

CyELT Journal

Pancyprian Association of Teachers of English
O.E.L.M.E.K

Year 2

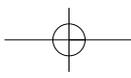
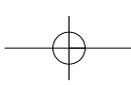
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Bringing teachers of English together





CyELT Journal

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Editorial

Dear colleagues,

One more year went by and a new one came. I hope that energy and enthusiasm would be the spirit of this new academic year, too!!

This is the fourth issue of our magazine and apparently, the last of this committee. It is elections year this March, and I hope all our colleagues would join forces to elect a new committee which would continue what this one has already started and maintained.

It has been a period of three years and this committee of this association has set goals on one hand , and has achieved most of them on the other. I wish and hope, the new committee of this association works with zeal to accomplish what we have left behind, due to lack of time.

I would like to take this opportunity to give special thanks to my colleagues, Maria Pavlidou, Aggela Charalambous, Eudhokia Anastassiou, Maria Lyssioti, Giorgos Georgiou and Elisavet Skarou for their patient work, their valuable contribution and the long hours they spent to make all our visions come true.

*Monica Grimaldi - Constantinou
Chair of the Pancyprian Association
of English Teachers (O.E.L.M.E.K.)*

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Active Youth - 3rd National Session of EYP Cyprus

*Andri Poullidou
Livadia Lyceum, Larnaca*

It was in May 2009 when an invitation for the 3rd National Session of the European Youth Parliament, arrived in our school, Livadia Lyceum, Larnaca. It would take place in Limassol from 3 to 6 September and we had to choose seven students to play the role of young MP's.

All teachers recommended one or two of their students and we had a group of seven girls ready to work hard and prepare seven different committee topics on which they would work during the session. The names of the girls are: Kasapi Marianna, Liopetríti Anastasia, Liopetríti Panayiota, Nicolaou Theodora, Stefani Joanna and Tyrimou Rafaella.

The Committee topics were: a) Education, b) Civil Liberties and Home Affairs, c) Environment, d) Foreign Affairs, e) Economic and Monetary Affairs, f) Justice and g) Culture

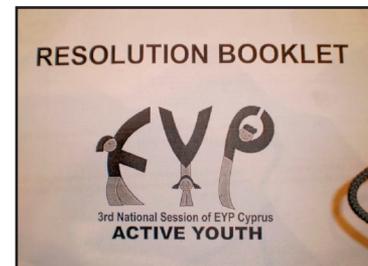
We worked together during the summer. Actually my role was to give guidance and encouragement and of course exchange ideas on how they would support their views during the session. It is worth mentioning that 16 schools from all over Cyprus participated in the 3rd National Session of EYP, 12 English speaking schools and 4 public schools.



All participants stayed in Arsionoe Beach Hotel in Limassol for three nights and four days. The Theme of the session was 'Active Youth', and I must admit that all

participants were really very active during the session. They participated in 'teambuilding' activities to get to know each other before the beginning of the Committee work.

The Committees worked on their topics, and had to draw conclusions which would be presented during the General Assembly on Sunday, last day of the session. I must admit that our students impressed the organizers and the other participants with their work, speeches and questions to the other committees. That was the reason they were selected among the four best teams who participated and were offered as a reward, their participation in the Regional Session of EYP which will be held in Gratz, Austria between 10-15 February 2010.



I have to point out that this was the first time a Public School has gained such an award. Concluding, I want to emphasize the necessity for all English teachers to give the opportunity to their students to participate in such events, despite the extra work that it might take. The reward is always our students' satisfaction from the valuable experience, which cannot be acquired with any lesson, no matter how good it is.



An opportunity for 'Public Speaking': Inter-School Debating Competition 2008-9

Lambo Rayia, Teacher of English, Livadia Lyceum, Larnaca

After several years of teaching in the private sector, I joined the state school of Livadia Lyceum, Larnaca last school year 2008-2009. During this initial period of familiarization with and adjustment to the state educational system, I was faced with an excellent opportunity for my students: to learn to publicly argue a case, to effectively develop and support a line of argument and essentially to practise the art of rhetoric in their second language. A great challenge indeed! The Inter-School Debating Competition organized by the Ministry of Education starting in March and ending in May, provided us with this opportunity.

Despite our students' lack of prior experience in formal debating, a number of them were keen on taking part so that interviews were held with my colleagues' assistance, for the selection of our three representative speakers. These were: Georgia Koukou, Iakovos Kyriltsias and Chrystalla Zezou. All three of them were highly dedicated and hardworking, and worked enthusiastically throughout their preparation before the events.

The motion for the quarter-finals and semi-finals was the following: 'Mixed ability



classes in our schools cannot function satisfactorily, which strikingly proves that all students are equal but some are more equal than others', a topic that required research in educational issues and that was inspired from George Orwell's 'Animal Farm'.

Our first victory gave increased confidence to our students as well as renewed commitment. Our team had defended their proposal with such conviction, however, that they had some difficulty having to reverse their arguments from opposers to proposers of the motion in the semi-final. The news that they had made it to the final was exhilarating and our team re-started their efforts to research a subject which in



itself was a motivating factor: “Schools in Cyprus promote critical and creative thinking through the curriculum and extra curriculum dimensions which adequately equip students with the necessary skills to fulfil their role as universal citizens of the 21st century.’

The standard of debating in the final was very high on both sides and the presentations of all contestants were truly admirable, so that teachers attending were filled with a strong sense of pride. Both Livadia Lyceum – Larnaca (winners of the final) as well as Ay. Nicolaos Lyceum – Limassol (runners-up) were to be awarded with participation in the Euroscola programme in Strasbourg.

The trip to Strasbourg that took place in December 2009 was funded by the EU and organized and coordinated by a group of teachers, including myself. It was a wonderful opportunity for all contestants from both English and Greek debating competitions from all over Cyprus to meet and get to know each other. It is amazing how our teenagers mingled and became such good friends in no time. Needless to say that despite the biting cold, Strasbourg, ‘Capital



de Noël’, clad in its Christmas outfit, was truly enchanting.

The highlight of our visit was undoubtedly our day in the European Parliament where our teenagers met with young people from other European countries and debated on various European Union issues. Our Cypriot students made a most favourable impression with their bold contributions and interventions, as well as with the quality of their English. A good number of them were elected presidents or secretaries of their teams. They certainly made an impact through their dynamic and determined way of presenting their arguments. Undoubtedly their debating experience in Cyprus had proved invaluable. That is why, dear colleagues, I urge you to encourage your

students to take part in such debating competitions whether these are organized between schools or internally. They provide our students with the skills that are so much needed in today’s competitive world and give them the confidence they need to excel in their future chosen careers. Apart from this, of course, they provide them with unforgettable experiences that they will cherish for ever.



Comenius Partnerships 2009 - 2011

*Monica Grimaldi - Constantinou, Andri Demetriou - Constantinou,
B Regional Gymnasium - Nicosia*

It was with great pleasure to have in our school this Comenius gathering of so many friends from two countries on the project 'European awareness through Art'. The school partnerships Comenius are designed to strengthen the European dimension in education promoting co-operation between schools of countries participating in the programme of lifelong learning. A Comenius school partnership consists of schools in different countries and implements a common plan for learning (project). This gives students and teachers from different countries an opportunity to work together on one or more topics of common interest. It focuses on active participation of students. The school partnerships Comenius can help students and teachers acquire and improve organisational and social skills, use of foreign languages and technology, information technology and communications. It was great to see so many enthusiastic people, celebrating and getting together, in this European meeting, as well as having the chance of showing innovation and team spirit to achieve such a venture.

Our school - the 2nd Regional Gymnasium of Nicosia- was pleased to host this project meeting this year where we had the opportunity to see the best artefacts, all the students from the two countries, have already produced.



It is recognized that many of our partners have travelled from quite a distance and I'd like to acknowledge our members from Mallorca-Spain as well as those from France, who have made this long trip to

participate in the largest, most outstanding conference this school has ever had.

Among the activities we have planned, were workshops on virtual paintings of scenes the visiting students have created in their minds as well as pieces of work which depict our culture and civilisation.

We, in our turn, will visit these two countries (Mallorca-Spain and France) and we wish to illustrate, what their world is all about. We are sure that friendships for a life time have been made.

Comenius Programme

Comments of some of the students who participate:

It has been an unforgettable week with friends from France and Mallorca. We had fun, went to interesting places (Museums, Centres of Culture and the Big walk of Nicosia), but the most important of all is the fact that we created friendships which we all wish to stay alive!!!

Daphne Andreou C1

An experience that would stay vivid in my mind. Never thought that something like that would have been organised in our school!!!!

Christiana Mouski C1

I feel very lucky that I have been chosen to participate in the Comenius Programme because I met some very interesting people from France!!! I will never forget them, especially my pen-friend Lea!!

Andria Charalambous B2

If the whole world were a small village, then I would like to have Ines, my French pen-friend my neighbour. When I first met her, I felt as if I had another sister.

Anastasia Panteli B2

During the last day of our friends visit there was a festival in our school where we had the chance to taste traditional food from all the participant countries and danced traditional dances. It was great and we all enjoyed it very much!!!!

Helen Kourtellari B1

Hospitality is a precious gift. I was given the chance to host a girl from France who became my soul mate!!! The experience of having her at my house and the things we did together for a whole week, I would cherish till we meet again!!!

Aggeliki Eracleous C1

Programme of Piloting Applications in the Use of Technology in the Learning Process

Monica Grimaldi - Constantinou, B Regional Gymnasium - Nicosia

School: B' Regional Gymnasium - Nicosia

Class: C'

Subject: English as a Second Language

Teacher: Monica Grimaldi - Constantinou,
Deputy Head

ICT specialist from the P.I.:

Constantia Xenophontos

When I was first asked to take part in this programme: PILOTING APPLICATIONS IN THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE LEARNING PROCESS, I thought of it as a challenge for myself and for my colleagues at the school.

The English team of our school exchanges visits to each other's class and I considered this programme a new experience because more than one subject teachers would be involved in this. We would have a cross curricular approach on one hand and on the other, we would have the opportunity to state views, help each other within the whole process. The colleagues involved were the Biology teacher, the Art teacher and mainly the Computer teachers whose rooms/classes I would have had to use during the lessons, very often and also receive help from them.

The Design Process

To start with, the decision on the unit, through our curricula of the 3rd Grade English had to be made. Next we would have to decide how to proceed, what the lesson plans content would be and finally what the outcome would be. We talked about it with my ICT specialist from the Pedagogical Institute and the final decision was made.

I would like to mention at this point that at the B' Regional Gymnasium of Nicosia there is a Special Unit of six (6) children



with Special Needs. Three (3) of those are in the class where I teach, so some differentiation of teaching had to be made which for me it was the greatest challenge.

The Decision of Topic

We decided on the topic which was the pollution of the environment - «The greenhouse effect» - this derived from our C' Class English book on one hand, and being a current issue on the other hand with great dimensions. Furthermore the same topic was taught as part of the curricula in Greek so all the students had past knowledge of this problem and had already formed solutions to this particular problem.

The Teaching Process

During the process of teaching all the skills would be included - Listening, Reading, Viewing, Speaking and Writing.

Worksheets would have to be prepared, leading to puzzle making with the use of Puzzle Maker from the Internet, drawing of posters and of course our greatest venture - a short video.

Procedure

The students had to :

- search and find the explanations of the



- vocabulary of the particular unit on the Internet
- play games relevant to the vocabulary of the subject matter, on the Internet
- solve crosswords (puzzles) and to prepare their own puzzles using the vocabulary they have learnt, with the help of the Puzzle Maker, and to challenge the other groups
- watch short videos relevant to the unit being taught with the combination of picture, sound and vocabulary.
- do grammar exercises from a website
- search, find and present relevant short videos from the Internet
- take pictures from their areas
- have an Interview with the local authorities of their areas on the environmental problems they face, taking the part of a reporter
- take video shots with the use of a video camera
- The students showed discipline and enthusiasm.
- At some point the lesson developed in a different way from the initial planning. Here I mention that during the listening lesson, there were not enough headphones available so the students found it difficult to do the exercises. Also the Youtube programme was not on the PC's of the students.
- There was a time when the students had to start producing, i.e. writing a paragraph or presenting findings, where it was obvious that more time was needed.
- The students learnt all about Global Warming with the help of their Biology teacher and a short video clip from the Internet.
- In all the lessons the students were actively involved using all the skills for vocabulary learning, recording data and presenting results and there was no need for further encouragement.
- The use of Technology made the lesson more interesting and attractive. It kept their interest high.

Application

It would be worth mentioning that in the B' Regional Gymnasium of Nicosia students of 27 communities attend to, so the students would have to take interviews from many communities on the environmental issues and report back by creating a short video.

Tools used

The tools used, were the ones from the book of the 3rd Grade:

- a CD for Listening Comprehension



- a DVD for viewing especially designed for educational purposes.
- The use of the Internet for research and gathering of information. Listening to authentic material and use of interactive grammar exercises.
- The video camera and the digital camera
- The Powerpoint.

With the help of the Computer, the students made a short video illustrating the problems of their region. They also made posters with the help of their Art teacher.

Experiences

- The preparation of lessons of this kind is time consuming.
- The educator needs to have the minimum or at least some knowledge of using a PC.
- The educator must be able to find the appropriate websites, evaluate them and choose the ones which will offer the most suitable elements for the development of the lesson.
- It was made obvious at some time, that the need of a PC for each student was essential. The students could work on their own place. During these lessons the students worked in pairs.
- It is a general rule that when the lesson

plan is well-prepared everything runs smoothly.

Conclusion

- Personally, through this project I feel that I have improved professionally.
- A series of lessons have been prepared, that can be used from other colleagues as they are, or with certain alterations so as to match with their classes.
- These lessons have been tied up as a booklet and are used by the other English teachers of the B' Regional Gymnasium of Nicosia.



Learning in the 21st century ! Innovation and Creativity via ICT - My reflection!

Chrysanthi Nicodemou, Aradippou Lyceum

It goes without saying that any implementation of an action plan requires reflection and the end of the school year is the appropriate time to make my reflection of the experimentation and implementation of ICT in my A'4 and A'7 classes in Aradippou Lyceum. Both, my action plan and implementation of ICT in my classroom are published in the 3rd issue of the journal. My reflection appears in various sub-headings in order to make it clearer and more comprehensible to my readers.

A. Where things got started from:

I initially got students to do work on the computer and email it from home as we had no access to the Internet in the language room. My A'4 class conducted a questionnaire on foreign language learning which was answered by about 115 students in the school; based on the data my students came up with the following suggestions for improving their English:

- Finding friends from the Internet
- getting to know the foreign students in the school
- visiting websites to engage in foreign language activities

These suggestions called for an action plan which could turn these suggestions into reality. Internet connection in the language room seemed very distant so I managed to get my two classes in the Computer lab approximately one period a week late in November.

B. Description of process (the following list comprises the process):

1. Creation of email for the students who didn't have any with the assistance of me and the other students



2. I got my students to send emails and attachments to my new email address(I created one exclusively for my students)
3. Introduction to Twitter and creation of student accounts
4. Wiki
 - Introduction to wiki / creation of usernames and passwords for all my students.
 - chain story and writing comments
 - uploading students' word documents and power point presentations
 - project work
5. Blogs
 - I created my blog on the Comenius project in December
 - Introduction of blogs
 - I created two blogs (one for each class) to post their work on the lit book and other/I sent invitations to my students to contribute to the blog /students made accounts to be able to write in the blog
 - I created a blog for the Comenius students to post their experiences and work related to the project
6. Email exchange with foreign students via epals community
 - It started in December with some of my students from one of the two classes being involved and it later extended to

the other class and more students got involved from both classes.)

- The subject of the email exchange was, “The Way We Are” and the exchange was with students from Italy, then USA and lastly with Brazil.

C. Students’ attitude and response

The students have shown a positive attitude to learning English via technology. I received feedback from them on their feelings about the new technology used which was very encouraging; I have received both oral and written feedback. Moreover, they have been very excited about email exchange with foreign students. I introduced email exchange as a voluntary activity and matched the ones interested with their request (male or female epal). The fact that there has been no force or pressure from me has played a significant role in students’ having the freedom to choose activities! I clearly remember two oral remarks on my students’ engagement in email exchange (“this is the way to learn English”, “Miss, I really like this; I just want you to know this”. Generally, they liked the idea of making friends from abroad. The results of a Reflection paper (questionnaire) that my students completed on May 2009 show that my students were interested in using computers in class because computers have helped them improve their English in various interesting and exciting ways. Students liked the combination of having book-based and computer-based lessons. It was a nice change for them to go to the computer lab with no books, just a USB and a paper with their usernames and passwords. In particular, students enjoyed doing work using web2.0, the Internet and watching videos in the language room (The diary of a young girl by Anna Frank, Artificial Intelligence, Castaway - all three are part of the English curriculum). They acknowledge the role of technology in their learning of English (ample educational sites to practise all modes of the language, essential benefits of digital text, means of



correcting work, access to other students’ work and their own at any time as long as there is a PC and Internet connection, extension of work outside the classroom etc). Most importantly, students felt motivated to write in a blog or wiki knowing that their writing would be public or shared by others and they also expressed a feeling of pride to see their work posted.

D. Benefits on Writing and other skills

I strongly feel that writing is one of the most difficult modes of the language for the students and the web2.0 tools used have enhanced students’ writing. Writing in a blog/wiki has given the students not only a real audience but a larger audience and this has given them an incentive and motivation to write. Frankly, it is all about the purpose of writing. Students have taken more care over their work in terms of grammar, syntax and spelling once they knew that it would go public via the blog and the wiki. Many of them saved their work so they could check it later or with me before making it public. It’s clear that digital text is more linear than handwritten text and blogs and wikis are interactive and collaborative due to the fact that others can view the work, edit and leave comments in but also outside the class. Short story writing is a great tool for students to use and the wiki has enabled collaborative work on chain stories. Also, the fact that computers facilitate spelling correction and translation has made students, especially the less competent ones in English, feel more comfortable and eager to write. Some of my students who usually write

very little, have written interesting and relatively long pieces of writing in the blog. I have been very impressed! It's a great advantage that students could write directly in the wiki or simply upload their work in the wiki. Due to this great advantage, all my electronic students' work appears in the wiki. This has enabled peer assessment as well. My students stated that they like to see other student's work because they can get ideas and feedback and all these lead to reflection on their work which is a vital step of the learning process.

The use of technology has also benefited other skills, reading to a large scale but also listening and speaking. The students watched Youtube videos relevant to their work (some are hosted in our wiki). Tools such as podcasts and voicethread provided listening and speaking practice. A lot of discussion was generated on the audio and video material presented. Interestingly, two students involved in email exchange with Texas and Brazil presented their work in our school celebration of The European Day of languages.

E. Problems I faced

The major problem has been lack of internet connection in the language room and insufficient number of computers. Although the problem was solved by having access to the computer lab in late November, I must point out that initially, the computer lab had fewer computers with Internet connection in comparison to the number of my students so my 22 students had to wait one another to create accounts or do work individually. Of course, many times students had to work in pairs or groups so there wasn't a problem there as long as they all had a go on the computer. It has really been a great pity that in the other two periods of classes I needed to introduce topics via tools on the Internet (for about 5 mins) and I was unable to do so. A very small number of students didn't have an e-mail address and were initially negative in creating one. I had two cases of students that didn't know how to



use email so I showed them how to compose and send email. One thing I realized is that students can't remember usernames and passwords easily so I printed them out including the addresses of the wiki and blogs so the students had them on paper plus I always had a copy of them in the computer lab.

Also, the fact that not all students were involved in email exchange meant that I had to involve the other students in other activities which also meant more work preparation for me.

F. Things I'd like to change

It has been a year of experimentation and implementation of new technology in my classes which has proven to be a very interesting and rewarding experience for me and my students. I wouldn't like to make changes with the tools I used as I know that they have assisted my students' learning. I would like to see all my students use these tools more systematically at school but also outside school. Also, it would be great to have all students in a class engaged in email exchange. As far as Twitter is concerned, little use has been made of it but I feel that it has benefits on students' writing and reading plus the benefits of joining a community. WebQuests are great projects and it would be a good idea to introduce them early in the year.

G. Recommendations to other teachers:

From my experience in experimenting with new technologies this year, I have learned a great deal about web2.0 and there are certainly things to consider like privacy and

safety. I highly recommend the use of blogs, wikis, podcasts, membership of a social network/community for students so that students can share ideas and exchange information which is vital in the process of learning. The following list sums up my suggestions:

- ensure that all students have an email address because web2.0 tools require one for the creation of accounts, sending notifications or invitations to contribute to a blog etc.
- know well the use of the tools you wish to introduce (in the case of a blog, preferably create your own for whatever purpose you want) before creating one for the class
- wikis and blogs become more interesting when you add RSS, links, google gadgets (dictionaries, calendars etc)
- browse through epals community , see how it works and encourage your students to engage in email exchange with foreign students (negotiate it with them to see their requests etc before proceeding)
- introduce one thing at a time and never rush; computer use requires patience as there might be technical problems etc)
- have an alternative lesson in case there is a power failure or a temporary Internet disconnection
- have a record of your students' usernames / passwords for class blog, wiki etc
- plan the computer-based lesson well (clear tasks for students whether it's individual, pair, group work or a combination of these)
- tell students to have a USB with them but also bring one to the class yourself
- learn how your students feel about the work they do especially when you introduce a new tool
- read thoroughly the CyELT Journal as it provides essential information on English language teaching and insight to other teachers' practices. Use the CyELT Journal (Issue 2) - Practical Teaching Ideas, (pages 8-17) as a guide to



computer-based lessons and visit the Useful websites (pages 18-20)

H. My twitter, blogs and wiki URL

- www.twitter.com/chrysanthi
- www.creativewritinga4.blogspot.com
- www.creativewritinga7.blogspot.com
- www.aradippoucomeniusblogspot.com
- www.studentsprojectonthecomeniusproject.blogspot.com
- www.innovativetwebtools.blogspot.com
- www.chrysanthi.pbwiki.com

Feel free to visit my website which hosts all the above blogs and wiki, sign my guestbook and leave your comments on my webpage blog at:

<http://www.chrysnic.weebly.com>

I. Some of my students' written comments during the last lesson of English:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| "It was my best year of learning English!" | George P |
| "Interesting lesson and exciting." | Stavros |
| "It was interesting and fun!" | Marianna |
| "It was a lot of fun and I learned many things." | Panayiotis |
| "It was fun and the best year of learning English." | Elena C. |
| "It was very enjoyable and interesting with various activities." | Maria S. |
| "Some of the most interesting lessons." | Vasiliki S. |

The following quotes express my views on 21st century learning:

"For the first time in history, students are no longer limited by their teachers' ability and knowledge."

Mark Anderson

"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

Alvin Toffler

Using Web 2 Tools in the English Classroom

*Eudhokia Christoforou- Anastassiou
Livadia Lyceum, Larnaca*

The educational goals of innovation and creativity in schools can be indeed, achieved in many and various ways. In addition, the challenge to integrate technology in teaching in general, is one more challenge that cannot be ignored. When it comes to English lessons at Lyceum level, this challenge becomes harder to overlook. And this is because of the very nature of the language and the opportunity that technology and internet give to learners of English.

It is within this frame that I decided to involve my students with the Web 2 tools and suggest that their projects are made in some of the sites that provide such tools. For the first term projects I decided to suggest Museum box and Bookr.

1 Museum Box

<http://museumbox.e2bn.org/index.php>

The creation of the site was inspired by the work of Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846) a British man who spent his life in the abolition of Slave Trade in the British Empire.

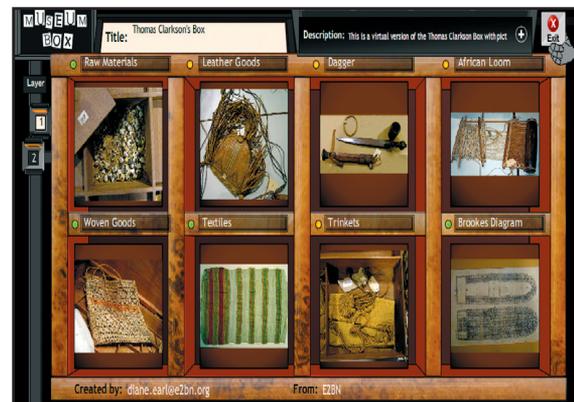
More particularly, he travelled 35,000 miles in England on a horse back intending to promote the idea of slavery abolition and to collect evidence of slavery. During his campaign, he visited several ports and interviewed more than 20,000 sailors. He



also managed to collect tools from slave ships that were used for torturing the slaves. Such tools are the following: iron handcuffs, leg shackles, thumb screws, instruments for forcing slaves' jaws and branding irons.

He also collected artefacts made of ivory (elephant tusks), woven cloth and other products from Africa which convinced him of the craftsmanship and skillful abilities of these people. He kept his collection in boxes which he displayed at public meetings.

He soon realised that the actual tools had a more immediate influence on public opinion than just words and reinforced the message of his anti-slavery speeches. He even used the items to demonstrate the skill of the African slaves to persuade the public to follow him in his battle against slavery. Eventually, the 'boxes' of his collection became an important part of his public meetings.



<http://museumbox.e2bn.org/creator/viewer/show/34>

Museum Box provides users a unique method for creative work and project making instead of a limited format in traditional projects. Users can create their own virtual, electronic boxes on various

topics using a variety of information: text in Word or PDF format, images, sound, PPTs, video and external weblinks. More importantly, users will have to practise organizational skills and work either individually or collaboratively to complete their task.

2. Bookr

<http://www.pimpampum.net/bookr/>

The site was created by Pim Pam Pum (Barcelona) by a team of people who believe that the Internet is made by people and so there are more things people can do on it than just look for information.

They stress the fact that people should be able to interact with the Internet. For this they provide the tools to change the quality of the Hypertext by contributing to it and creating our own work and projects, generating thus, new unpredictable realities.

Bookr is generated by Flickr and creates electronic books with pictures/images and text. Until 28th December 2009 there were 10708 books in the archives section.

Bookr users have to think about the concept, design and development of their interactive projects before creating their books which I believe provides excellent practice for students.

In addition, it's free, user-friendly, secure and it doesn't require sign-in or email validation and can be used by people of all ages in different languages and topics. It can be an alternative to powerpoint presentations and can be used individually or collaboratively. When finished it can be found in the site archive section or be embedded in a personal site.

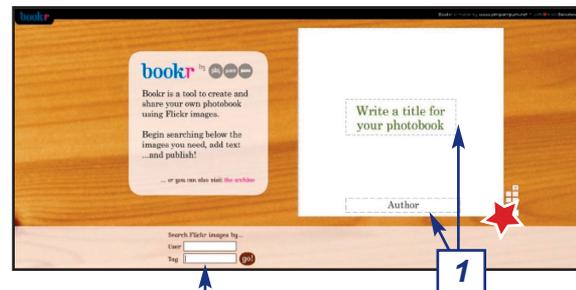
You can view my students' work in <http://efhrista.com/joomla>

How to use Museum Box



This is what you get! You can choose layers and number of boxes if you click on 'change box'. Each box has six sides. You need to organize your work beforehand (decide on the number of sides and boxes). You can add your script/text, images, sound or videos to the side of the cubes. To save your box you will need to register.

How to use Bookr



Just enter the word you want to get pictures of and then press 'go'.

When you've finished with the cover, you can open the rest of the blank pages just by clicking on the bottom right-hand corner (indicated with the red asterisk). You can add as many pages as you want!



35th Anniversary

*Daniella Daniel (English teacher)
Rizokarpaso Gymnasium*

Sometimes escaping the daily routine and doing something different is most refreshing both for the students and the teachers.

Using a joke as a comprehension passage is particularly interesting and fun for the students and at the same time the teacher is given the chance to involve technology and encourage creativity in the lesson.

I was sent this PPP (PowerPoint presentation) in an email and I immediately thought it would be a good idea to use it in the classroom. So, I edited it a little bit. Then, I copied- pasted the story in a word document and prepared a worksheet on it. This is a lesson that is appropriate for

Gymnasium students of class B or maybe class A if they are a good group. The purpose of the lesson is to help the students practise the past simple and develop their narrative skills.

I asked the students to go to the Language Room on the day of the lesson and I showed them the PPP. We talked about it and worked on the story's language and the worksheet. Finally, I asked the students to work in groups and to find or think of their own joke, prepare it during the next lesson and present it in a PPP in class in a subsequent lesson.

These are the PPP slides:

1

A married couple in their early 60s was celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary in a quiet, romantic little restaurant.

Suddenly, a tiny yet beautiful fairy appeared on their table saying,

"For being such an excellent married couple and for being loving to each other for all this time, I will grant you each a wish."

2

Oh, I want to travel around the world with my darling husband.

The fairy waved her magic wand and - poof! - two tickets for the Queen Mary II appeared in her hands.

The husband thought for a moment.

3

"Well, this is all very romantic, but an opportunity like this will never come again. I'm sorry my love, but my wish is to have a wife 30 years younger than me."

4

The wife, and the fairy, were deeply disappointed, but a wish is a wish.

5

So the fairy waved her magic wand
and - poof! –
the husband became 92 years old.



The moral of this story:
Men who are ungrateful should remember
fairies are female.



This is the joke in word form:

35th ANNIVERSARY

A married couple in their early 60s was celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary in a quiet, romantic little restaurant.



Suddenly, a tiny yet beautiful fairy appeared on their table saying, "For being such an excellent married couple and for being loving to each other for all this time, I will grant you each a wish."



"Oh, I want to travel around the world with my darling husband," said the woman. The fairy waved her magic wand and - poof! Two tickets for the Queen Mary II appeared in her hands.



The husband thought for a moment: "Well, this is all very romantic, but an opportunity like this will never come again. I'm sorry my love, but my wish is to have a wife 30 years younger than me." The wife and the fairy were deeply disappointed, but a wish is a wish...

So the fairy waved her magic wand and - poof!
...– the husband became 92 years old.

The moral of this story:

**Men who are ungrateful
should remember fairies
are female.**



This is the student's worksheet:

35th Anniversary

Look at the first slide of the PowerPoint presentation and decide what it is about. Now watch the power point presentation with your classmates and teacher and say if your prediction was right.

A. Now match the following words with their opposites:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Married | a) Wife |
| 2. Quiet | b) Single |
| 3. Appeared | c) Always |
| 4. Excellent | d) Noisy |
| 5. Husband | e) Ugly |
| 6. Never | f) Male |
| 7. Younger | g) Disappeared |
| 8. Beautiful | h) Grateful |
| 9. Ungrateful | i) Horrible |
| 10. female | j) Older |

B. Now match the following words with their synonyms:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Excellent | a. Small |
| 2. Little | b. Chance |
| 3. Grant | c. Very |
| 4. Opportunity | d. Superb, brilliant |
| 5. Deeply | e. Give |

Read the joke again and answer the following questions using full answers:

1. How long was the couple married for in the story?

.....

2. What did the fairy want to give them?

.....

3. What was the woman's wish?

.....

4. What was the man's wish?

.....

5. Why is the story funny?

.....

Now in groups of 3-4 think of or find a good joke yourselves and be ready to prepare it during the next lesson and present it to your classmates in a power point presentation in a subsequent lesson in front of the whole class.

Finally, these are the teacher's notes:

35th Anniversary

- Level: Class A or B Gymnasium
- Time: 40-45 minutes
- Materials: 1. The power point presentation of the 35th ANNIVERSARY joke.
 2. The story (photocopy)
 3. The student's worksheet
- Give the students the worksheet and show the first slide of the PPP. Get them to decide what the story is about and then discuss it with them.
- Divide them in groups of 2-3 and ask them to do exercise A. Give them 5-7 minutes and then correct it with all of them together. Do the same with exercise B. Allow 5 minutes. Make sure that the students transfer the words in their vocabulary notebooks and ask them to learn them at home.
- After this, get them to answer the questions on their own quietly. Give them 8-10 minutes and then answer them together.
- Finally, separate the students in groups and ask them to find material for their own joke which they have to prepare in the next lesson in a PPP. During that lesson the teacher makes sure the students' language is correct and that it makes sense. The students' PPPs should be presented to the whole class subsequently.



Why is decentralisation desirable? What are the problems of centralisation in Cyprus?

Katerina Konstantinides-Vladimirou, Paphos

Decentralisation is desirable in order to move schools from authority to influence. Also, it is desirable as a sign of globalization, and as a means to help solve the problems that centralisation creates. These ideas which make decentralisation desirable are in fact benefits hoped to be gained if the education system in Cyprus becomes decentralised.

To begin with, we want to move schools from authority, which is considered to be the static, structural characteristic of power in organisations, to influence, which is thought to be the dynamic feature. Authority is formal whereas influence is informal.

Authority flows downward, and it is unidirectional; influence is multidirectional and can flow upward, downward or horizontally... The source of authority is solely structural; the source of influence may be personal characteristics, expertise or opportunity.

(Bush, 1986, p. 76)

I agree with Bush that centralisation is a one way process, while decentralisation is a multi-directional process which empowers everybody involved in the school organisation to take initiative and put their skills and expertise into action for the good of the school.

Centralisation is the accumulation of power and authority in the hands of 'one', the government, which, in the context of Cyprus, exercises its power on schools through the Ministry of Education. Centralisation is related to leadership which is "done" by one ... "to others".

(Davies, 2005).

The organisations are confronted with a dilemma; to go on accepting the school business organised by the government or to make an effort and take the risk and initiative to change school management and move schools toward decentralisation where the school leaders following a strong leadership will manage the school?

In my opinion the dilemma and challenge for schools is to choose either to leave the authority and power in the hands of 'one' or

to form schools which distribute leadership, empower others and move towards collaborative leadership of learning, autonomy and independence. In fact, it is these specific characteristics, distributed leadership, empowerment and collaboration that make decentralisation desirable and these are the aspects of influence.

Distributed leadership is not something "done" by an individual "to others"... rather it is emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise.

(Davies, 2005, pp. 163-164)

It is likely that decentralisation will follow distributed leadership in order to give the opportunity to all individuals in the school organisation to use their skill and expertise, their knowledge and abilities to work jointly together in order to accomplish the goal of the school which is student learning and make schools effective. Distributed leadership is associated with influence. Preedy (1993) states that

Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organised group toward goal setting and goal accomplishment'

(Preedy, 1993, p. 143).

And according to Day et al. (2000)

Leadership is about encouraging and motivating the staff, realizing that the head can't do everything and has to delegate, looking to the future, recognizing strengths and building on them and identifying weaknesses and remedying them. It is about being a figurehead model for the staff and the school, but it is also about being approachable and impartial for the good of all.

(Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley and Besford, 2000, p. 75)

So, influence, in contrast to authority, distributes leadership in the school and engages the whole staff in the school performance and this is a benefit of decentralisation.

In the second place, decentralisation is desirable as a globalisation mega trend. Since the 1980s, the politico economic

arguments led to 'the disintegration of the western 'Keynesian consensus' that had favoured strong, centralized governments' (Welsh and McGinn, 1999, p. 27). As a result, there was a decrease in the strength of the central government and an increasing demand for the market. This happened in Russia as well as in Eastern Europe and changes in school governance started in the United States, in New Zealand and in the United Kingdom aiming at leading schools to local management. In the early 1990s, Australia also started following Local School Management (LSM).

Ten years later governments continue to convey an urgent need for radical reform of schooling through decentralisation (Wallace and Poulson, 2004, p. 66).

The need for decentralisation is now obvious in Cyprus, as well. It seems that decentralisation is desired as humans all over the world seek for better educational systems. This gives the impression that humans in the whole globe think in the same way and communicate their need for change in the same way.

Globalisation is 'a state of affairs in which the globe is the essential unit of operation of some human activity, and where this activity is ideally conducted in terms of single, universal, systems of thought, techniques and modes of communication (Hobsbawm, 1998). (Papastephanou, 2005, p. 536)

Although Hobsbawm implies that a single culture should dominate all activities and operations and heterogeneity and particularity are threatened, I think globalisation is welcomed as a beneficial trend since it expresses the general view of people worldwide. This view favours decentralisation and the problems it implies can be faced through democratic processes.

Education should try to counterbalance the negative effects of globalisation and extend the potentialities of it for all in a democratic fashion. (Papastephanou, 2005, p. 537)

Further, decentralisation in Cyprus is desirable in order to sort out the problems centralisation creates. In the education system in Cyprus, there is centralisation of power. The centre of the power, the Ministry of Education, makes the decisions about everything together with an

Inspectorate and the schools have to follow them. The Inspectorate is a committee of seven which is politically influenced. It changes every time the government in Cyprus changes as they are appointed by the political party the elected President comes from.

Power emanates mainly from the Ministry of Education through the Inspectorate and the schools and their principals are obliged to obey without really questioning the system and its authority.' (Pashiardis, 2004, p. 659)

Pashiardis implies lack of freedom of expression and blind obedience to the centre. Do we live in democracy when we are forced to follow everything blindly? I believe centralisation decreases democracy and where democracy does not exist, humans cannot produce effectively. Concerning the financial control of the school, the principal has no right to handle money and that is why they often complain that they are trusted with the education of their children but not with the money to facilitate their education. This implies that centralisation minimises democracy as school principals have a lot of responsibilities but they are

...not given the money or authority to exercise these responsibilities (Pashiardis, 2004, p. 659).

When the schools need certain resources, they follow the bureaucratic steps and the government office called 'Eforia' of each town or district decides to provide them with what they need eg. computers, chairs, desks, stationery and this is often time consuming. In addition, the Ministry of Education appoints the teachers to the schools taking into account the year they graduated from the university. Is this the right criterion for teacher appointment? In fact, there is a list in which the year teachers finish the university is stated and a specific number of teachers is appointed each year. Hence, it is implied again that democracy is decreased as principals do not have a voice concerning the personnel of their school. This also implies conflicts as principals often show their dislike to the teachers who are not hard-working. Another problem centralisation in Cyprus creates is seniority as an important factor for promotion. According to Pashiardis

(2004) this philosophy tells teachers that they have to wait till they get old enough to be promoted. They need to be

...patient and eventually... they will reach higher administrative positions within the educational bureaucracy (Pashiardis, 2004, p. 659).

Is this fair? As far as I am concerned there are young teachers who are better in these positions than older ones.

Concerning the curriculum, the Ministry of Education again decides about it as well as about the textbooks and the examinations. Everything is strictly regulated by the centre and everything is done as required by the Ministry of Education. According to Pashiardis (2004):

At school level, there is no flexibility for curriculum changes except for the enrichment of the education process. All modifications to the curriculum, if necessary, come as a direct result of policy decisions emanating from the Ministry of education and Culture.(Pashiardis, 2004, p. 662)

In a decentralised education system, the government can again set the curriculum but it is likely that they will ask the school staff about the effect of their procedures on the curriculum rather than just determine the standards and requirements and check if they are met. Through an exchange of ideas and opinions with the local level, they should ensure that the curriculum displays certain features such as breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression and continuity (Gann, 1999).

According to Gann (1999) these characteristics are vital ingredients of the curriculum if it aims at student learning. Breadth refers to the opportunities given to a child to get in touch with all areas of learning and balance means that every area of learning needs to be given the right attention. Relevance ensures that the curriculum meets students' needs and differentiation suggests that the curriculum

must cater for pupils of a range of abilities in the tasks given to them, and in the outcomes expected of them (Gann, 1999, p. 48).

Finally, progression and continuity relate to the fact that students should make sense of the experiences they have on a day to day basis.

Learning is to some extent cumulative, and pupils should be able to build their knowledge in a sequential way – while allowing for the fact that much learning is haphazard and unexpected. (Gann, 1999, p.48)

On balance, decentralisation is desirable in Cyprus in order to move schools from authority to influence which gives the opportunity to all stakeholders to exercise leadership in their school organisation and to use their expertise for the good of all. Influence attempts to make school performance a collective effort for school improvement through distributed leadership. What is more, decentralisation is desirable as a globalisation trend that promotes local school management. Finally, decentralisation is desirable as schools are reluctant to be blind followers of the system. It will probably enable the principal to handle the money of the school in order to satisfy the school needs and it might change the way teachers are appointed or promoted in schools. Also, it may allow teachers to be flexible concerning the curriculum that has to be taught and ensure it carries certain characteristics which adjust to the students' needs and lead them to learning. In general, decentralisation is favoured so that the educational system is benefited through influence, globalisation and problem solving.

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