

AMORES

An Approach to Motivating learners to Read in European Schools

DELIVERABLE D2-7

Methodology for teachers in teaching national and European literature supported by interactive ICT tools

Version 1.0

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AMORES Teaching Methodology

1. Introduction

This document is a framework for teachers to use in teaching national and European literature with the support of interactive ICT tools. The AMORES teaching methodology described here draws upon the experience of the AMORES project experts and, more importantly, the teachers who will conduct the learning activities with the students throughout the project. These teachers also participated in the AMORES teachers' workshop held at Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent, in the UK in March 2014, during which they shared expertise and started to plan the curriculum during the implementation phase. The AMORES teaching methodology is based on participant teachers' experience, state-of-the-art analysis (the literature review) and the user needs analysis developed in workpackage 1.

The AMORES teaching methodology presented in this document can be employed by all educators, but primarily those wishing to develop their students' participation in learning about national and European literature through the creation of e-artefacts.

The AMORES teaching methodology is put forward as a set of recommendations. It is flexible in order to be applicable to the different contexts of the schools participating in the project, and to other learning contexts.

2. The main goals of the AMORES teaching methodology

This methodology provides a framework for teachers to create engaging activities for their students/pupils to enhance their love of literacy. The methodology responds to the essential need for a mechanism to engage students. Four of the five schools report issues with motivation and engagement with literature, particularly as the children get older. The competing demands of other media, which requires shorter attention spans and more interaction, and the nature of text studies (which

may not always appeal to students) means that many pupils are switched off from reading.

The main goal of the methodology, from the teachers' perspective, is to instil a love of reading in their pupils, given that the most common shared problems are that boys tend to read less well than girls, and that all pupils /students read less as they progress through their school journey.

3. The setting for the development of the methodology

The first draft of the AMORES teaching methodology was developed by teachers from participating schools, coming from five countries: Croatia, Denmark, Poland, Sweden and the UK. The development was facilitated by the expert partners on the project. The teachers from participating schools all have a background in teaching national or European literature.

The teachers' workshop took place in the period from 17 to 19 March 2014. The development of the new methodology was based on participatory design, which allowed all voices to be heard and consensus achieved in order to make the methodology appropriate and sustainable. Teachers felt empowered and identified the roles and activities which they wished to undertake as part of the AMORES project. The collaborative nature of the venture came through very clearly. It allowed teachers to incorporate their experience into the development of the AMORES methodology.

After the draft of the methodology was developed, the educational technology team selected the appropriate ICT tools that support the methodology and correspond to the needs analysis results. The selection of the tools is described in the Technology Selection Report. When the technology selection was completed, the learning materials for teachers on interactive ICT tools in teaching literature were designed.

4. The context of the participating schools

It was clear from the group work at the teachers' workshop that although the

teachers are working in very different contexts, the problems and issues regarding lack of engagement with literature are very similar.

In general, the opportunities and challenges faced by the participating schools are very similar. Four of the five schools have well-stocked libraries, and all have access to public libraries. Collaboration with local libraries is also very important for the schools, and there are various initiatives, such as bringing in parents and volunteers to read to the students. Sometimes children's authors are also brought into schools through the collaboration with local libraries. Most of the schools dedicate time during the week to encourage children to read, and all include reading at home as part of their expectation of the children. This is usually assessed by the writing of reading reports, and sometimes of holding presentations in class.

Four of the five schools conduct group work around literature, and use digital technology to create these. These technologies are almost exclusively different types of presentation software, using a series of still images to convey the content. Creating moving images will therefore require some additional support. All students are familiar with e-books as a platform and have experience of digital technologies, but the majority of students do not have experience of learning using online discussion tools.

5. Recommended digital competencies for use of the methodology

In order to use the methodology, it is necessary to determine to what extent the teachers are familiar with particular categories of online tools. Those who do not have the expertise required to engage their students in the activities which will be taking place partly or wholly in the online environment, or to guide their students/pupils in the use of online tools, may be advised to use the AMORES learning materials for teachers on interactive ICT tools in teaching national and European literature, available at <https://loomen.carnet.hr/course/view.php?id=4755> and <http://www.amores->

project.eu/ .

6. Instructional strategies, teaching methods and learning activities

The literature review indicates that creating artefacts is a learning strategy that involves the highest order learning skills, standing at the top of the revised Bloom's taxonomy. The pedagogical theory that best describes learning by creating is that of Papert's idea of constructionism. This not only emphasises the learning that is triggered by the constructivist approach of activity-based learning (or learning by doing), but also the importance of the learning that occurs as a result of discussion leading to shared meanings. This then led to the importance of two elements of the methodology:

- Encouraging students to learn by creating
- Encouraging students to learn by sharing and discussion

The literature review also covered the effectiveness of a learning cycle such as the Lewin or Kolb learning cycle has at consolidating learning. This involves encouraging the students to reflect on activities and develop their activities based on this reflection. The Kolbs also emphasise the value that reflecting on their learning has on improving learning. This led to an additional two elements of the methodology, that of:

- Encouraging students to maximise their learning by scaffolding activities around creation, observation and reflection
- Encouraging students to develop "metacognitive" approaches by reflecting on their learning

Students' reflecting on their learning also has the additional benefit of providing much needed data on the effectiveness of the learning activities.

From the social interaction side: social interaction is important not only because it enables annotation, co-creation and feedback on the development of

artefacts; it also provides a basis for team- and trust-building between the participants. However, the indication of these previous projects is that this trust-building interaction also needs to be scaffolded through the provision of set tasks.

In the context of the AMORES methodology, social interaction allows students from participant schools to become better acquainted with national and European literature through collaborating on the creation and discussion of e-artefacts. The methodology also has a European dimension, allowing students to discover more about the literatures and cultures of their counterparts from various countries.

The recommended instructional strategy is therefore collaborative creation, which is underpinned by the theory of social constructivism. In brief, collaborative learning is described by social constructivism as a means by which meaning is constructed jointly by a community (Conole et al, 2005; 11). Lewis, Pea and Rosen (2010; 7) summarise social constructivism as the process in which “By together questioning texts and situations, conceptualizing problems, designing solutions, building artifacts, redesigning, re-conceptualizing and reinterpreting, people generate forms of public knowledge that in turn provide conceptual and relational support for further interaction and learning”.

Recommended teaching methods are:

- collaborative or individual creating of e-artefacts based on works of literature
- sharing e-artefacts
- discussion of e-artefacts
- reflection on the process of creation of e-artefacts and on the whole learning process.

The recommended learning activities should align with the teaching methods, which should include learner-generated content such as creating an e-artefact that can be shared in and between schools and discussed face-to-face and via videoconferencing. Lewis et al (2010; 7) remark that, “students engage in deep learning when they research, design and construct an artefact or model as a representation of their knowledge” and also that “constructionism links personal and social influences on learning because the artefact produced is an output of the

interaction of personal and social knowledge construction that needs to be meaningful and made public.

It is assumed that enthusiastic early adopters or those with some experience in the area of e-learning will be best placed to take the initiative forward in the school setting. Therefore, it is recommended that e-learning champions within the school are identified who can act as leaders in this process.

7. Example of a learning scenario

The following is a sample learning scenario employing the AMORES teaching methodology.

Recommended activities:

- Students/pupils read their stories
- Discuss in class.
 - Putting a series of questions about the text to students/pupils who then have to discuss in groups and come up with an agreed set of answers. Questions could be: Who is your favourite character, why did you like her etc.
- Ask students to think about how they might retell this part of the story to a partner school
- Demonstrate e-tools for possible use
- Students/pupils discuss and decide which e-tool to choose such as a movie film of students/pupils acting out an aspect of the story or cartoon generator
- Students/pupils create their own a-artefact, such as movie etc.
- Partner schools students/pupils share and discuss the e-artefacts via social network
- Partner schools students/pupils discuss the process of creating e-artefacts via videoconference
- Teachers should moderate and summarise all discussions

8. Recommendations

The activities carried out in the classroom, such as those described in the learning scenario example, should take the following into consideration:

- Activities should be meaningful to engage students and motivate them
- Activities should be engaged in which can lead to collaboration across institutions
- Technologies should stretch students but not overtax resources at schools
- Students need observation and feedback on their progress throughout the creation process to ensure they are mastering the required skills
- Providing an opportunity for learners to feed back on each others' work is a motivating element, both in a formative way (by enabling annotation and response to each others' work) and in a summative way in the form of a final "show and tell"
- Learning by creation is a resource-intensive activity, particularly on the time required by both learners and teachers, so adequate provision must be made for this.

9. Technology selection considerations

In order to select the technologies which will be used for specific learning activities, the following points need to be taken into consideration.

According to the theoretical framework the draft methodology is based on, tools which allow both creation and mediation are necessary. Participant (teacher) experience suggests that the technologies chosen need to be ones that could be remixed and annotated, as well as shared. They should also be engaging for students and flexible enough to draw on their experiences.

Key technologies that are recommended are video creation tools and comic strip generators. These are rich media, interesting to students and include the

storytelling aspects which are crucial to creating digital artefacts based on literary works. An important consideration is that schools and students generally have some experience of creating videos, as is evidenced by most of the participant schools.

For a medium for socialisation, a social network is recommended for asynchronous activities, whilst videoconferencing is advised for synchronous ones. Project requirements stipulated the selection of technologies which allow sharing and collaboration at a distance.

10. References

- Conole, G., Littlejohn, A., Falconer, I. and Jeffery, A. (2005) Pedagogical review of learning activities and use cases, LADIE project report, JISC; August 2005*
- Lewis, S., Pea, R. and Rosen, J. (2010) Special issue: Digitize and transfer, Social Science Information, Vol. 49(3): 1-19*