
GAMEland methodology (WP2)

GENERAL INFORMATION

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Project title: Gamification assets for multisensorial educative tools in language learning using co-creating for addressing needs and desires of students (GAMEland)

The focus of the activity: GAMEland methodology for LSP workbook

Duration: 1/07/2022- 30/09/2023

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Participating consortium members: AMU, RENNES, UNINA, SRL, LNPU

Description of the activity and its connection with the previous task:

This activity was performed in the last three months of WP1 and presented the final draft of the pedagogical methodology. It represents the outcome of a cooperative endeavor that derives its effectiveness from various research methods, encompassing findings from surveys, workshops, and an examination of coursebooks carried out in partner nations. The partners integrated the results from the evaluation national workshop and included gamification aspects in LSP teaching, designing a framework for other HEIs outside the partnership.

Background for the GAMEland methodology for LSP workbook: This framework represents a comprehensive approach to addressing the critical intersection of language and soft skills development. It is the culmination of a collaborative effort that draws its strength from an array of research methodologies, including survey results, workshops, and coursebook analysis conducted across partner countries.

Informed by the valuable insights gathered through the online survey (A2.1-Mapping the softskills) and coursebook analysis (A.2.2 analysis of the LSP workbooks) about soft-skills and language use that canvassed the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, and enriched by the in-depth discussions held during workshops (A2.3-4-5-6-7) Focus-Group / Evaluation Workshops) that brought together educators, industry experts, and technology specialists, this framework stands as a testament to the power of interdisciplinary cooperation. Moreover, the framework is rooted in a meticulous analysis of coursebooks and educational materials in partner countries, shedding light on the existing gaps and opportunities in language instruction and soft skills cultivation. This synthesis of data from various sources forms the bedrock upon which this framework is built, ensuring its relevance and practical applicability in addressing the evolving needs of modern professions. The following sections present a detailed roadmap for seamlessly integrating language p and essential soft skills within the context of language teaching and learning. This framework embodies a commitment to nurturing holistic professional development and equipping learners with the linguistic and interpersonal competencies needed to thrive in today's dynamic and interconnected global landscape since one of the aims of education is to prepare future university graduates for entry into the European job market.

Mapping the softskills in enterprises: Leveraging the critical soft skills identified, an online survey was devised to systematically identify the soft skills essential in corporate settings and pinpoint language-related issues in professional contexts. The survey was distributed collaboratively by our partners through various channels, including social media platforms, email,

and other personalized communication avenues, commencing in the final week of November 2022. The survey remained accessible to potential participants until the second week of January 2023. The total count of responses collected reached 159. The data acquired underwent an extensive analysis process involving descriptive statistics and coding, mainly due to several questions requiring concise responses. The following table presents the ranking of various soft skills, along with the corresponding number of responses and the percentage of total responses each skill garnered.

Rank	Soft skill	Responses	Percentage
1	Communication skills	82	56.6
2	Adaptability and flexibility	81	55.9
3	Problem solving	77	53.1
4	Team working	63	43.4
5	Decision making	61	42.1
6	Service skills (understanding of others' needs)	59	40.7
7	Motivation	58	40
8	Time management	49	33.8
9	Creativity and innovation	46	31.7
10	Critical and structured thinking	40	27.6
11	Managing responsibility	36	24.8
12	Conflict management	31	21.4

"Communication Skills" holds the top position in the rankings with 82 responses, constituting 56.6% of the total. Following closely, "Adaptability and Flexibility" secures the second-highest ranking, garnering 81 responses, which accounts for 55.9% of the total. The third-highest ranking

is attributed to "Problem Solving," with 77 responses and a percentage of 53.1%. "Teamwork" claims the fourth position, having received 63 responses, making up 43.4% of the total. In the fifth spot is "Decision Making," with 61 responses and a percentage of 42.1%. "Service Skills (Understanding Others' Needs)" ranks sixth, with 59 responses, representing 40.7% of the total. "Motivation" secures the seventh position, having garnered 58 responses, equivalent to 40.0% of the total. "Time Management" occupies the eighth spot, with 49 responses and a percentage of 33.8%. "Creativity and Innovation" stands as the ninth-highest ranking soft skill, with 46 responses, accounting for 31.7% of the total. The tenth position is claimed by "Critical and Structured Thinking," which received 40 responses, corresponding to 27.6%. "Managing Responsibility" secures the eleventh spot, with 36 responses, representing 24.8% of the total. Finally, as previously mentioned, "Conflict Management" takes the twelfth position, having received 31 responses, equivalent to 21.4% of the total.

Drafting and analysis of LSP workbooks: The coursebook analysis conducted as a pivotal component of this framework yielded crucial insights that are instrumental in shaping its recommendations. Through a meticulous examination of course materials used in partner countries, several key findings emerged, providing a deeper understanding of the current landscape of language instruction and soft skills integration. In terms of drawing conclusions and offering recommendations for the methodological framework discussed, several noteworthy observations can be made. Firstly, a significant aspect that emerges from the analysis is the limited provision of interactive exercises for learners. This deficiency is particularly critical, as it is evident in just two textbooks, underscoring its importance within the context of the project's objectives.

Secondly, there is a conspicuous absence of close collaboration between textbook authors and the professional environment. Consequently, the latest and most up-to-date topics are noticeably absent from these materials. Furthermore, the deficiency extends to the dearth of real-life case studies and simulations, which are essential for fostering practical applicability in language learning. Thirdly, the textbooks predominantly rely on pre-planned tasks, leaving a conspicuous absence of impromptu interactive activities. This aspect hinders the development of spontaneity and adaptability in learners' language skills. Fourthly, it is evident that the topics related to remote work, emerging technologies, and related subjects are notably absent from the texts. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the inclusion of such themes is imperative for equipping learners with relevant skills and knowledge. Moreover, there is a notable gap concerning themes related to healthy lifestyles and ecological awareness in everyday life and professional contexts such as green offices. The prominence of green energy also warrants dedicated attention in these materials. The section devoted to hobbies requires timely updates, reflecting the changing preferences of corporate employees increasingly embracing activities like yoga, meditation, and extreme sports over traditional options like football or aerobics. Furthermore, there is an evident lacuna in the coverage of topics related to entrepreneurship, management, various types of companies, and partnerships. Additional sections on recruitment methods, headhunter activities, and online presentation of professional achievements are warranted. Lastly, it is striking that the issue of interculturalism in the workplace is entirely overlooked by the author. Given the multicultural dynamics of modern workplaces, addressing this aspect is imperative.

This analysis highlights the need for comprehensive revisions and enhancements in the methodological framework of these textbooks. This should include the incorporation of interactive exercises, up-to-date content, real-life case studies, and a broader array of relevant topics. Additionally, including soft skill development exercises, integration of virtual reality for practical tasks, and technology and conflict resolution activities could significantly enrich the language learning experience.

Evaluation workshop (Italy, Poland, Turkey, Ukraine, and France): The intricate relationship between language proficiency and soft skills development has been indicated in the workshops as well as the coursebook analysis. The findings indicate that language barriers often lead to misconceptions about individuals' soft skills. Effective communication in the local language was stressed as essential for showcasing soft skills fully. Participants shared anecdotes highlighting situations where language proficiency directly influenced their ability to express crucial soft skills, such as leadership or conflict resolution. While discussing priority soft skills, the participants identified conflict management, creativity, and innovative thinking as paramount. It was intriguing to note that despite excelling in innovative thinking, foreign workers often face challenges in expressing their ideas effectively in a foreign language. This particularly becomes apparent in collaborative efforts with native speakers, where the language barrier can create stress and hinder soft skills demonstration. The group emphasized the need for tailored language support to bridge this gap effectively. Participants recognized that for both graduates and employers, proficiency in these specialized variants is crucial. However, a significant gap was identified in available educational materials. Most existing resources primarily cater to individuals in low-qualification positions, such as cashiers or construction workers. This scarcity of materials for those

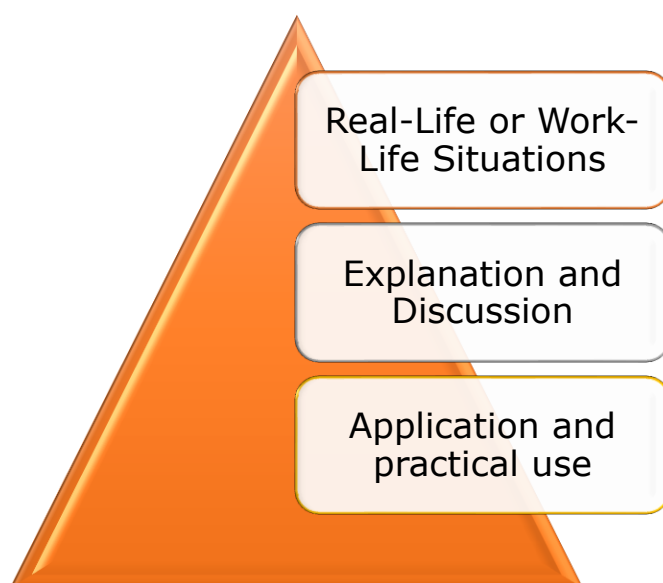
aiming for higher-paying jobs was seen as a significant challenge that needs to be addressed urgently.

During the workshops, serious games emerged as a promising avenue for soft skills development. Participants engaged in a thoughtful exploration of how gamified learning environments could be harnessed for skill cultivation. They agreed that serious games offer an excellent platform for developing soft skills such as conflict resolution, customer service, and teamwork. The potential to simulate real-world scenarios through interactive gameplay garnered substantial interest. When discussing the design of effective serious games, participants shared detailed insights. They envisioned a narrative-based approach that immerses users in compelling storylines. Allowing users to create characters or choose avatars was deemed essential to foster a sense of ownership and engagement. The importance of relatable characters who undergo character development as the game progresses was underscored. Moreover, participants emphasized the significance of branching storylines with decision-making elements, humor, situational comedy, and wordplay as key elements to create an enjoyable and effective learning experience. Emotional engagement emerged as a central theme in game design. Participants stressed that emotional engagement is a catalyst for deeper learning and higher retention of soft skills. Beyond emotional involvement, they highlighted the need to develop various language skills, not limiting the focus solely to reading. Supportive modules such as hints, glossaries, and access to external sources like recordings, films, and TV series were valuable additions that enhanced the learning experience. Attention to sound effects was mentioned as a way to further immerse users in the gaming environment.

Participants discussed ways to measure progress within serious games. They recommended providing a clear result and summary at the end of the game to offer users a sense of achievement. The idea of automatically generating completion certificates, complete with percentage scores, was put forward, with a crucial caveat being the upfront communication of criteria for earning the certificate. Additionally, participants proposed the inclusion of a final knowledge assessment test, focusing on specific areas like vocabulary, to objectively gauge the growth of language skills. The concept of level-based progression was enthusiastically received by participants. They recognized that incorporating this gamification element could significantly enhance user engagement. As characters progress through the game, they could receive rewards for correct answers or good decisions, reinforcing positive behaviors. Moreover, the participants envisioned character development that mirrors learners' professional aspirations. Starting as a novice and evolving into a seasoned professional within the game's narrative offered a compelling incentive for continued engagement.

The discussions in the workshops underscored the importance of taking a holistic approach to soft skills development by combining language proficiency and essential soft skills. Participants expressed strong support for using serious games as a promising tool and provided detailed insights into design considerations.

The proposed methodological framework: The following proposed methodological framework seeks to enhance the integration of soft skills and language proficiency by dividing scenarios into three distinct components:



Real-Life or Work-Life Situations Requiring Specific Soft Skills

In the initial stage of this methodological framework, the focus is on selecting or crafting scenarios that authentically mirror real-life or work-life situations. These scenarios are meticulously chosen or created to replicate circumstances that demand the application of particular soft skills. The key objective is to create scenarios that resonate with learners, making them feel like they are dealing with genuine challenges they might encounter in their professional journeys. Creating multiple and different scenarios inspired by as many contexts and the opportunity for participants to create a personalized scenario will enrich the experience of learners. Therefore, the design of these scenarios is a critical aspect of this phase. They should not only be contextually relevant but also engaging and relatable. The goal is to immerse learners in scenarios that resonate with their experiences and aspirations, fostering a sense of connection to the challenges presented. This connection ensures that learners are not merely passive observers but active participants, fully invested in the scenario's outcome.

Explanation and Discussion

Following the presentation of the carefully crafted scenarios, learners progress to the explanation and discussion phase. During this crucial stage, the framework provides a detailed outline of the specific soft skill under focus. This includes a comprehensive exploration of the soft skill's definition, relevance, and its application in the given context. Behavior patterns associated with the successful application of the targeted soft skill are meticulously discussed. Learners delve into the intricacies of how individuals typically exhibit the skill in real-life scenarios. This phase goes beyond surface-level explanations, offering learners a deep and nuanced understanding of the soft skill's dynamics. It provides insights into the subtle cues, gestures, and communication strategies that contribute to effective soft skills deployment.

Importantly, this phase encourages active engagement through discussions and interactive activities. Learners are encouraged to ask questions, share their insights, and engage in critical thinking about the soft skill in question. The framework fosters a collaborative learning environment where participants can learn from each other's perspectives and experiences. This open dialogue not only enhances comprehension but also prepares learners for practical application.

Application and Practical Use

The final component of the framework places a strong emphasis on practical application. Having gained a solid theoretical understanding of the targeted soft skill and its behavior patterns, learners are now encouraged to put their knowledge into action within the context of the scenario. This hands-on approach is central to the learning process, as it allows learners to

experiment with applying the soft skill in a safe and supportive learning environment. Digital materials can also be blended with the tangible world in a multisensory learning experience. During this phase, learners actively engage with the scenario, making decisions and taking actions that align with the soft skill's principles. They have the opportunity to practice and refine their skills, applying what they've learned in a realistic context. Importantly, this practical experience enables learners to witness firsthand the impact of their decisions and actions on the given scenario's outcome. Feedback and reflection play pivotal roles in this phase. Learners receive constructive feedback on their application of the soft skill, enabling them to identify areas for improvement and refinement. Self-assessment and peer evaluation are also encouraged, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. By actively applying and reflecting on the soft skill in a practical setting, learners solidify their understanding and build the confidence to apply these skills effectively in real-world scenarios.

Exemplary Situations

The following are some exemplary situations to illustrate how this methodological framework would operate:

Scenario: Conflict Resolution in a Multicultural Team Meeting

Real-Life or Work-Life Situation: A team composed of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds is faced with a disagreement during a project meeting. The situation demands effective conflict resolution to maintain productivity and harmony within the team.

Explanation and Discussion: Learners are guided through an explanation of conflict resolution strategies, including active listening, empathy, and compromise. They discuss the importance of understanding cultural differences in communication styles.

Application: Learners are tasked with role-playing scenarios involving conflicts within the multicultural team. They practice applying conflict resolution techniques, taking into account the cultural nuances discussed earlier. Feedback and reflection opportunities are provided.

Scenario: Customer Service in a Retail Environment

Real-Life or Work-Life Situation: A retail employee encounters a dissatisfied customer who is unhappy with a product purchase. Effective customer service skills are required to address the customer's concerns and maintain a positive brand image.

Explanation and Discussion: The framework explains the key elements of exceptional customer service, such as active listening, problem-solving, and maintaining a positive attitude. Learners discuss the significance of resolving customer issues promptly.

Application: Learners engage in simulated customer service interactions where they must apply the skills learned. They handle various customer scenarios, demonstrating their ability to address concerns and provide satisfactory solutions. Feedback and self-assessment are integral components of this phase.

Scenario: Teamwork in a Project Collaboration

Real-Life or Work-Life Situation: Professionals working on a collaborative project encounter challenges in team cohesion and effective collaboration. The situation necessitates the application of teamwork skills to enhance productivity.

Explanation and Discussion: Learners explore the characteristics of effective teamwork, including communication, trust-building, and role clarity. They discuss the impact of teamwork on project success.

Application: Learners participate in collaborative project scenarios where they must work as a team. They apply teamwork skills to overcome challenges, allocate tasks, and achieve project goals. Reflection and peer evaluation contribute to the learning process.

In these exemplary situations, the framework effectively divides scenarios into real-life or work-life situations, provides explanations and discussions of behavior patterns related to specific soft skills, and encourages practical application. This structured approach enhances learners' ability to acquire and implement soft skills within relevant contexts, ultimately fostering holistic professional development.