims to exceed an ordinary process of knowledge transfer and strives to encourage personal development – as it is also claimed in the introduction, as part of the competencies.

3. Summary

Having reviewed the digital and online teaching materials related to the education of the Holocaust we can see that there is a great variety of sources. There are many great initiatives, creative ideas – whereas they are not equally well-developed. The reason for that could be that no systematic guidance exists about what description should accompany an online teaching material. Many teaching materials are more like recommendations – this might not be a problem: teachers should adjust the materials to the proper contexts and the needs of their own students anyway. Yet, there is space for development: most of the studied educational materials can only be regarded as online teaching materials because they are accessible on the Internet. Instead of being real online materials they could rather be defined as digital

materials belonging to the 1st generation of digital educational materials (e.g. HAVER, or Sulinet), or the 2nd generation of digital educational materials (e.g. Centropa and Holocaust in Hungary), or the 3rd generation of digital educational materials (e.g. some materials of Centropa, the ones of the USC Shoah Foundation, and that of Zachor Foundation). Only the IWitness platform belongs to the 4th generation of digital education materials, that is this is the single only real online educational material. In order to have more access to 4th generation digital education materials in Hungary Hungarian schools would need a much more reliable technical background with broadband internet, well-functioning, good-quality computers, tablets, and system administrators. Methodological training for educators is indispensable: they should be introduced to online teaching materials.

Clearly, providing a good technical environment is not sufficient. We experience a paradigm shift in the teaching about the Holocaust in Hungary. The study of the teaching materials discussed above reveals inconsistencies, mistakes and dead ends, but most of the materials discuss the topic of the Holocaust from a new approach. Nearly all of them includes personal perspectives, personal life stories enabling students to discuss personal decisions, moral dilemmas and other dilemma situations. Several materials apply multimedia tools besides (in some cases instead of) textual and visual sources, which appear to be closer for today's students. Teachers realized that the topic of the Holocaust is interdisciplinary: teaching it can happen outside the History classroom. A large number of educators develop their materials and classes by the principles of the constructivist theory of teaching which does not merely intend to pass on knowledge, but considers student personalities and individual interests, skills, and creativity. The concept of the role of the teacher is undergoing a change all over the world: they are not any more the absolute 'possessors' of knowledge, they have to teach students how to express their own opinion, how to think critically, how to contrast different points of view and how to debate.

The paradigm shift is noticeable not only in the methodology of the teaching of the Holocaust, but also – in strong coherency – in the objectives. The Holocaust is not merely one of the historical events, but an important and tragic turning-point of our civilization. Knowing or not knowing about it determines our future. In order to prevent genocides similar to the Holocaust from happening, we need to decrease prejudices, racism, intolerance, and discrimination in our society. For that purpose, we have to develop social and cognitive competencies together, as well as democratic thinking.²² This cannot be achieved through an exposure of all the horrors of the Holocaust in the most naturalistic way possible, as this could alienate many from the topic. This can be achieved by developing age-appropriate teaching materials to develop student skills of empathy using through personal stories.

Students should be encouraged to actively participate in the interpretation of sources, as well in formulating and expressing their own thoughts and opinions.²³

The final goal of the teaching about the Holocaust is therefore the education towards active citizenship, that is to teach our students to be aware of and recognize signs when power is being

²² Adorno, Th. W. (1950): *Típusok és tünetegyüttesek*. In: Csepeli, Gy. (szerk.): *Előítéletek és csoportközi viszonyok*. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest. 237–295.; Allport, G. W. (1954): *Az előítélet*. Gondolat, Budapest; Kovács Mónika (2010): *Az előítéletek okai és mérséklésük lehetőségei: a szociálpszichológiai nézőpont*. *Alkalmazott Pszichológia*, 12. 1–2. sz. 7–27

²³ Szép Ágnes (2005, szerk.): *Megközelítések...Tanári kézikönyv a holokauszt témakörének feldolgozó-sához*. Történelemtanárok Egylete, Budapest. 12–27.

misused, when authorities threaten human rights and single out social groups and individuals. The active citizen is conscious about personal responsibility and knows that indifference or ignorance supports perpetrators – thus they become collaborators unless they take action in time. Most of the online teaching materials available today in Hungary try to sensitize others, like the digital material of *Holokauszt Magyarországon*, or the online ones of the USC Shoah Foundation including its IWitness platform go far beyond that, they emphasize the importance of individual choices and decisions as well as individual responsibility.

Thus, if we consider the activity of Hungarian education material developer, and especially the work of civil organizations, we can see that the paradigm shift in the tools, objectives and methods of teaching about the Holocaust has taken or is about to take place. It is absolutely indispensable, however, that the official education policy adapts to the needs of today's digital generation; not merely by supporting the development of appropriate teaching materials and the training of teachers but also by creating the necessary frames: by providing the technical environment, and by reconsidering the core curricula, the heavy content and the number of lessons. There is still a lot to do in this field, though.