In this proposal we describe an action-research project on History of Literature (from now on HL) developed during a last course of secondary school (15-16 years old) in Barcelona. Literature education has been a major focus of educational research in Spain over the last 15 years. School has traditionally focused on HL, with a major attention on authors, literary movements, and rhetoric. Concepts such as ‘literature competence’ (Colomer, 1998) have opened an avenue for research, as well as contributions regarding the canon (Colomer, 2005), narratology mechanisms (Delmiro, 2002), intertextuality (Mendoza, 2001), literature and cinema (Ambròs & Breu, 2007; Pujals & Romea, 2001), metafictional picture books (Silva-Diaz, 2005), literature for integrating newcomer students (Fittipaldi, 2011), oral interaction and reading skills (Gil, 2011), or literature and ICT (Fontich, 2008). However, HL is still a part of the official curriculum in Spain and few innovative contributions have been developed (Sánchez-Enciso, 2007), especially regarding (i) teacher-centered discourse and learning-by-heart assignments as basic procedures; (ii) no integration of writing, reading, and oral abilities; and (iii) chronology as main criteria to organize content.

**Research questions.** (i’) How can we develop collaborative settings (and the use of ICT) in teaching HL?; (ii’) How can we integrate writing, reading, and oral abilities as a learning tool?; and (iii’) How can we organize a course on HL from the middle ages to the present days starting out not with medieval but with romantic texts?

**Objectives.** (1) To read a romantic poem in class and to discuss its symbolic references. (2) To establish this poem as an entrance to authors in the past. (3) To enhance reading comprehension of students through writing and oral assignments about information sources. (5) To develop writing skills focusing on the process of writing. (4) To validate a model (that of Didactic Sequence) for literature education by comparing initial and final texts and by describing how the problems have been sorted out all along the project.

**Conceptual framework.**

(A) A Model for Literature Education. We follow the model of Didactic Sequence (DS) created and developed at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain) in collaboration with schools (Camps, 2003, Camps & Zayas, 2006), and inspired by cooperative and self-regulated learning models (Knoll, 1997; Wenger, 1998; Hakkarainen & Paavola, 2009; Perry, 2002).
(B) Literature education. We adopt a cultural anthropology perspective on the construct of ‘History’ (Friedman, 1992) and the concept of ‘teleology’ to interpret historical phenomena (Coyle et al. 1990).

(C) Didactics research. We see learning as a process for sharing discursive contexts (Cazden, 2001) through an exploratory dialogue (Chambers, 2001; Mercer & Littleton, 2007), and classroom as a natural context for didactics research (Bronckart, 1989). We adopt an action-research perspective (McKernan, 1996) and stress the importance of a rich context with multiple affordances and scaffolding processes (van Lier, 2004).

(D) Communicative abilities. We consider the importance of integrating writing-reading as a learning tool (Tynjälä et al. 2001) for “knowledge transformation” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987), as well as the importance of oral interaction (Mercer, 2000).

Methodology

The poem ‘La Pàtria’ (‘The homeland’) is explored collaboratively. Written in 1833 by B.C. Aribau, it is in tune with Romanticism imaginary, connecting the ideas of ‘homeland’, ‘mother tongue’, and ‘the glorious medieval past’. The class is divided into small groups focused each one on literary periods the poem refers to. Each group explores different sources of information in order to write an essay. The teacher shows one problem: these essays reproduce the form of the sources consulted (technical vocabulary, complex syntax…) but the concepts appear wrongly connected. She suggests addressing the texts to five-graders (10-11 years old), and this will bring students to ‘transform knowledge’ and adapt it. Some decisions are made: to invite the five-graders’ teacher in order to ask her questions about the new addressee; to explore five-graders’ text books from a grammar perspective; to give them a test of previous knowledge on HL; and to give them an oral conference. We contrast an initial and a final text of one of the groups, and we organize a collective edition of a short video report on all the process.

Conclusions

The class has turned into a high functioning learning community, improving students’ commitment and learning. Unlikely traditional transmissive settings, students and teacher have worked together using processes of inquiry and problem solving. To jointly interpret the poem and to establish it as an entrance to HL has shed light not only to the poem itself but to authors and literary movements. To identify an addressee for the essays has made students make an effort of adapting and transforming knowledge. A final oral exposition and a video report have helped students to visualize the project from the final results and from the process. Regarding the evolution and improvement of the essays, we can compare an initial and a final text. On both there appear complex syntax structures (subordinate sentences, appositions…), specific vocabulary (authors, movements…), formal academic style (avoiding using the 1st person singular, using passive constructions…), paragraphs, etc. But while in the former information is actually gathered together making no real sense, in the latter students tend to select less information and to structure it in a clear way. We think this is due to the fact these texts are addressed to real readers, with specific knowledge about the content.