An environment for teachers of History to create digital card-index notes

Over the last 40 years, research concerned with education and computer environments produced many tools and environments but few were really integrated in classrooms. Although recently computers are better integrated into classroom, the EURIDICE study noted that “the presence of computers at school does not guarantee that they are used”. This is underlined by a recent report of the OECD regarding information Technology: “Now that ICT access is widely available to individuals and households, the digital divide is becoming a “use” divide”. This issue is becoming how to ameliorate the teachers’ computers use.

Teacher have an important role to play in the way of improving the use of computers in the classroom. We think that getting better use of computers in classrooms should be reached progressively in two phases: in the first phase, the teacher should get familiar with information technology tools to, in a second phase, uses them with students in the classroom.

Learning implies linking to knowledge already acquired. Therefore, our approach should follow structures already established and enable teachers to understand what digital environments are, using their actual way of working.

Environment

Based on the considerations outlined, our work focuses on setting up an environment close to the current teachers’ didactical tasks (before classroom) so that they can freely keep writing and managing their lessons. For the requirement analysis of such environment we interviewed teachers.

Card-index notes, current work

Card-index references and card-index notes are documents that are shared between teachers. So as to facilitate contents retrieval and reusability, these documents should be annotated. It is important to integrate standard metadata so as to share data in larger community.

Conclusion

We have described some results of teachers’ interviews and their implication in the setup of lesson material creation environment for teachers. This environment is composed of three tools that respect teachers’ role and needs.

Research work is now focusing more specifically on the design of card-index notes metadata. For this we are doing other interviews with teachers to get more details regarding card-index notes.

We are also working on visual meta-templates and would like to study the different technologies that could fit our needs.