



TALETE

Teaching mAthS through innovative Learning approach
and conTEnts

LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME
COMENIUS

Coordinated by Università degli Studi "G.Marconi"

AVATAR International Workshop



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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Elaborated by (Name of the organization)	Università degli Studi "Guglielmo Marconi"
Conference Name	AVATAR International Workshop
Date	13 th September 2011

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Introduction

The AVATAR Final Workshop Report describes the final workshop that took place in Burgas, on Tuesday, September 13, 2011 and constituted the face to face event of the AVATAR project. The title of the workshop was "Added Value of Teaching in virtual worlds".

The report describes the workshop organization process, its sessions and outcomes and the means that were used to promote the event to decision maker and wider public.

Workshop Organization

The organization of the workshop started as far as six months in advance. Aspects of the organization were also discussed among the partners during the partner meeting in Madrid. The local organizer, Yanislav Zhelev and Mariya Zheleva, being the representative of BFU, had prepared and presented to the partners different ideas about the structure of the workshop.

In the end, the following decisions were made:

1. The workshop would last one day; September 13, 2011 was chosen as the best solution;
2. It would consist of two main session and a panel;
3. One session would be dedicated to presenting the AVATAR project; this session might include a real demo of the AVATAR E-Learning and V-Learning platform;
4. A number of invited speakers from all over Europe would present aspects of virtual worlds, their use in educational context and its impact on the education system; all partners would suggest candidate speakers;
5. A Panel session and open discussion would be dedicated to stimulate discussion between the speakers and the audience;
6. On line broadcasting would be foreseen to allow a broader audience to participate in the workshop and open discussion.

Moreover, BFU would initiate a significant promotional campaign aiming to attract as much attention to the workshop as possible.

The workshop organization, including the development of the website, the printing of programmes, the secretarial and technical support was carried out by BFU.

Workshop Objectives and Topics

The main objectives of the workshop were:

- Present of the main results and outcomes achieved in the framework of the AVATAR project aiming of the provision of opportunities for both teachers and students in secondary schools in Europe to benefit from ICT skill development, social learning opportunities and a resource to help revive the traditional classroom environment, adding value to the learning process;

- Present the results and outcomes of other European projects focused on the serious applications of the virtual worlds in teaching and learning processes;

The main topics of the workshop were as follows:

- Methods and tools for teaching and learning in secondary school oriented multi-user virtual environment;
- Teaching and learning of business studies in the virtual learning environment;
- In-World Effects on Technology Acceptance for Teachers;
- Teaching and learning of languages in multi-user virtual environments;
- Feedback and planning support created from Internet-based learning tools and 3D learning environment;
- Art in the virtual space

Workshop themes and structure

The workshop was held under the patronage of the Representative of the EU Commission in Bulgaria. The Representative also sent a welcome message, giving congratulations to the AVATAR Consortium for their outstanding action and inviting partners and institutions to foster their international cooperation to mainstream a framework to help revive the traditional classroom environment, adding value to the learning process. The message was read at the beginning of the workshop. This added a significant institutional *quid pluris* to the event.

The BFU's Rector welcome participants with an institutional speech underling the quality of the work done and his institutional engagement in sustaining an mainstreaming the results of the project, also considering its transfer to other sectors.

The conference was broadcasted in real time through the AVATAR website www.avatarproject.eu for all the ones interested in the event who might not physically attend. Also possibility for on line interactive participation was given through the AVATAR website.

The workshop was organised in two main sessions.

During the first session the main results and outcomes of the project were presented and demonstrated by the team members as follows:

- The overall structure, stages, aims and objectives of the AVATAR project were presented by Cristina Stefanelli - representative of FOR.COM Interuniversity Consortium being co-ordinating institution of the project;
- Research phase of the project and results of it were presented by Jill A. Hewitt, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom;
- The main aspects and outcomes concerning the design and production of the AVATAR Course were presented by Inger-Marie F. Christensen, University of Southern Denmark;
- The AVATAR E-learning platform structure and functionality were presented and demonstrated by Mikail Feituri, FOR.COM Interuniversity Consortium, Italy;
- Presentation and demonstration of the AVATAR V-Learning platform were done by Andrew Marunchak, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom;

- Experimentation phase of the project, the results and lesson learnt from it were presented by Jutta Pauschenwein and Maja Pivec, FH Joanneum, Austria;
- Results from the evaluation phase of the AVATAR course and user satisfaction were presented by Tiberio Feliz Murias, Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia, Spain;
- A representative of the AVATAR teachers' who successfully completed the AVATAR Course and delivered his project work, Jens Kjær Olsen from the Ungdomscentret i glostrup, 10'eren, Denmark, presented his project work in the form of a case study: Learning English as a foreign language in SL.

The first session of the conference culminated with the ceremony of awarding of certificates for Bulgarian teachers who took part in the project teachers' experimental group. Some of them gave a short speech sharing the experience gathered during the AVATAR Course.

The second session of the conference focused on other international projects dealing with the use of virtual world for teaching and learning purposes. These projects were presented by keynote speakers as follows:

- NVWN, the Nordic Virtual Worlds Network was presented by Robin Teigland, Center for Strategy and Competitiveness, Stockholm School of Economics (SSE), Sweden;
- In-World Effects on Technology Acceptance for Teachers Vanessa Camilleri, Serious Games Institute of the University of Coventry, United Kingdom;
- From AVALON to Euroversity was presented by Luisa Panichi, University of Hull, United Kingdom;
- NEXT-TELL, Next Generation Teaching, Education and Learning for Life was presented by Klaus Hammermüller, Talkademy.org, Austria;
- The last two projects ST.ART, STreet ARTists in a virtual space and **TALETE, Teaching maths through innovative learning approach and contents** were presented by Francesco Fedele, USGM, Italy

At the end of each session, a fairly extensive period was allocated to questions and answers, thus facilitating a constructive dialogue between the speakers and the participants. During the Q&A part of the session and the informal discussions some ideas and proposals for future collaborations and developments were discussed by delegates. Also during the breaks all participants had the opportunity to ask additional questions and to exchange information, experience and ideas for future use of the products.

TALETE Presentation

The TALETE project aims to support the use of mathematisation and contextualization in the school lesson, because its potentiality is to show students the value of mathematics and to increase their motivation to study it.

The project aims at improving the quality and efficiency of education and training as follows:

- identifying and developing teaching and learning method in the field of mathematics with a focus on the geometry;

- improving the quality of learning in order to support the development of students' basic and transversal competences;
- improving attractiveness and efficiency of International Standard Classification of Education levels 2 and 3 of education and training (nearly the end of compulsory education) through the 3D virtual world;
- supporting high quality teaching and teacher training;
- supporting schools to establish partnerships and improving teachers and pupils' skills favouring the integration of the European dimension in teaching and learning.

The TALETE project is addressed to teachers and students of European schools. The impacts on the target groups are:

- as to the teachers, to provide innovative contents strictly connected with national school curriculum in mathematics, in order to improve the quality of teaching making it more flexible and fun and reducing the number of low-performs of students;
- as to the students, to improve mathematical literacy skills, contrasting with the interest lack among students for the scientific and technical studies.

Press release

A few days before the workshop, BFU sent press releases to regional newspapers and sites. A dedicated articles appeared in local newspapers Paper Chernomorski Phar. It is the paper with the highest circulation distributed mainly on the territory of the Southeastern Region of Republic Bulgaria. The article presents the project in short, the partners, the aims and expected outcomes. The publication puts an accent on the final project workshop.



Fig. 1: Paper Chernomorski Phar, 14.09.2011

Annexes

1. Photos
2. Conference program (in English and Bulgarian)
3. Handout of the TALETE presentation



Fig. 2: Partners and invited speakers at the AVATAR International workshop



Fig. 3: Yanislav Zhelev (BFU) reads the message from the Representative of the EU Commission in Bulgaria who gave the patronage to the event



Fig. 4: Welcome message by Prof. Dr. Vasil Yankov, Rector of Burgas Free University



Fig. 5: Prof. Dr. Vasil Yankov, Rector of Burgas Free University



AVATAR

Added value of Teaching in virtual worlds

**AVATAR
International Workshop**

**Burgas (BG)
Tuesday, 13 September 2011**

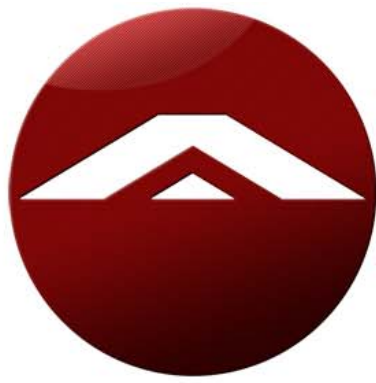
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AVATAR

13 September 2011, Morning

9.00 – 9.30 Registration of participants

9.30 – 9.45 Welcome
Prof. Dr. Vasil Yankov, Rector of Burgas Free University
Konstantin Grebenarov, Governor of the Burgas region

Session 1: The results of the AVATAR project

Chair: Yanislav Zhelev, Burgas Free University

9.45 – 10.00 **Introduction to the AVATAR Project**
Cristina Stefanelli, FOR.COM Interuniversity Consortium, Italy

10.00 – 10.15 **Research phase: why and which virtual world?**
Jill A. Hewitt, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

10.15 – 10.30 **The design and production of the AVATAR Course**
Inger-Marie F. Christensen, University of Southern Denmark

10.30 – 10.45 *Coffe break*

10:45 – 11:00 **The AVATAR E-learning platform**
Mikail Feituri, FOR.COM Interuniversity Consortium, Italy

11:00 – 11:15 **The AVATAR V-Learning platform**
Andrew Marunchak, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

11:15 – 11:30 **The Experimentation phase**
Jutta Pauschenwein and Maja Pivec Austria, FH Joanneum, Austria

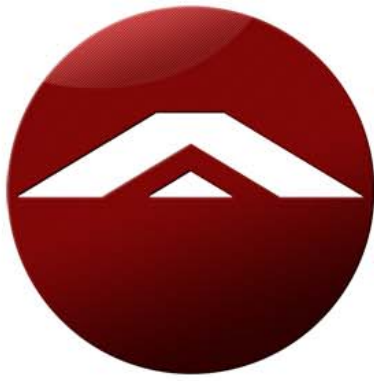
11:30 – 11:45 **Evaluation of the Course and user satisfaction**
Tiberio Feliz Murias, Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia, Spain

11:45 – 12:00 **Case study: Learning English as a foreign language in SL**
Jens Kjær Olsen, Ungdomscentret i glostrup, 10'eren, Denmark

12:00 – 12:30 **Lesson learnt from the project and Q&A**
Panel session

12:30 – 13.00 Ceremony of awarding of certificates for Bulgarian teachers

13.00 - 14.30 *Light lunch*



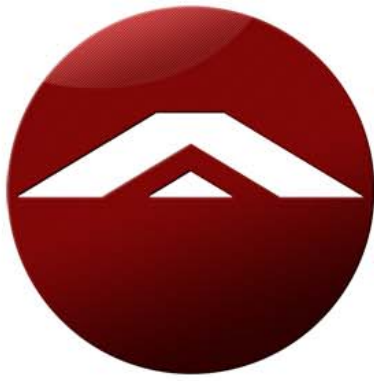
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13 September 2011, Afternoon

Session 2: Other experiences in virtual worlds

Chair: Francesco Fedele, USGM

- 14.30 – 14.50 **NVWN, the Nordic Virtual Worlds Network**
Robin Teigland, Center for Strategy and Competitiveness,
Stockholm School of Economics (SSE), Sweden
- 14.50 – 15.10 **In-World Effects on Technology Acceptance for Teachers**
Vanessa Camilleri, Serious Games Institute of the University of
Coventry, United Kingdom
- 15.10 – 15.30 **From AVALON to Euroversity**
Luisa Panichi, University of Hull, United Kingdom
- 15.30 – 15.50 **NEXT-TELL, Next Generation Teaching, Education and
Learning for Life**
Klaus Hammermüller, Talkademy.org, Austria
- 15.50 – 16.10 **ST.ART, STreet ARTists in a virtual space**
**TALETE, Teaching maths through innovative learning
approach and contents**
Francesco Fedele, USGM, Italy
- 16.10 – 17:00 **Q&A and closing statements**



AVATAR

Workshop venue

Burgas Free University - konferent room 2
62 san Stefano str.
8001 Burgas (Bulgaria)

On line participation

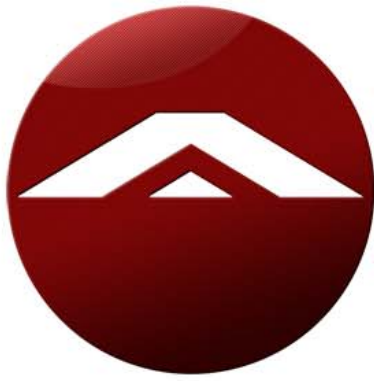
For the ones who may not physically attend, the workshop will be broadcasted in real time through the AVATAR website www.avatarproject.eu and the AVATAR Island in Second Life. Information for the on line interactive participation are available from the AVATAR's website.

Registration is mandatory

The workshop is free of charge, but places are limited!

Send your registration with name, position and affiliation to:

Yanislav Zhelev – Email: yanislav@zhelev.com
under the subject: AVATAR Workshop Registration
Please, indicate also if you will participate on line or in presence.



AVATAR

About

AVATAR is a European Multilateral project under the Lifelong learning programme 2007-2013, Sub programme Comenius. AVATAR multi-actors include seven organizations from six EU countries (AT, BG, DK, ES, UK and IT)

Project Coordinator

Formazione per la Comunicazione Interuniversity Consortium (FOR.COM), Italy
www.forcom.it

Formal partners

Information Design FH JOANNEUM University of Applied Sciences, Austria
www.fh-joanneum.at

Burgas Free University, Bulgaria
www.bfu.bg

University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
www.sdu.dk

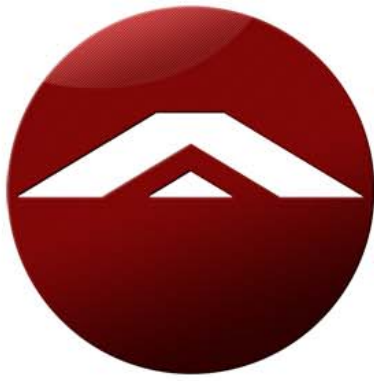
Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain
www.uned.es

University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom
www.herts.ac.uk

SOPH.ia In Action Consulting, Italy
www.sophiaconsulting.eu

Project website

www.avataproject.eu



AVATAR

Note:

TALETE – Teaching mAthS through innovative Learning approach and contents

Francesco Fedele, EU project Coordinator, Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi

European Ministers set the target to reduce the average of students with difficulties in reading, maths and science in order to reach fewer than 15% by 2020. TALETE project aims at investigating different ways of the mathematics representations, in the topics, already, defined in the PISA, IEA TIMSS and National surveys concerning the maths skills of 15 years-old students. The worldwide surveys report that EU students often lack mathematical competence and key basic competences in science and technology. The learning of the mathematics literacy enables students to contribute effectively in actual society, improving their employment prospects. In this context, the project intends to develop with the teachers more attractive and fun pedagogical tools (serious game and machinima) for the maths literacy delivered in two virtual environments: e-learning platform and 3D world. The project, therefore, addresses the Comenius priority 3 "Support to literacy and "transversal key competences".

The data, collected by TIMSS survey, show that the Asian countries placed at the best positions of the ranking. In response to this, the project aims at developing innovative pedagogical tools based on the topics defined in the PISA, TIMSS and National surveys in order to enable 15 years-old students to acquire mathematical literacy improving attractiveness and efficiency in the ISCED levels 2 and 3 of compulsory education.

Main outcomes are:

- E-learning platform delivering the e-course for teachers
- 3D virtual world environment for their students in compulsory education

Envisaged impact:

- Teachers will develop and test innovative didactic tools that can help raise the interest level and motivate students to acquire mathematical skills
- Students will test directly with their teachers the attractiveness and efficiency of new didactic tools and will also develop transversal skills (e.g. communicative, learning to learn, social and digital skills) useful for future professional development.

About the Speaker:



Francesco Fedele designs and coordinates financed projects, he is a Senior Manager for Università degli Studi 'G. Marconi' in Italy. He also has more than 25 years of experience in providing consultancy on IT technology and organization. After some years as a software developer, system analyst and system designer, he has been Product Manager of a software design tool, Marketing Manager for a company developing IT applications for health-care, and then General Manager for a web development company. He managed a number of EU funded projects and grants under



the ESPRIT, TAP, ACTS, IST, LLP, EUMEDIS, TEMPUS programmes. He has been involved in IT standards development (with a focus on the XML technology) and worked with CEN. He is fluent in Italian and English, speaks French and Spanish and has some knowledge of Polish and Serbo-Croatian.

e-mail: f.fedele@unimarconi.it