You are not to be Afraid of the Internet

V. Dilaveri[1], R. Thoma[2]

[1]6th Primary school of Nikaia, Med, PhD Candidate, Kapodistrian University
vdilaveri@primedu.uoa.gr
[2]6th Primary school of Nikaia, MSc, PhD Candidate, University of Thessaly
rallouthoma@gmail.com

Abstract

The following teaching and learning implementation plan aimed at the development of active citizenship of 5th graders of an urban primary school with a view to engaging them with the issue of cyberbullying and hate speech prevention. At the same time effort was made for the development of their 21st century skills with emphasis on the use of Web 2.0 tools. To carry out this practice the strategy Project Based Learning was used as main instructional method, while special emphasis was placed both in the implementation of team teaching and of peer to peer counseling. The final outcome of this practice was the creation of original digital content by the students. They created an online radio show and they wrote their own song on cyber-bullying and hate speech prevention which was then visualized by a stop motion video animation of mixed techniques.

Keywords: project based learning, team teaching, peer to peer counseling, 21st century skills, web 2.0, stop motion, safer internet, cyberbullying, hate speech

1. Introduction

Internet use by young people is particularly high while the average age of users is constantly decreasing (ELSTAT, 2015) resulting in more and more primary school children using it either as an information resource or as an entertainment medium. Although these young users, who are the "natives" (Prensky, 2001) of the Internet, are technologically skillful, they are very vulnerable to cyber threats since they are exposed daily to digital content that may be illegal or inappropriate for their age. Considering that their critical thinking and their social skills are at a developing stage, they cannot easily recognize the hidden agenda or harmful purposes that adult Internet users may have towards them. As a result, it is easy for adults to manipulate the young ones, influence their personality and push them to risky or dangerous actions. (Vafopoulos, 2012)

Education must act preventively, help students with hands-on, student-centered activities to understand the dangers of the Internet (Internet piracy, identity theft, phishing,

spoofing, pharming, spam messages, spyware). Young users are easily lured by their "online" friends, they are more vulnerable to sexual harassment, to the indirect use of violence, to cyberbullying and/or hate speech and to internet addiction (Vafopoulos, 2012). Surveys in adolescents and students of the final classes of primary school indicate the link between the risky and the increased use of the Internet with cyberbullying behavior (Touloupis & Athanasiades, 2014)

Cyberbullying is associated with traditional bullying that occurs inside or outside school, as they share some common features: they are both aggressive, intentional and repeated actions, which are incited by a bully, target a victim (the bullied person) who is vulnerable and cannot easily defend themselves. This ill-structured relationship may be supported by the participation of bully supporters who advocate the bully's behavior and by silent observers who although do not agree with this action they do nothing in the bullied person's defense. (Tsorbatzoudis & Angelakopoulos, 2012. Ασημακόπουλος κ.α. 2010). According to Willard, cyberbullying can take several forms of gradual annoyance, such as online "fights" harassment, cyberstalking, denigration, impersonation, outing, trickery and exclusion (Willard, 2005).

Related to cyberbullying is hate speech. "Hate speech, as defined by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, covers all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, and migrants and people of immigrant origin […] other forms of discrimination and prejudice, such as antigypsyism, christianphobia, islamophobia, misogyny, sexism and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity fall clearly within the scope of hate speech."(Keen & Georgesku, 2014)

All the above are directly connected to the need of students' active citizenship development, one of the key 21st century skills. It's a concept difficult to be defined due to complex notions that implies such as the development of critical thinking, and of democratic citizenship behavior which includes a stance of diversity acceptance and that of social solidarity (EU, 2012). One of the most recent frameworks of 21st century skills is that of the European Commission (Vuorikari et al., 2016), which covers five competence areas (information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety and problem solving). It also contains a list of skills that citizens should develop in each competence area.

According to this framework, the issue of cyberbullying and hate speech is in direct relation to the competence areas of communication - collaboration and safety. In the first, the need to cultivate Netiquette is explicitly mentioned, the know-how of digital technologies, while one uses and interacts with them and the need to be aware of cultural and generational diversity in digital environments. Regarding the safety competence area one of the skills citizens need to develop is the protection of personal data and privacy as well as the protection of health and well-being so as to be able to protect themselves from potential online risks.

2. Creating a safer and better internet

2.1 The implementation of teaching practice

The teaching and learning implementation plan presented here was implemented by the two classes of 5th grade students at the 6th Primary School of Nikaia in the school year 2015-16 aiming at developing their active citizenship (Vuorikari et al., 2016). Students with the support and encouragement of their teachers dealt with issues of safer Internet navigation, and cyberbullying and hate speech prevention, with the scaffold of Web 2.0 tools. The specific objectives of this action were set in accordance with the revised taxonomy of Bloom, namely Bloom's Digital Taxonomy (Churches, 2009). For example, by the end of the action students should be able:

- to recognize potential dangers while using the Internet

- to consider the consequences caused to the recipient of cyberbullying and hate speech,

- to collaborate by taking the role of peer counselor,

- to create original open content digital material appropriate for educational sites and for their peers to use

Project's duration was five months and was implemented during the hours of flexible zone which is two hours per week (according to the timetable of 5th grade for the school year 2015-2016). The opportunity to initiate this practice was given by the call of Saferinternet.gr, the Greek Safer Internet Centre to all Greek schools to participate in the celebration of Safer Internet day as ambassadors and multipliers of the day (http://www.saferinternet.gr, 2016).

For this teaching practice we followed the project based learning (hereinafter PBL) approach, as it refocuses on students' learning process and not on the curriculum, in

other words it is student-centered and it uses exploratory learning to construct knowledge. It is a very interesting approach which highly motivates students who actively deal with a real world problem or question of their interest. It usually starts with a central research question around which students design the steps and activities of their project. The collaboration among students in order to achieve the final goal is of great importance, while the role of the teacher in all PBL steps is that of the supporter and facilitator. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to conduct original research that matches with the research question supported by ICT. PBL is complete when tangible products or presentations targeted at specific audiences have been created. The whole process, the outcome and the work habits are evaluated by non-traditional and / or qualitative methods (Stix & Hrber, 2006; Krajcik &, Blumenfeld, 2006; Bell, 2010; Markham, 2011)

In our case, effort was made to implement all the above steps and features of PBL, adapted to our school setting. Students of both 5th grade classes were beginners both in collaborative team work and in working with ICT. Their teachers on the other hand have knowledge and experience in ICT for educational purpose. So from the beginning of the school year they used web 2.0 tools, hands-on activities in a collaborative setting and let space and time for their students to actively learn. Consistently there was increased guidance throughout the implementation of teaching practice (mainly modeling activities required to implement PBL approach) with no further intervention in their creativity. The research question that concerned students was derived from their new experience with the use of ICT and Internet as a learning resource. Students had to investigate whether there were dangers in the web, to inform or warn their peers, to show them how they could avoid them and especially how they should navigate safely.

Once the research question was formulated, prior knowledge and especially students' ideas about what is safe on internet was tested by the use of a relevant questionnaire. Most of them had little experience with it and they used it mostly as a means of communication (especially via Viber application and 2 via Facebook) or entertainment (playing online games and using YouTube). Nevertheless, they were adequately informed about what to avoid. To systematize and extend this theoretical knowledge the two teachers chose to engage them with a playful application called "The internet island" of saferinternet.gr platform (http://www.saferinternet.gr/index.php?parentobjId=Page4) taking into account that students' involvement with fun activities is an effective way of importing new knowledge (play as learning) using Internet (Richards, 2001). This application in

combination with the extra digital content sent to our school due to our participation in the action "Ambassadors of Safe Internet Day" was the starting material of the whole project.

The first activity of the process gave students a great opportunity in developing their information and data literacy skills. Students were divided into groups with the task to study and manage the digital content in their own pace in order to find and evaluate the information that was appropriate to answer the research question (Vuorikari et al., 2016). Moreover, a great deal of objectives were achieved like the objective of communication and collaboration among students, with the sub-objectives of collaboration using ICT and sharing digital content with their peers for fostering active citizenship in their school community.

Then each group chose a cyber threat (different for each one), wrote and recorded a radio message for their peer listeners. To create this audio message students used the free audio editor software Audacity developing at the same time the skill of creating digital content to express thoughts, opinions and feelings. All messages were used to compose a coherent half an hour online radio show. The recorded speech was then enriched with appropriate soundtrack and was uploaded to the "European School Radio, the first student radio" platform as their third monthly show. (Students of E1 were conducting a Cultural Project throughout the school year. Their task was to create and upload to the above platform a half an hour radio show concerning their activities and interests. All radio shows created by students can be found here http://europeanschoolradio.eu/podcast/index/1/564a0e06f17801-25620932)

Afterward, students studied and discussed in groups the additional digital content that was sent to our school in order to compose two poems about cyberbullying and hate speech. After having reached their own definition of these two phenomena, students discussed it with the whole class and came to a more complex definition which included the forms which can be presented in the virtual and real world. Then, a creative writing workshop took place. Each group had to study traditional and modern poems to unravel the morphological features of poetry. Later they were given the standards to be followed in order their poems to be eligible to poetry collection of Saferinternet.gr action (each poem should have 8 verses, and up to 5 words per verse). In the final step, students had to apply the content knowledge they gained through the previous activities and be inspired to write the poems. The poems they wrote have the titles "Fear not" and "The electronic friends". Both poems were positively evaluated by the action organizers who included them in their online poetry collection about

cyberbullying prevention, published in their website (http://www.saferinternet.gr/index.php?parentobjId=Page15, 2016).

To this point students of both 5th grade classes were working separately, apart from the time that they sang the two poems as one. But after the poetry writing workshop, the two teachers decided to co-teach both sessions to create the final product, namely the recording of the song and its visualization by creating a video stop motion animation.

Interdisciplinary team teaching makes a model for collaboration and cooperative learning for both students and teachers. Teachers who co-teach have the opportunity to step aside the main stage and take in turns the role of "exemplary" student asking clarifying questions and offering additional viewpoints of the discussed subject, or take the role of presenter. Teachers are also given the chance to observe their colleague in action and see the way they deal with class management issues and the teaching approaches they apply. This way team teaching serves as a professional development session in practice especially when the presenter is modeling processes which the other is not experienced in (Leavitt, 2006; Little & Hoel, 2011). Furthermore, by joining the two 5th grade classes we aimed to implement the peer to peer counseling among students as the first class (E1) would raise awareness of cyberbullying and hate speech prevention among students of the second class (E2) by teaching them the song they wrote. Meanwhile students of the second class would assume lead roles within the groups to create the stop motion video animation, a technique in which they were more familiar. At the same time everyone had the chance to express themselves creatively utilizing Web 2.0 tools to produce original digital content.

Stop motion animation is a laborious and time consuming procedure but it demands creativity, flexibility and commitment. Students have to choose objects with no ability to move by themselves. They arrange them in any way they want and then they slightly move them. Every slight movement is photographed. Then with an appropriate digital tool like Movie maker they arrange the photograph shots they've taken and set the time of every shot so fast as in the final outcome the objects seem as if they move by themselves (http://www.kinoumeno.gr/).

Initially, students of both 5th grade classes were mixed and divided into small groups of 4 or 5. There was the restriction that in each group two students of E2 class should participate as they had already created a stop motion video for a previous project and had more experience and practical knowledge of the task in hand. After the group formation, teachers presented examples of stop motion animation video clips and the

various techniques that can be used in order to enable students to be inspired and to choose the technique they liked or find appropriate to create their own part of the final video. Then, the groups were asked to choose a verse of the song that wished to visualize, to meet with their peers in order to express and record their ideas for both the way they would like to visualize the content of the song and the technique they would like to use. The ideas were then announced to the whole class in order each group to receive relevant feedback from their peers, before proceeding to the implementation of their group decisions. The final video was presented to pupils from other classes of the school, to the rest of the teachers and to students' parents. In all cases the video was accompanied by positive reviews and many children were humming the song.

3. Evaluation - Results

As the described practice was an experimental PBL implementation within the flexible zone, non-traditional evaluation methods were used and mainly focused on students' observation. Thus, the accent was students to obtain the 21st century skills described above and to create the final product (song and video). Through students' observation there was constant feedback about the skills acquired individually or collectively, about the support teachers should offer them and about the next steps of the project. The students' enthusiasm as well as their active involvement was the cause of the continuation and expansion of the project. In addition, time was dedicated to both students' self-evaluation for all phases of PBL and the final outcome, as well as comments from parents which were taken into account.

Moreover, at the end of the teaching practice students were asked to fill in again the questionnaire they had been given at the beginning of the project so that teachers could evaluate whether they had reconstructed (or not) their initial ideas about internet safety. In the questionnaire there were questions to which students had to answer about how they would react to risk events in the real world (i.e. whether they would leave their house door wide open, put their photos in public places, tell anyone their address, talk cordially and confidently to strangers or allow them to take a look on their personal belongings) and respectively what they would do in cases involving their exposure to the internet (i.e. accept strangers as "friends" on social media, post personal photos which their parents are unaware of, allow strangers to view or edit them or disclose their personal data)
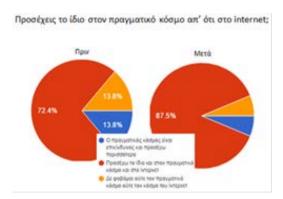
Image 1. *Students' before and after answers on the question: Do you take more care in real world than that of internet?*

Generally, it was observed that students' majority influenced and informed by the action, reevaluated their initial responses, while a small percentage of them maintained their initial views. For example, there were no differences in the initial negative responses of students to questions concerning the real world. However, there were obvious differences in questions related to social media and more specifically in questions related to their profile. Finally, significant differentiation rates were observed in the question "Are you more mindful in the real or in the Internet world," where initial positive responses decreased significantly. (Image 1)

The alteration in students' attitudes was reflected in the lyrics of the song composed by them entitled "You are not to be afraid of the Internet" the content of which is directly related to cyberbullying and hate speech as well as the ways of confronting relevant cases.

As far as the stop motion video animation creation is concerned, it spurred students of both 5th grade sessions to communicate, collaborate and produce digital open content material, utilizing problem solving approaches as there were several times when the group members had to solve technical issues. Students seemed to have fun throughout the PBL implementation. We feel that collaboration habits and the relationship established between group members as well as the fact that students took initiative and developed their skills is very important. Students participated equally through the whole process gaining recognition from their peers for their talents and their contribution to the final outcome, which boosted their confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem. In their comments they mentioned that it was a difficult process, which resulted in a nice and well viewed outcome and that they particularly enjoyed collaborating with their peers.

Parents commented the implementation only positively highlighting particularly two elements: a) it was the first time that their children had been involved in such matters using ICT and b) the children were excited about being involved with the project, they were occupied with it at home and they showed great interest and joy for school generally.

4. Discussion

The application of PBL approach although new to students who took part can be said to have met the objectives set both in cognitive and social levels. Students were asked to do original research based on the research question using ICT, to evaluate and use the content they found in order to solve the problem in hand cultivating at the same time their critical thinking and developing their reasoning on contemporary and important issues (e.g. the protection of personal data, the management of crises such as cyberbullying and awareness of netiquette) concepts they had little or no knowledge of.

At the same time, everyone was benefitted by both students' and teachers' collaboration. For example, co-teaching process worked as a model for students' collaboration, who implemented peer to peer counseling to reduce the knowledge gap that existed between them concerning the use of ICT to produce the final outcome. Finally, it is necessary to point out that through this teaching practice students developed their skills of active citizenship especially that of social sensitivity by recognizing the importance of diversity and the need to protect it.

Aknowledgements

References

Ασημακόπουλος, Χ., Βασιλακάκη, Ε., Γιαννακοπούλου, Δ., Μπεράτης, Ι., Παπαδο-πούλου Κ., Φύσσας, Κ. & Χατζηπέμου Θ. (2010) Δραστηριότητες στην τάξη για την πρόληψη του εκφοβισμού και της βίας μεταξύ των μαθητών – Εγχειρίδιο εκ-παιδευτικών πρωτοβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης, Τσιάντης, Ι. (Επιμ.), ΕΨΥΠΕ, Ευρωπαϊ-κό Πρόγραμμα ΔΑΦΝΗ III. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/joJUov

Bell, S. (2010). Project-Based Learning for the 21st Century: Skills for the Future. The Clearing House, 83, 39–43.

Churches, A. (2009). Bloom's Digital Taxonomy. Retrieved from https://goo.gl/lnbxem

Hellenic Statistical Authority (2015). Έρευνα χρήσης Τεχνολογιών Πληροφορίας και Επικοινωνίας από νοικοκυριά και άτομα. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/k8aJtf

Keen, E. & Georgesku, M. (2015). Bookmarks– A manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Retrieved from https://goo.gl/NltZ5R

Krajcik, J. & Blumenfeld, P. (2006) Project-Based Learning. In: The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences. R. Keith Sawyer (ed). Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/DY71pK

Little, A. & Hoel, A. (2011). Interdisciplinary Team Teaching: An Effective Method to Transform Student Attitudes. The Journal of Effective Teaching, 11(1), 36-44. Retrieved from https://goo.gl/LX700z

Markham, T. (2011). Project Based Learning A Bridge Just Far Enough. Teacher Li-brarian, 39(2), 38 – 42. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/5fmYnd

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/QVtrgk

Richards, C. (2001) A Project-Based Learning Approach to the Integration of lnternet Resources in Education. Teaching and Learning, 22(2), 62-73. Retrieved from https://repository.nie.edu.sg/bitstream/10497/283/1/TL-22-2-62.pdf

Stix, A. & Hrbek, F. (2006).The Nine Steps of Project-Based Learning. Chapter 11 in Teachers as Classroom Coaches: How to Motivate Students Across the Content Areas Stix, A. & Hrbek, F., ASCD. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/acDJZg

Touloupis, Th. & Athanasiades, Ch. (2014). The risky use of New Technology among elementary school students: Internet addiction and cyberbullying, *Hellenic Journal of Psychology,* Vol. 11, 83-110. (in Greek) Retrieved from http://www.pseve.org/journal/UPLOAD/Touloupis11b.pdf

Tsorbatzoudis, H. & Angelakopoulos, G. (2012). Descriptive data on cyberbullying prevalence in schools across Greece. In Tsorbatzoudis, H., Lazuras, L. & Barkoukis, V. (Eds.) Cyberbullying in Greece: An interdisciplinary approach, 81 – 142 Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, European Programme DAPHNE III. (in Greek) Retrieved from http://goo.gl/pOljqq

Vuorikari, R., Punie, Y., Carretero Gomez, St. (2016). DigComp 2.0. The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens. Available from http://goo.gl/A9XhGK

Vafopoulos, M. (2012). Changing (with) internet. But mind the gap. In Tsorbatzoudis, H., Lazuras, L. & Barkoukis, V. (Eds.) Cyberbullying in Greece: An interdisciplinary approach, 33 – 78 Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, European Programme DAPHNE III. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/pOljqq

Willard, N. (2004). An educator's guide to cyberbullying and cyberthreats. Retrieved from   http://goo.gl/LvfgAR

Περίληψη

Η ακόλουθη εκπαιδευτική πρακτική είχε ως σκοπό την ανάπτυξη της ενεργούς πολιτότητας των μαθητών (citizenship) με απώτερο στόχο την ενασχόληση των μαθητών με το θέμα του διαδικτυακού εκφοβισμού και της ρητορικής μίσους μέσα από την ανάπτυξη των δεξιοτήτων του 21ου αιώνα με έμφαση στη χρήση των εργαλείων Web 2.0. Στην πραγματοποίηση της εν λόγω πρακτικής ακολουθήθηκε η μάθηση μέσω σχεδίων εργασίας (Project based learning-PBL), ενώ δόθηκε ιδιαίτερη έμφαση τόσο στην εφαρμογή της συνδιδασκαλίας (team teaching) όσο και στη συμβουλευτική ομοτίμων (peer to peer). Ως τελικό προϊόν της όλης δραστηριότητας υπήρξε η παραγωγή πρωτότυπου ψηφιακού υλικού. Οι μαθητές δημιούργησαν μια διαδικτυακή ραδιοφωνική εκπομπή, συνέθεσαν το δικό τους τραγούδι για το διαδικτυακό εκφοβισμό και τη ρητορική μίσους το οποίο και οπτικοποίησαν με τη δημιουργία βίντεο εφαρμόζοντας μικτές τεχνικές stop motion animation.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: μάθηση μέσω σχεδίων εργασίας, συνδιδασκαλία, συμβουλευτική ομοτίμων, δεξιότητες 21ου αιώνα, web 2.0, stop motion, ασφαλές διαδίκτυο, κυβερνοεκφοβισμός, ρητορική μίσους