SUPPORTING CONTEMPORARY LEARNING AND TEACHING METHODS THROUGH GLAT PROJECT

Petra Pejić Papak, Jasminka Mezak, Darko Lončarić
University of Rijeka, Faculty of Teacher Education, Croatia

Abstract

The use of technology in education requires teachers with certain digital competencies to use the teaching technology and make the learning process more interesting to students. The ongoing Erasmus+ project "Games for Learning Algorithmic Thinking" provided 20 primary school junior grade teachers with education on different teaching strategies for stimulating the algorithmic thinking of their pupils in everyday situations.

Through lectures, demonstrations and practical work in three workshops participants were introduced to the concepts of Game Based Learning and unplugged activities, Problem Based Learning and the possibilities for integration of problem-solving tasks into the lecturing process. They were also introduced to the concept of Inquiry Based Learning and possibilities for learning basic programming concepts using games.

Also, teachers applied newly acquired knowledge through the development of their own learning scenarios. Learning scenarios are materials and procedures intended to support teachers in using innovative and imaginative ideas for teaching activities by means of modern pedagogical methods, with the use of appropriate digital content and tools. So, their task was to design a learning scenario for a selected subject that will include activities which will encourage creativity, logical thinking, and problem-solving skills in students. They were also expected to implement such activities with their students and to share their experiences with other participants.

After each workshop participants provided structured evaluations and reflections aimed at the improvement of teaching and practical exercises provided through this project. The initial and final evaluation was used to identify how this project contributed to teachers knowledge, skills, and how it changed the pattern of teaching methods that they use in classrooms.

The syllabus and teaching materials developed during the teacher training program will be used to organize a lifelong learning program at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Rijeka. Certain segments of syllabi and teaching materials will also be included in the new Integrated University Teacher Study plan and program.

Key words: Game Based Learning, Inquiry Based Learning, Problem Based Learning, algorithmic thinking, teachers