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Design of educational programs for folk culture: An innovative cooperative model for the production of printed and digital material

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Abstract

We will present the design and the process of educational material's production (printed and digital) regarding Greek's naval tradition. In particular, the educational program under the title "Where are you going little boat in such weather?" designed to support modules for the pilot programme of "Flexible Zone" as well as for other modules of primary and secondary education. The design and production of the printed educational material on folk culture, history and local history carried out by primary and secondary education teachers in cooperation with the school community, local cultural institutions, museums, organizations, associations and it is an innovation of great interest

Keywords: Folk Culture, Digital material, Educational Programs

Introduction

In this paper, we will present the design and the process of educational material's production (printed and digital) regarding Greek's naval tradition. In particular, the educational program under the title "Where are you going little boat in such weather?" designed to support modules for the pilot programme of "Flexible Zone" as well as for other modules of primary and secondary education. The design and production of the printed educational material on folk culture, history and local history carried out by primary and secondary education teachers in cooperation with the school community, local cultural institutions, museums, organizations, associations and it is an innovation of great interest.

In our case study, the educational program for the production of the printed and digital material is related to the naval tradition of Magnesia in Greece and the wider region of the Aegean Sea. This is the central theme with its corresponding sub-themes. The producer of the program was the "Academy of Folk Culture & Local History" a department of the Culture Organization "Magniton Kivotos, for the preservation of the cultural reserve" of the Metropolis of Demetriadou & Almirou. The design started in May 2015, was completed in April 2016, and the final implementation of the deliverables is expected in September 2017. For the design and the production of each sub-module of the program created a team¹ that included teachers from different specialties (such as teachers of the primary and secondary school, IT, music and art teachers) with specialization in production of educational material. Each team², except its members, had a Coordinator³ who also had the responsibility for the delivery of the material according to the specifications (specification guide for the deliverables). The coordinator's main role was to solve problems and dysfunctions, general issues of cooperation, use of the material about respect for copyright, and co-operation with the Project's Coordinators and the General Coordinator of the educational program.

Main Goal, Structure, Content and Usefulness of this Educational Program

The main goal of this educational program was the creation of educational material (printed and digital) to help students to understand the aspects of the local history, the environment and the folk culture of their homeland about naval traditional. Also, teachers (male and female) in the future will have at their disposal multiple tools of enriched teaching interventions for the teaching of Humanities' courses⁴ (Kapaniaris, Gkasouka, 2016).

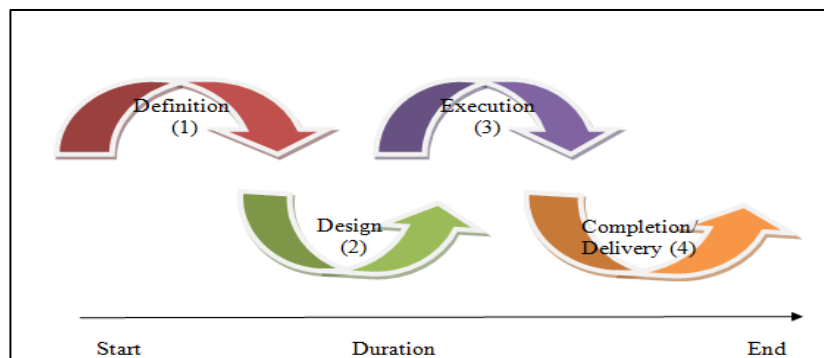
Each educational package consists of six distinct and autonomous thematic units. Its material can be used in Primary Education within the Flexible Zone or in Language, Literature and History courses, while in Secondary Education it can be used in the context of the Local History (Experiential Course) or in any other lesson which is considered useful by the educational community. The titles of the thematic units of the educational package are: 1) The myth of the Argonautic campaign, the heroes and their relationship with ancient Iolkos and new city of Volos, 2) Medieval ports-stations on the East's waterways: North Aegean, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, 3) "Where are you going little boat in such weather?" (The naval tradition of the Aegean Sea), 4) the naval tradition of Magnesia (The ports of Volos, Trikeri, Northern Sporades, East Pelion, Amaliapolis), 5) The tradition of the fishermen of Magnesia (Pagasitikos Gulf, Lake Karla), 6) Environment,

sea and shipping today. The educational material runs through the centuries. It starts from the Antiquity (from 3500 BC to 400 AD) then goes to the middle Ages (from 400 AD to 1500 AD) and finishes with the New Age (from 1500 AD). The covered geographical area is a) Europe b) Sea, c) Magnesia.

Methodology

The methodology for the design and the production of the educational material (printed and digital) was based on the model of the life cycle of a project, i.e., all those phases from which a project must pass from its inception, the conception of its purpose until its completion (Gray & Larson, 2008).

Thus, in the life cycle model, accordingly to the time and intensity of the effort of each stage, we distinguish the following stages:



Pic.1: The life cycle of a project (Adaption from Gray και Larson, 2008 in Alevizos, Kostas & Parashos, 2015)

A) Initiation Phase

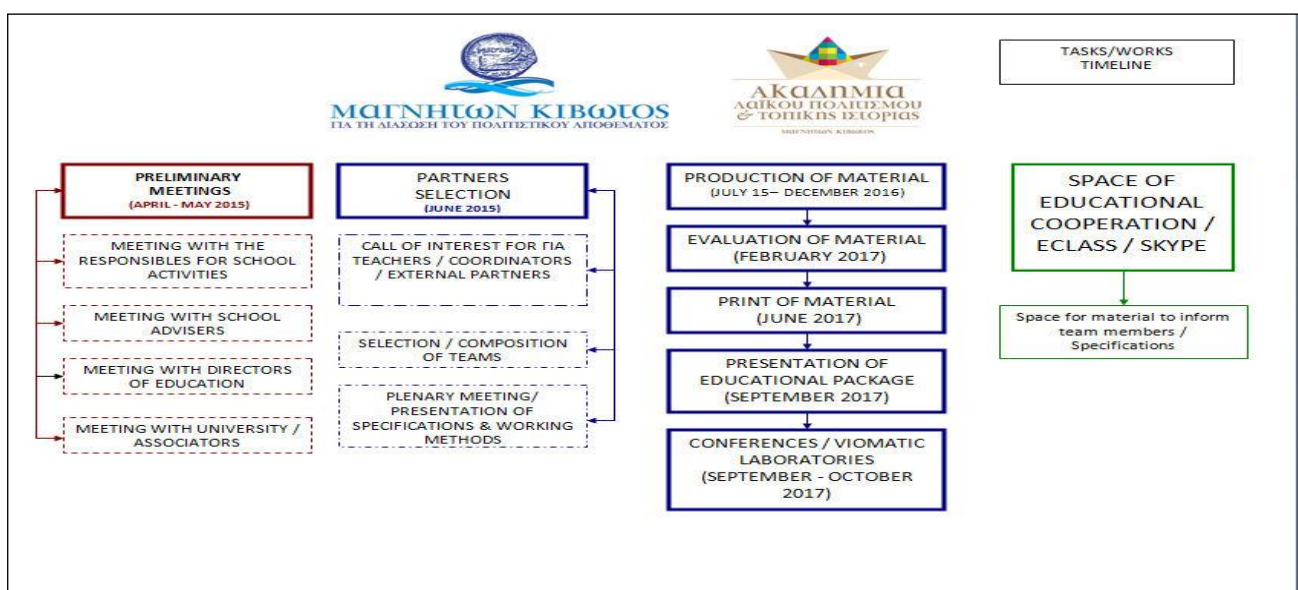
During this phase, the purpose of the program mentioned above determined and its main features and dimensions captured. In this phase, also, the concise identification of the program created (Project Charter) which included: the title, a brief and comprehensive description of the program, the program's purpose, the available resources, the roles and responsibilities of the involved members and finally the timetable of the project and its deliverables. Through the concise identity of the project incurred the respective notices of the working team's members, but also the texts

cooperation with external partners and stakeholders (Kapaniaris, Gasouka, 2016).

B) Planning Phase:

During Planning Phase the important parameters that affect the project examined and a detailed implementation plan have been drawn up, taking into account the difficulties and particularities that exist (Meredith & Mantel, 2006; McVay-Lynch & Roecker, 2007).

In particular, the tasks that recorded for execution are plotted in the following diagram:



Pic.2: Work distribution (timetable)

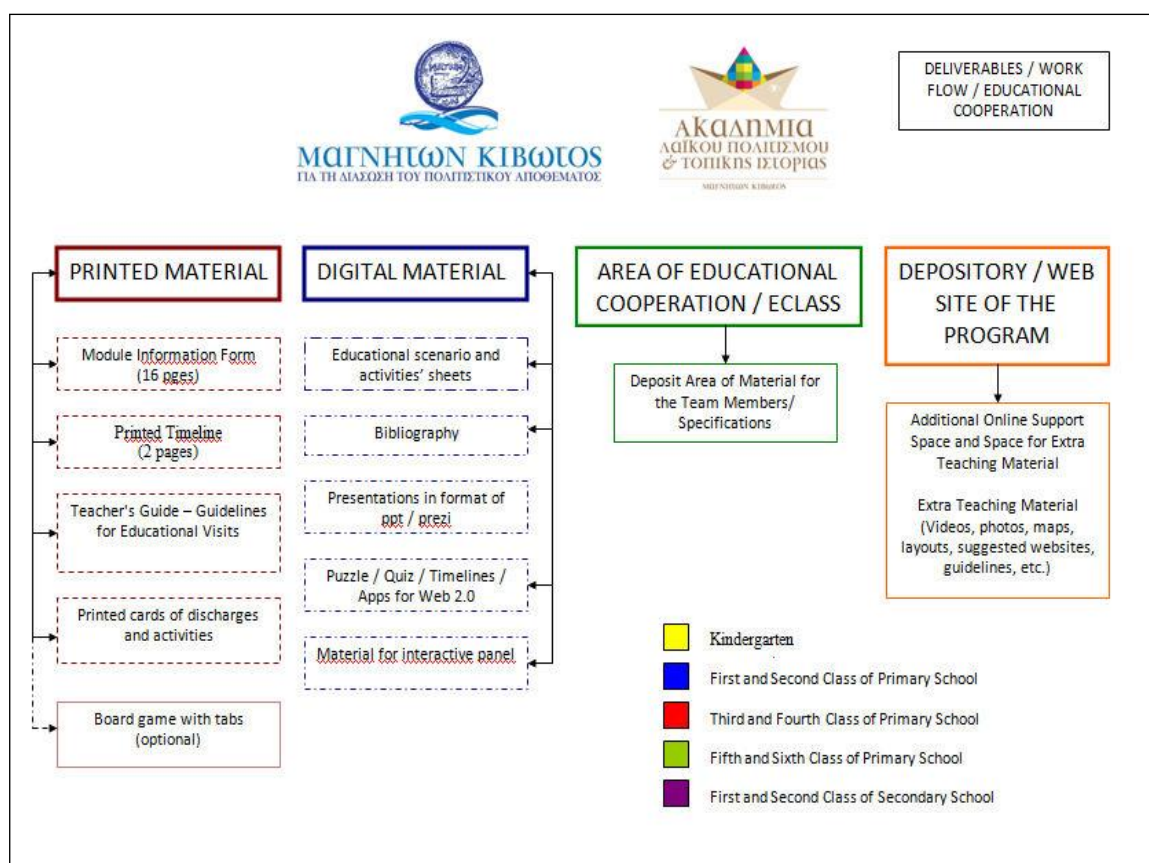
During Planning Phase, preliminary meetings were held with the School Leaders whose were responsible for school activities which aimed to communicate the original identity of the project for providing feedback to the final design. Meetings were also held with the School Advisors of Primary and Secondary Education and with the Directors of Primary and Secondary Education, where the identity of the program presented to provide feedback and the relevant information that would lead to cooperation and support during the implementation phase and evaluation of educational scenarios in real-world classroom conditions. Collaboration with the local community and stakeholders has been achieved through meetings with Cultural Organizations in Magnesia. In the end, the cooperation on scientific supervision and responsibility with the Department of Preschool Education and Educational Planning of the University of the Aegean decided, with Scientific Supervisor the Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Gassouka.

Regarding the development of the project from its inception onwards, i.e., from June to August 2015, the selection notice was held for: a) team coordinators, (b) team members, (c) external collaborators. The teams were

interdisciplinary, with various specialties from Primary and Secondary Education. For the communication between members and coordinators and all the program participants, an account was created on the Edmodo digital platform (www.edmodo.com)⁴ that functions as a space for communication, announcement, exchange of views, the share of material and digital space for the creation of a learning community.

For the download and the upload of the learning material a digital class created in the free open e-class software (<http://free.openeclass.org/>),⁵ exploiting in practice the tools of "web 2.0", where six teams created with access rights to coordinators and team members. The specifications of the program deliverables were another subject of the design phase. In particular, the general specifications⁶ of the final deliverables of the educational material includes the following per thematic unit:

A) Written material of sixteen pages as a general support module (teacher's guide), two-page printed timetable, tabs, educational scenario, worksheets with activities, instructions for the teacher, instructions for educational visits, bibliography, links to the internet, constructions, games (puzzle, acrostic, table, etc.).



Pic.3: Deliverables (workflow and teacher collaboration)

B) Digital material, with powerpoint presentations, digital quizzes, crossword puzzles, photo presentations, links with sources, comics, interactive tabs, etc.

A basic concern also for the design of the educational package was the compatibility of the produced educational material with the Primary and Secondary Education courses.

C) Implementation (Execution) Phase

Since January 2016, the educational program has been in the implementation phase. In particular, from January to

February 2016, took place material searches, recordings, field visits, material uploads, updates from stakeholders in specific thematic areas, development of the baseline scenario, design and development of substrates, design and organization of proposed activities and worksheets (by age group), updates from stakeholders in specific thematic areas (Kapaniariis, Gasouka 2016). From March to June 2016, the first use of classroom material (selected activities and worksheets) took place. Also there was the evaluation of the first application, the reorganization of the material,

the updates from stakeholders in more specific thematic areas, the second use of the material in the classroom (selected activities and worksheets), the recording of observations, work on the groups, evaluation of the second application, any modifications, the final form of the material, the finalization of the script and the substrates.

In July 2016 the final material composition is planned, i.e., the creation of the sixteen-page information leaflet and the timeline, the mid-term evaluation of the program and the first meetings with print design specialists (Kapaniaris, Gasouka 2016).

D) Closing Phase

The completion and delivery phase of the project includes the final evaluation by external evaluators from Greek universities with the final feedback of the educational package.

Development Specifications of the "Teacher's Guide" of Each Thematic Section of the Program

The teacher's guide will be a sixteen-page printed book and will also be in a digital form (e-book). It will include material divided into three sections: a) for Preschool - Primary School (Kindergarten and the first two classes of Elementary School), b) for the Elementary School (from the third to the sixth class), c) for Secondary School.

The content of the educational guide, according to the instructions given to the teachers, should be distributed to the three age groups that mentioned above, taking into account, of course, the team material, the nature of the subject and the composition of the group. The best distribution will be: a) for Preschool - Primary School (Kindergarten and the first two classes of Elementary School), b) for the Elementary School (from the third to the sixth class), c) for Secondary School, d) Auxiliary pages.

For each age group as defined above, the teacher's guide should contain:

- a. Instructions for using the module material (educational scenario, additional digital material, links, instructions for digital tools that can be re-used, additional recommendations for the use of supplementary material).
- b. Supplementary cognitive material (basic texts or excerpts for understanding the unity, songs, poems, riddles).
- c. Proposals for the teaching of the material (instructions for experiential activities, visits, re-use and extension of the material, project teaching, cultural program, etc.).
- d. Bibliography and web sources (which used for the production of the educational material).
- e. Supplementary bibliography and network sources (complementary bibliographic sources, training packages, web resources).
- f. The identity of the material and its creators - writers.
- g. Contents of the guide.
- h. Cover elements (group topic title, age group, suggested picture, educational guide, program logos)
- i. Back cover (suggested photo, program logo).

The photos and shapes that will accompany the teacher's guide must include title, creator, the copyright owner.

The language of the teacher's guide must be in line with the Guide to the use of non-sexist language in Administrative Documents⁷. Also into the guide, there must not be racist or

sexist references or material that promotes stereotypes and perceptions that are not consistent with the spirit and principles of intercultural education.

Development specifications of the timeline for each thematic course of the program

The development of the timeline (by the instructions that have been given to the members of the program teams) must include the main event stations or historical developments or discoveries or changes or the appearance of new elements or objects or techniques of the thematic unit based on time

The timeline offers the possibility of alternative recruitment to students so that they can understand better the writing discourse, recognize and understand the sequence of events (as they emerge from the Greek history) and the meaning of time. Thus, when students place the main events in chronological order, they are more facilitated in summary exercises, learn to take notes while reading a text and identify the different ways of linking information. In particular, with the help of timeline students enhance their critical thinking, choose the images that represent better a historical age (e.g., Byzantine finds, works of art, faces, etc.) and acquire empathy, as they can interpret historical action and process further the information with the aim of making their writing text (Iliopoulou 2006, Kaskamanidis 2016).

Specifications for the Development of an Educational scenario for each Thematic Section of the Program

The scenario's deliverables, according to the instructions which have been given to the teachers, related to the basic educational scenario as well as the sub-activities for the three age groups: a) for Preschool - Primary School (Kindergarten and the first two classes of Elementary School), b) for the Elementary School (from the third to the sixth class), c) for Secondary School.

Therefore, a basic scenario from each group will be delivered as well as the corresponding sub-activities for each of the three groups above. For example, If a group script has three subparts (Figure 1, 2) the team of this course has to deliver three subparts X 3 age groups = nine subtopics - activities. Each scenario will have as many sub-assumptions, and age groups as the teacher's team consider about the material, purpose and overall time of the scenario, which is the sum of the time of implementation of each activity. For example, a scenario for the age group of the Elementary School with five suppositories of four hours each means that the scenario to be realized in full growth, it will take twenty hours. The implementation of the script by the school teacher who will receive the educational package does not mean that he/she has to use all the activities of the script in his/her classroom. The scenario supports all the subparts and follows, in general, the educational model for the Second Level Educational Training Scenario. Namely, in this last Scenario, the teacher goes on to get directions (for example to see the individual teaching objectives of a sub-assumption by age group, the learning theory on which the sub-assumptions rely, etc.). Therefore, when scenario writing is completed, it must support all sub-groups and age groups (e.g., to indicate whether the theory of learning constructivism refers to all or some of the sub-assumptions).



Figure 1: Basic Structure of a Scenario

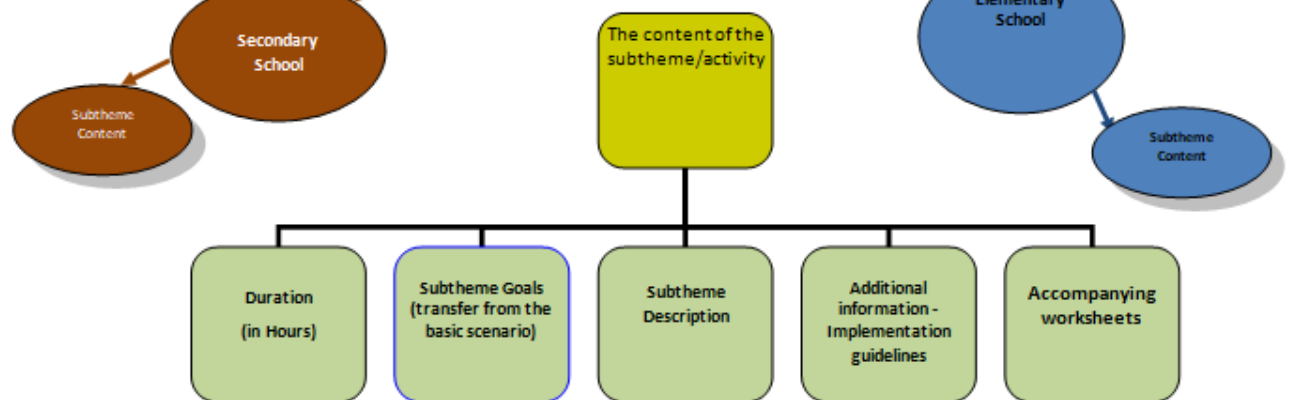


Figure 2: The content of the subtheme/activity.

According to the Educational Program's Deliverables Guide, for the fuller evaluation of the educational scenario, it is necessary to consider whether the scenario: a) has clear learning objectives, b) is based on a pedagogical approach, c) there is clear link with the curriculum, d) follows the principles of interdisciplinary approach, e) fosters exploratory, cooperative and active learning, f) utilizes ICT with measure and balance combined with other teaching strategies, g) offers the possibility of multiple concurrent representations, h) provides the opportunity for the teacher to extend it by adding new activities to the same subject area or another subject, i) is distinguished by simplicity, j) assigns clear roles to each student, k) defines the interaction and predicts the time of each activity, l) utilizes the natural tendency of the child to explore and creativity, m) offers the possibility of cultivating not only skills but also

lifestyles, n) provides not only opportunities for collaboration among students in the classroom but, more generally, for exchange of views and cooperation between virtual classes in various schools in Greece as well as abroad (Tzimas, 2000).

Specifications for the Development of Digital Material of Each Thematic Section of the Program

The digital educational material of each subject is comprised: a) from the basic digital educational material of the module, which proposed by the educational scenario (its development is necessary) and b) from the optional digital educational material (it should be developed or proposed existing digital resources (e.g., from "Photodentro" repository). Also, if it is necessary some proposed drivers of software and tools Web 2.0⁸ should be

offered (Teachers can find such type of guides on the internet, and they can customize them indicating their creators. With the reuse of and educational resources, a teacher eventually can create his/her instruction manual).

Conclusions

The educational program “Where are you going little boat in such weather?” started at the April of 2015 with the preliminary meetings and is expected to be completed in September 2017. Around 80 teachers, school counselors and volunteers have been actively involved. Besides the internal evaluation of the program by school counselors, it will evaluate by external evaluators such as faculty members of Greek Universities. The educational package includes printed and digital material in open form. The mass production of the educational package is scheduled to begin in September 2017 a then will send to all interested schools in the next school year (2017-2018). Members of each of the thematic groups/teams will be participants and presenters to meetings and workshops that will be held in Magnisia during 2017-18. The innovative educational program is not funded by a European program or another European source of funding, and for this reason, the participation of teachers, coordinators, and scientists in the production of educational material was unpaid and voluntary.

Notes

1. Six teams formed for each subprogram, with the participation of 80 teachers (men and women).
2. Each team formed by 10-12 members of Primary and Secondary Education teachers.
3. Coordinators had previous experience in the production of educational material (printed and digital) as well as in the coordination of teams/ groups for the production of educational material.
4. Safe Social Media & Electronic Learning Platform – Edmodo available at <https://www.edmodo.com> (date of last retrieval, 17/2/16).
5. Free Open eClass - Asynchronous eLearning Platform, Available at <http://free.openeclass.org/> (date of last retrieval 17/2/16).
6. There was provision for the development of detailed specifications of the program deliverables (printed and digital), which reflected in a specific Deliverables Guide which is described in details below.
7. Guide to the use of non-sexist language in Administrative Documents. Available in: <http://www.isotita.gr/var/uploads/MELETES/Odhgos%20Xrisis%20Mi%20Seksistikis%20Glossas.pdf>.
8. Web 2.0 Tools for Education (2012, 2015), Educational wiki by Alexandros Kapaniaris as part of the students' work at ASPAITE - Volos Branch. On this page, you will find textbooks for the use of word processors. Available at: <https://kapaniaris.wikispaces.com/>.

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