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email: e-journal@inpatra.gr

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Dr. Memos Konstantinos

The Global Financial Crisis and its Impact on Labor, Social Security and Education in Europe

Summary

The economic crisis is one of the two phases of economic fluctuations, namely the downfall phase, when economic activity is in a continuous shrinking. The present research focuses on bibliographic research to describe the global financial crisis. First, how did the causes of the crisis begin, what were the effects of the crisis, how it went into the real economy and its transition from the US to Europe.

The study then explores the results of the effects of the financial and economic crisis, the impact on European countries and more specifically on employment, social security and education.

The purpose of the research is to point out that the financial crisis launched by the US has affected not only economically the US and Europe but also socially.

Keywords: Economic crisis, Financial crisis, Social crisis, labor crisis, Social Security crisis, Education crisis

1. Introduction

The economic crisis is one of the two phases of economic fluctuations, namely the downfall phase, when economic activity is in a continuous shrinking. Economic fluctuations are defined as successive fluctuations in economic activity within an economy. Cyclical fluctuations or economic cycles are also mentioned. The English attribute the phenomenon to the term “business cycles”, precisely to emphasize the particular importance of investment in the evolution of the economic cycle.

An economic crisis is a disturbance in financial markets where the wrong choices and financial risk problems are increasing, and they are unable to channel their capital into productive investments and profitable sectors. An economic crisis can lead an economy away from the balance and turn its downward trend indicators into economic growth. Financial crises may have different effects beyond banking panic¹.

Eichengreen & Bordo², they found about 139 crises in 56 different countries between 1974 and 1997. Crisis hit the United States with the black market crash on the black Tuesday of 1929, the Latin American countries in the 1960s and 1970s, Mexico in 1994, South East Asia in 1997, Argentina 1998, which in 2001 led to bankruptcy.

The present research focuses on bibliographic research to describe the global financial crisis. The financial crisis, launched in the US subprime mortgage market in 2007, was transformed into a crisis of the global financial system and quickly moved to the real economy. Official data are used to describe the crisis that has been caused and its economic and political implications. Several decades of deregulation and innovation grossly inflated the size of financial markets relative to the real economy. The value of all financial assets in the US grew from four times GDP in 1980 to ten times GDP in 2007.

Many banks, which had placed their clients' money in shares to earn more profits, face tricky problems, and in the next few days they go bankrupt. This crisis has moved directly to the financial markets, causing a dramatic fall in all stock markets in the world. The financial crisis was transmitted to the real economy.

The aim of the present study is to point out that the financial crisis launched by the US has affected not only economically the US and Europe but also socially. The financial crisis was transformed into economic, it passed into the real economy and influenced Europe not only economically but also socially. In particular, it affected Labor, increased unemployment, reduced jobs, negatively affected social security system and the education system.

1 Mishkin, S Frederic.(1991). NBER Working Papers Series, Working Paper No 3934.

2 Bordo, M. & Eichengreen B. et al. (2001). Is the Crisis Problem Growing More Severe? *Economic Policy* 16, no.32 pp. 51-82

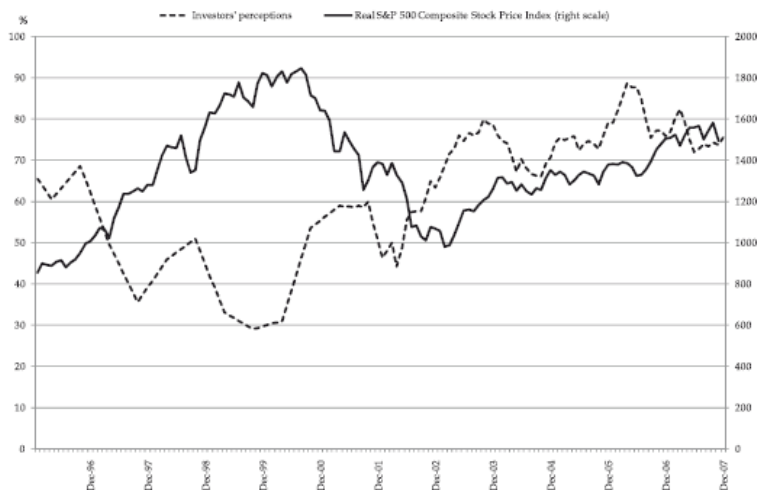
The remainder of this research is organised as follows: Section 2 describe the global financial crisis. Section 3 focuses on the causes of the financial crisis. Section 4 describe the financial crisis in Europe. Section 5 focuses on the effects of the economic crisis in Europe. Finally, section 6 draws conclusions of this bibliographic research.

2. The global financial crisis

The global economy was faced with the biggest recession since the end of the Second World War. The crisis became visible in September 2008 with the collapse of Lehman Brothers and Wachovia Bank, the mergers of Merrill Lynch and Bear Sterns and the nationalization of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac of large financial institutions. The financial crisis, launched in the US subprime mortgage market in 2007, was transformed into a crisis of the global financial system and quickly moved to the real economy.

In order to understand the role of monetary policy in generating the speculative bubble that led to the global financial crisis, we identify a speculative bubble as a widespread or generalized increase in asset prices to unsustainable levels, with unsustainability confirmed by the subsequent crash³.

Diagram 2.1 Stock Prices and Investors Perceptions (% of Investors Believing Market Not Too High), 1996-2007



Source: Shiller, 2009

3 Kindleberger, C.P. and Aliber, R. (2005) *Manias, Panics, and Crashes: A History of Financial Crises* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons).

Several decades of deregulation and innovation grossly inflated the size of financial markets relative to the real economy. The value of all financial assets in the US grew from four times GDP in 1980 to ten times GDP in 2007. In 1981 household debt was 48% of GDP, while in 2007 it was 100%. Private sector debt was 123% of GDP in 1981 and 290% by late 2008. The financial sector has been in a leveraging frenzy: its debt rose from 22% of GDP in 1981 to 117% in late 2008. The share of corporate profits generated in the financial sector rose from 10% in the early 1980s to 40% in 2006, while its share of the stock market's value grew from 6% to 23%.

The scope and severity of the current crisis is a clear signal that the growth trajectory of financial markets in recent decades is unsustainable and must be reversed. It is not possible for the value of financial assets to remain so large relative to the real economy because the real economy cannot consistently generate the cash flows required to sustain such inflated financial claims. It is not economically efficient to have such large proportions of income and human and material resources captured by the financial sector⁴.

USA were hit by the Great Depression, which was initially linked to the stock market crash on October 29, 1929 (known as the "Black Tuesday"), then taking on a global dimension. It struck Europe and America, with bankruptcies of companies, mass unemployment and a large capitalist concentration. In the 1929 crisis, leveraged financial speculation through the widespread use of bank loans to buy shares was responsible for the quadrupling of stock indices in the US in the 1920s and for their collapse, leading to the October 1929 crash and at the same time bankruptcy of many banks.

Many banks, which had placed their clients' money in shares to earn more profits, face tricky problems, and in the next few days they go bankrupt. The end of the US crisis was identified with the start of the war economy of the Second World War, around 1939.

The recession was caused by both the collapse of financial markets and bankruptcies in the banking system, and the lack of a direct response to economic policies. Monetary policy remained restrictive, with loan funds for investment shrinking. But the state of the economy was getting worse. Unemployment has risen, and agricultural commodity prices have fallen, with the result that rural areas also suffer. Economic policy waited for the markets to balance on their own. Government interventions in 1933 helped stabilize the property market, and by 1936 long-term mortgages were granted to approximately 1 million homeowners.

The recent financial crisis of 2007-2008, which began with the US subprime mortgage market, has evolved into the world's most severe economic

4 New York Times. 2009B. Wall St. pay is cyclical: guess where we are now, 5 February

crisis over the last 80 years and has created a recession. It showed weaknesses in the existing supervisory and regulatory framework and led to coordinated action by international and national supervisors and regulators and agencies to shield the global financial system. In 2007, nearly a million homes were seized by the banks, creating a huge social and economic problem. This crisis has moved directly to the financial markets, causing a dramatic fall in all stock markets in the world.

By 2007 the CDS market had turned into a gambling casino that eventually helped destroy insurance giant AIG and investment banks Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers. As of February 2009 AIG alone had suffered losses of over \$60 billion on CDS contracts⁵.

The financial crisis has passed into the real economy through the reluctance of credit institutions to lend even through the destruction of wealth of households and businesses by breaking into bubbles. External trade collapsed and consumption decreased. As a consequence, we have had the impressive reduction of global GDP, falling employment and rising unemployment.

The 2008 crisis has no similarities to the monetary crises of the Latin American countries. These crises were characterized by strong credit expansion, high inflation and low credibility of local monetary authorities. It also does not look like the financial crises in the late 90's in Southeast Europe, Asia and Russia. They were local, much less systemic and better manageable.

The problems were so serious that some of the biggest financial institutions in the world collapsed. The governments of the richest nations in the world have resorted to extensive rescue packages for the other major banks and financial institutions.

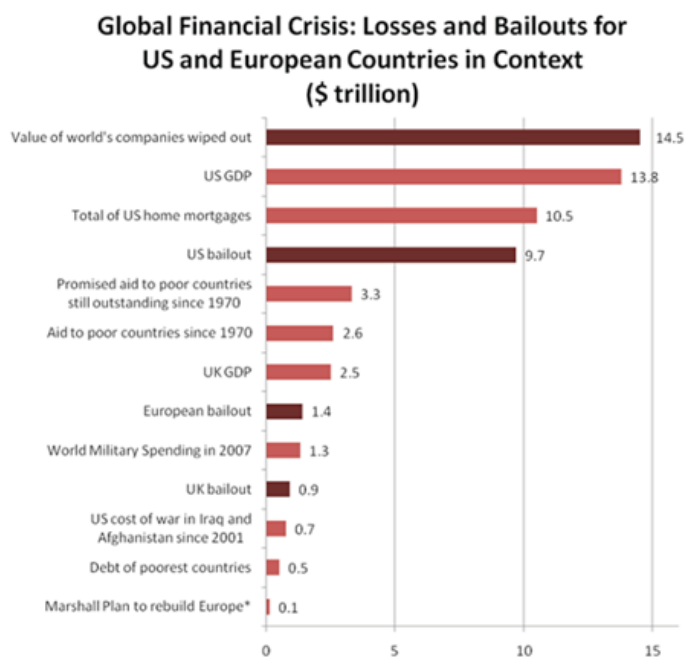
The total amounts that governments have spent on bailouts have skyrocketed. From a world credit loss of \$2.8 trillion in October 2009, US taxpayers alone will spend some \$9.7 trillion in bailout packages and plans. \$14.5 trillion, or 33%, of the value of the world's companies has been wiped out by this crisis. The UK and other European countries have also spent some \$2 trillion on rescues and bailout packages. More is expected⁶.

The 1929 crisis may have more in common with the 2008 crisis, as well as big differences from it. In both cases of the crisis period, a long-term phase of credit expansion, leverage and economic booming followed. In both cases bubbles were created in the markets for physical and financial capital that posed a systemic risk. When the bubbles broke, many and large banks went bankrupt, international trade shrunk, consumption and GDP dropped and unemployment increased. The big differences with 1929 are three: First, in 1929, the decline in

5 Haldane, A. 2009. 'Why Banks Failed the Stress Test', speech at Marcus-Evans Conference on Stress-Testing, 13 February, p. 14

6 The scale of the Crisis, In: <https://www.coursehero.com/file/p3sf3rl/23-The-scale-of-the-Crisis-The-extent-of-the-problems-has-been-so-severe-that/> (accessed on 20-6-2019)

GDP and price levels was incomparably higher and was probably much more obsessive. The destruction of household wealth was relatively greater and diffused much more in 1929 due to deflation and debt accumulation in households and businesses that were impossible to repay. In contrast to the 2008 crisis, wealth destruction focused on the losses of high-income investor portfolios. Also, the lack of deposit guarantees in 1929 has led to even greater economic distress among households. Secondly, monetary policy and fiscal policy in 2008 were unlike the corresponding 1929 policies. In 1929, both were restrictive, and in 2008 they were both expansive. The effectiveness of the stabilization policies of 2009 will be the subject of the next paragraph. For the 1929 case, there is no doubt that they worsened the situation further. Thirdly, in 1929, the crisis diffused globally with considerable time lags, and the whole political and economic climate of the era did not allow a rapid recovery from the recession. In contrast, in 2008, there was a flash of diffusion of the initial disruption due to globalization, but on the other hand there are indications that exit from the crisis will be feasible in the medium term. As has already been mentioned, it has contributed to rapid and coordinated monetary and fiscal intervention⁷.



Sources: BBC, Bloomberg, UPI, globalissues. Org, Feb 2009

7 Kolindzas, T. & Psalidopoulos, M. (2009, November 12) .From the Crisis of 1929 in the Crisis of 2009. Presentation at the Conference of the Hellenic Parliament Foundation. In:https://www.eurobank.gr/Uploads/Reports/Economy%20and%20Markets%20IV_8_DEC2009.pdf(accessed on 3/5/2015)

The financial crisis was quickly transformed into financial, as the problems that arose were transmitted to the real economy. The financial system is at the heart of the modern global economic structure. Banks have been de-leveraged and forced to cut lending to businesses and households. In addition, they have introduced tighter credit criteria and have led businesses and households to shrink their activities, ie staff shortages, rising unemployment, falling production and income, declining GDP and widening the recession.

Also reduced credit contributed alongside the decline in consumer and business confidence in the collapse of world trade. Recession and insecurity have caused a decline in global demand and have led to a slowdown in global growth, declining investment and declining asset prices (stocks, real estate, etc.).

Central banks lowered interest rates and stamped liquidity on the market. Governments raised the deposit guarantee threshold, provided rescue packages for financial institutions, and followed an expansive fiscal policy. Their efforts were coordinated through the G-20 countries and the International Monetary Fund.

The crisis has in the meantime a different character. The crisis that has hit Europe since 2008 is not only financial and economic. It is also social, institutional and political. The austerity policies implemented by Member States' restrictive budgets increase taxes and unemployment, reduce growth and income, increase their public debt and fuel Europe's popular dissatisfaction manifested by different ways of mobilizing and reacting European citizens⁸.

3. The causes of the financial crisis

The financial crisis has come from a combination of many factors. The first was the imbalances between countries in terms of their internal savings and investment⁹.

The imbalances were manifested by high US current account deficits and high surpluses from Asian countries, particularly China. These imbalances led to cheap money, high liquidity and low real interest rates. The low real interest rates then boosted existing financial imbalances, such as real estate bubble and hunting high yields with the use of exotic financial tools¹⁰.

A second factor was the real estate bubble in the US. Since 2001 real estate prices have started an upward trend. The rise in property prices ceased in mid-2006. Supply surpassed demand, leading to a fall in prices until April 2009,

8 Robolis, S. (2012). Economic crisis and the Social State. (p.59) Thessaloniki: Spotlight.

9 Obstfeld M. and Rogoff K. (2009). Global imbalances and the Financial Crisis: Products of Common Causes

10 Hardouvelis, G. (2009, June 10). Economic Policies for Crisis Presentation at a workshop of the Economic Policy Studies Laboratory of the Athens University of Economics and Business. In http://www.hardouvelis.gr/FILES/SPEECHES/Hardouvelis_ASOEE_June_10.pdf (accessed on: 3/5/2015)

which in turn created a negative net position for mortgage borrowers. The fall in prices has led to delays in the payments to banks. Some households have found that the value of the property they bought dropped below the value of their loan and that it helped them not to repay the loan.

The buoyant rise in subprime loans has contributed to the build-up of the US real estate bubble, with no consistent bank robustness and control over credit risk. A clear example of the same expansionary lending policy is the spread of interest rate loans, ie loans in which the monthly payment was not the traditional interest rate, but only the interest and the capital were paid in full at maturity. The lack of borrowing from banks is justified, firstly, by the fact that the value of the collateral in a home loan until 2006 constantly increased and therefore the risk of bankruptcy in the household has not had expected losses for the banks. Secondly, it is also justified by the possibility of securitization of mortgages. With the securitization, the banks took out the loans and hence the credit risk from their balance sheet. The practice of securitization has multiplied since the mid-1990s, with the result that banks become mere intermediaries in the housing bureaucracy. Securitization also increased their liquidity to provide new housing or other loans¹¹.

Market efficiency combined with low interest rates has led to extreme behaviors. Financial institutions have made high-risk investments without properly pricing risk. The new profit-making culture in the banking sector based on revenue generation and the complex and non-transparent forms of securitization (eg CDOs) have exacerbated the situation. Investors who held such securities at high risk and at the same time highly rated by rating agencies lost much of their funds.

In particular, investment banks, those that created the securitisations or those that were significant intermediaries in their primary market, were the ones that mainly held the so-called “equity tranche” of securitisations, that is, the share with the highest risk of losses but also the highest expected return. These were found in the eye of the cyclone when the crisis erupted and the prices of securities began to fall¹².

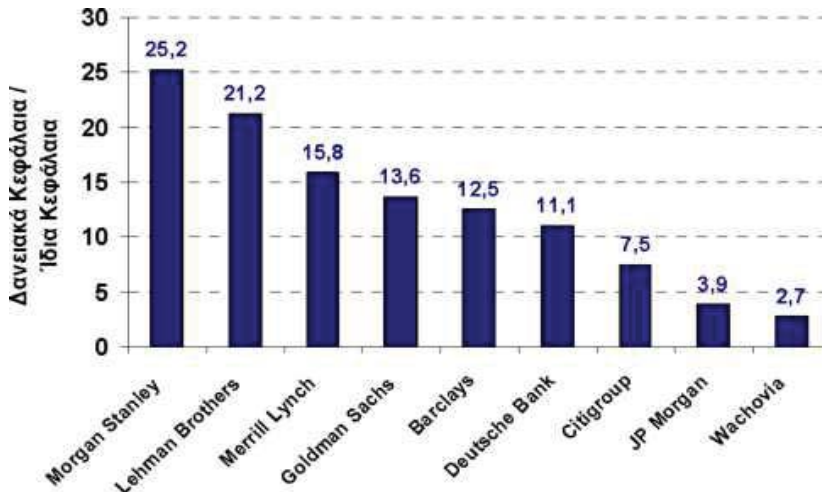
Excessive use of loan capital (Financial Leverage) was an additional factor of the financial crisis. In addition to the high leverage of households that is partly responsible for the large rise in house prices, high leverage (scarce equity and high borrowing relative to the assets of a financial institution) are also seen in

11 Hardouvelis, G. (2009, June 10). Economic Policies for Crisis Presentation at a workshop of the Economic Policy Studies Laboratory of the Athens University of Economics and Business. In http://www.hardouvelis.gr/FILES/SPEECHES/Hardouvelis_ASOEE_June_10.pdf (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

12 Hardouvelis, G. (2009, June 10). Economic Policies for Crisis Presentation at a workshop of the Economic Policy Studies Laboratory of the Athens University of Economics and Business. In http://www.hardouvelis.gr/FILES/SPEECHES/Hardouvelis_ASOEE_June_10.pdf (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

the US investment banks. The high leverage with short-term borrowing has been the cause of the rapid transmission of the crisis from the subprime loans market to the markets of many other assets.

Diagram 3 High leverage of Financial Institutions in 2006



Source: Bloomberg.

When securities prices held by investment banks dropped a lot, they lost large funds, which they borrowed, then they struggled to buy short-term financing from the markets and forced to sell further their other assets. The result of this stifling situation has led to the collapse of Lehman Brothers and Wachovia Bank, mergers of Merrill Lynch and Bear Sterns and nationalizations of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The above causes have also found fertile ground in the liberalized regulatory framework. The supervisory authorities in the United States gradually abolished many restrictive terms of the past. In 1999, with the abolition of the Glass Steagall Act, the reconciliation of traditional commercial banking with investment banking took place. The crisis in the US mainly caused by investment banks. Also, the Securities & Exchange Commission has elasticized the lending of investment banks, resulting in highly risk-taking investment with borrowed funds.

Each of these factors could not have brought the crisis on its own, but their combination has led to the deterioration of the situation and the emergence of a crisis that has expanded worldwide and still has dramatic consequences not only for financial institutions but also for the real economy countries.

4. The crisis in Europe

The crisis in the US has also been blinking in the European continent. Fortis is split up and partly nationalized. As well as Bradford & Bingley and Dexia. Bank rescues continue with Hypo Real Estate at a cost of 50 billion in the UK, with Royal Bank of Scotland with 37 billion to 60% going to state ownership, and Lloyds TSB and Hbos are merged and nationalized 40%. Northern Rock did not manage to overcome its problems and was nationalized. Austria is winding up a bank, Heta Asset Resolution AG.

The American Banks (eg Goldman Sachs) had created derivative products owned by English, French and Swiss banks. Goldman Sachs created CDO's (structured on home loans that he knew he would not repay) and some toxic derivatives (CDS) (which were essentially bets that CDOs would collapse) that had passed into the hands of major European banks such as German IKB and Royal Bank of Scotland creating huge losses.

Europe has not escaped the effects of the global financial crisis. The European Central Bank (ECB) expects write-downs of \$649 billion on securities and loans by euro area banks alone over the period 2007–10¹³.

European Union (EU) GDP fell by an estimated 4 per cent in 2009, the bloc's first recession since the early 1990s and its worst performance on record¹⁴. This downturn has had a dramatic effect on the labour market, with the number of people unemployed in the EU-27 rising by 5.4 million between March 2008 and May 2009¹⁵.

In Ireland, Great Britain and Spain, the explosion of the speculative bubble in the real estate market has led to huge losses of capital. While in Spain, due to the previous gigantic expansion of the construction sector, which is now bankruptcy, this phenomenon has led to an unprecedented eruption of unemployment, while in the Anglo-Saxon countries it has led to an almost complete collapse of the private financial sector, which could be addressed only with extensive partial nationalization. In Hungary, Estonia and Latvia, the economic crisis turned into a political crisis.

In the Scandinavian countries, Norway is an exception, thanks to its oil, while Denmark, Sweden and Finland have been hit hard by the economic downturn. However, the specific weight that the welfare state still maintains in these countries, with its "structural balances" (which hold high demand through benefits provided by social security contributions), still holds the economic

13 European Central Bank (2009a) *Financial Stability Review, June 2009* (Frankfurt A.M.: ECB), p. 103

14 Commission of the European Communities (2009a) 'Economic forecast, spring 2009'. *European Economy*, No. 3 (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the EC).

15 Eurostat (2009) 'Sharp Increase in Unemployment in the EU'. *Statistics in Focus*, 53/2009 (Luxembourg: Eurostat).

downturn still limited, although not to the extent that this was possible in the 1980s. The crisis reveals that the Scandinavian model is not intact. Germany is at the heart of the crisis because of its leading economic role. Because of this, its export industry is shaken by the decline in world trade. For the first time since the introduction of the euro, bond loans from Greece, Ireland, Spain, Italy and Portugal are subject to additional charges due to the risk they represent. Even France has to pay more for its government bonds than Germany. If one of the member states encounters extensive problems with its balance of payments, there will be a further step towards the destruction of the monetary union in general¹⁶.

In one year (2008-2009), Germany's GDP fell by 5%, France by 2.6%, Holland by 4%, Sweden by 5.2%, Ireland by 7.1% , Finland by 7.8%, Denmark by 4.9% and Spain by 3.5%. As was the case, the tax revenues collapsed. With the collapse of consumer markets in the United States, Europe has lost a major source of demand for its products.

In order to combat the financial crisis, we had the intervention of the authorities with rescue packages and the implementation of an expansionary fiscal policy, resulting in an increase in the public debt of the states. The ECB chose not to print money but to borrow from those who had funds available for investment. There was no money creation but redistribution of savings. Many insurance funds and private investors took part in this venture. As a result, the states and, by extension, the taxpayers have to bear the burden of recession, which has become a public debt.

In the four-year period 2007-2011, debt in the US increases by 37.2 points of GDP, in the United Kingdom by 38 GDP and in Greece by 43.8 points of GDP.

In the United Kingdom, the government has hurriedly announced the provision of a £ 50 billion financial package to boost the supervisory capital of the three major banks in the country. The ECB continued to provide large amounts of liquidity to banks in need, with various forms of facilitation. However, many countries have made a greater or even unlimited increase in this amount¹⁷.

The European Union does not have an internal mechanism to renew its surpluses so that surplus countries' profits are invested in the deficit to achieve growth and real economic convergence. Also, the member countries of Europe have large imbalances (same currency and different competitiveness). In contrast to the United States with a single fiscal and monetary policy, there is no real convergence in the Eurozone among its member countries, which has the effect of

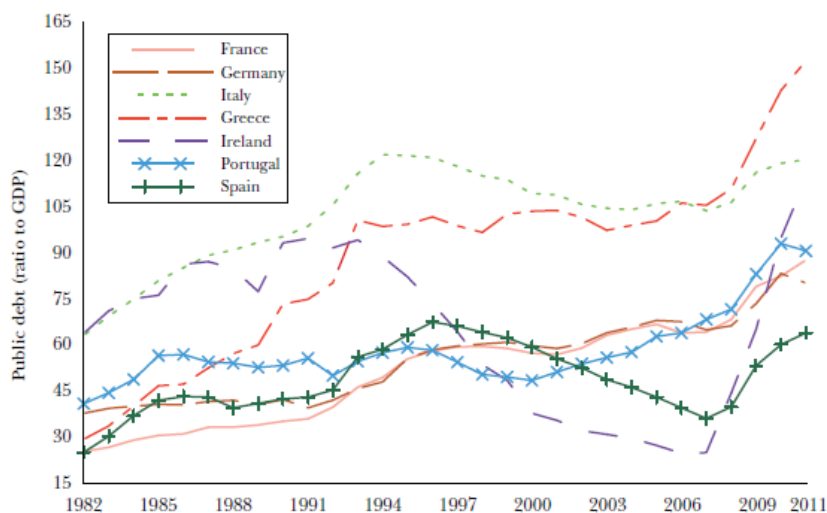
16 Bissoff, G. & Edge, P. (2009). Europe in crisis - En route to rupture? Transform, (No 5). In <http://www.transformnetwork.net/el/periodiko/periodiko052009/news/detail/Journal/europe-in-the-crisis-on-the-road-to-breakup> (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

17 ALPHA BANK, (2009). Financial Bulletin, Quarterly Issue (Issue 108), In https://www.alpha.gr/files/infoanalyses/oikon_deltio_108.pdf (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

mitigating inequalities. Germany and the Netherlands have generated significant surpluses while keeping domestic demand low. These surpluses were borrowed in the rest of the Eurozone countries, creating inflationary trends, increasing their deficits and thus their external debt. In 2009, the cumulative trade deficit of Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal was estimated at \$ 122.5 billion, while the surplus in Germany was \$ 109.7 billion.

Public debt for the aggregate euro area did not, at least at first glance, appear to be a looming problem in the mid 2000s. During the previous decade, the euro area and the United States shared broadly similar debt dynamics. For example, the ratio of gross public debt to GDP in 1995 was about 60 percent for the United States and 70 percent for the set of countries that would later form the euro area, based on my calculations with data from the IMF Public Debt Database. In both the United States and the euro area, the debt/GDP ratios declined in the late 1990s, but had returned to mid 1990s levels by 2007. The debt/GDP ratios then climbed during the crisis, growing more quickly for the United States than for the euro area¹⁸.

Diagram 4.1 The Evolution of Public Debt, 1982-2011



Source: Data from IMF Public Debt Database

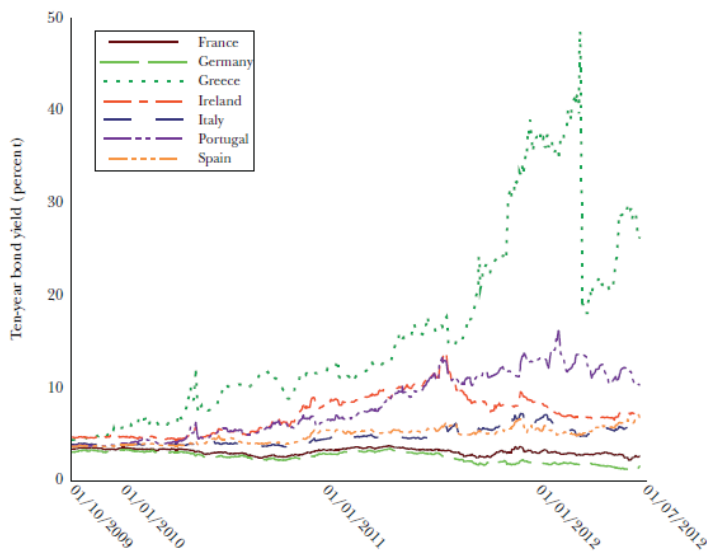
The debt crisis that hit the Eurozone countries has caused rising unemployment and declining employment with negative repercussions on

18 In <http://e-jep.org> (accessed on: 20-6-2019)

the sustainability of the social security system. The particularly high levels of unemployment have shown how vulnerable the productive model has been so far and have highlighted the great inequalities between the countries of the European Union and the inability of the European Employment and Social Protection Strategy to respond with minimum proficiency to its declared objectives. Some countries (eg Norway, Germany, Sweden) have only been affected in the short term and have returned to low levels of unemployment shortly, while in other countries, such as Greece, Spain and Hungary, unemployment levels widen, widening social inequalities and tensions¹⁹.

The adverse developments were reflected in rising spreads on sovereign bonds. For example, the annual spread on ten-year sovereign bond yields between Germany and countries such as Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and Italy was close to zero before the crisis. Sovereign debts from these countries are all denominated in a common currency, the euro, so differences in expected yield mainly represent perceived credit risks and differences in volatility²⁰.

Diagram 4.2 Yields on Ten-Year Sovereign Bonds (% , October 2009 to June 2012)



Source: Philip R. Lane, Datastream

19 Labor Institute - Center for Vocational Training GSEE.-ADEDY, (2014, September 4). Annual Report 2014: Greek Economy and Employment. (p.227). In <http://www.inegsee.gr/ekdosi/etisia-ekthesi-2014-i-elliniki-ikonomia-ke-i-apascholisi/> (accessed on: 20-6-2019)

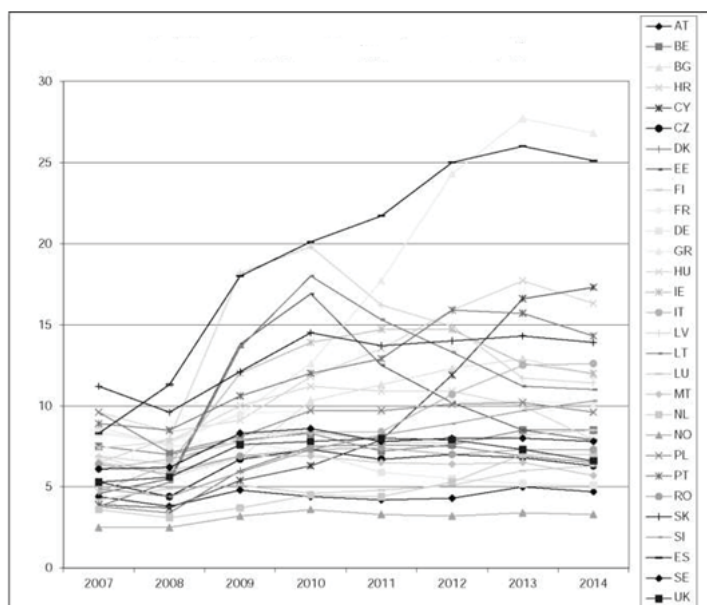
20 Philip R. Lane, The European Sovereign Debt Crisis, Journal of Economic Perspectives, Volume 26, Number 3, 2012, p. 56

5. Effects of the Economic Crises

During the crisis the unemployment rate in Norway and Sweden is below 5%. In the Netherlands, Malta, Luxembourg and Germany, unemployment ranges between 5-10%. In Bulgaria, Slovakia, Italy and Ireland, unemployment ranges between 10-15%. In Greece, Spain and Hungary, we find very high levels ranging from just under 20% to 28%.

The economic crisis in the European Union has resulted in the loss of 8.5 million jobs in 2009-2010, as opposed to the 9.5 million jobs created in 2006-2008. Unemployment is further rising, accounting for 12.0% of the total workforce of the Eurozone countries and 10.8% of the EU. The evolution of unemployment confirms the prediction that after the economic crisis the gradual rate of recovery of the European economy, would be the result of a high level of unemployment (unemployed recovery). It is significant that at the end of 2013 there are six million jobs less than in 2008. At the same time, the failure of the countries of Europe to maintain a steady pace of recovery, uncertainty about the economic outlook and economic developments in several of its member countries, especially in the European South, make the cyclical development of unemployment a long-term one with negative consequences for the labor market, production and social cohesion.

Diagram 5.1 Evolution of unemployment in EU countries 2007-14

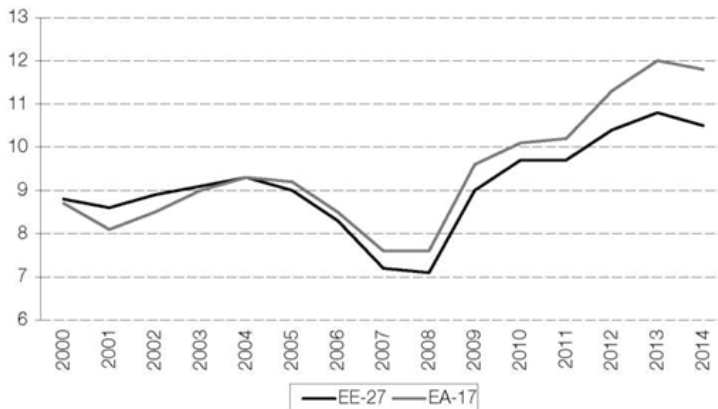


Source: Eurostat

Unemployment in the European Union in 2013 amounted to 26.4 million, rising by one million compared to 2012. A similar picture is also seen in the Eurozone countries with the unemployed reaching 19.1 million in 2013 from 18.1 million in 2012. The situation on the EU labor market is going to be extremely serious. Indeed, in several countries in the south, prominent of Greece and Spain has received dramatic characteristics with nearly one in three of the labor force being unemployed²¹.

The decline in wages and incomes in Europe results in a deterioration in working conditions with further increases in unemployment, resulting in conditions of further deterioration and recession in the European economy. Greater unemployment is seen in countries where economic adjustment programs are being implemented. Youth unemployment, which is a major problem for all Member States. It shows the distance between employment and unemployment in the different Member States of the European Union.

Diagram 5.2 Developments in the unemployment rate in EU-27 and NA-17



Source: Ameco Database.

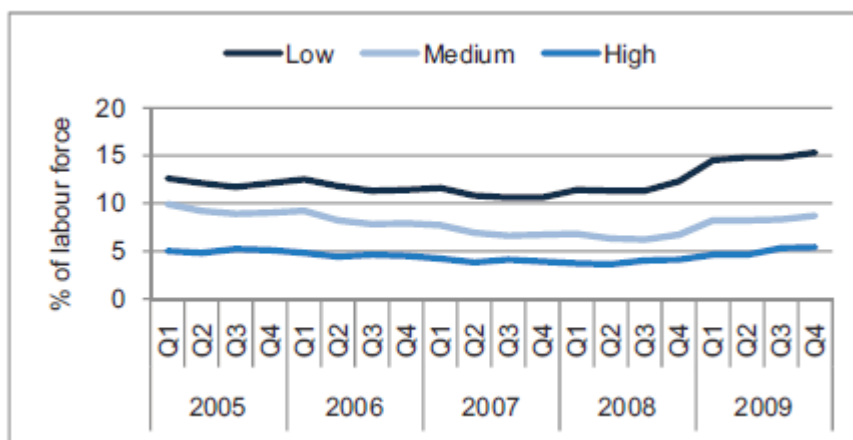
Youth unemployment levels are twice as high as the overall unemployment rate in all countries, and differences between countries are less apparent as they rise greatly, apart from the trend of the general level of unemployment. Exceptions include Norway, the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden, where the unemployment rate for young people aged 15-24 is below 10%. At the other end, Greece and Spain with youth unemployment levels exceed 50%, followed by

21 Labor Institute - Center for Vocational Training GSEE.-ADEDY, (2014, September 4). Annual Report 2014: Greek Economy and Employment. (p.260). In <http://www.inegsee.gr/ekdosi/etisia-ekthesi-2014-i-elliniki-ikonomia-ke-i-apascholisi/> (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

Hungary, where youth unemployment is close to 50%²².

During the economic downturn educational attainment had a strong influence on job security. The unemployment rates of low-skilled workers increased by 3.9 percentage points, while the unemployment rate of medium-skilled and high-skilled workers only increased by 1.9 and 1.7 percentage points respectively. This variation can again be attributed to the strength with which different economic sectors were hit by the economic crisis. The manufacturing and production sector, which mainly employs low and medium-skilled workers, was hit strongest, leading to a higher increase of unemployment for the corresponding skill groups. The variation of unemployment for certain skill levels highlights that the grade of substitutability for labour decides about the reaction of unemployment to an economic downturn. Easily substitutable labour will be affected most strongly²³.

Diagram 5.3 Unemployment rates in the EU 27, by educational attainment



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Employment policies have been geared towards measures to increase work flexibility by facilitating redundancies, part-time work, enhancing uninsured employment, reducing the conditions for payment of unemployment benefits, subsidies for temporary employment and unemployed people's employment programs. At the same time, employment costs, while rising due to the economic

22 Labor Institute - Center for Vocational Training GSEE.-ADEDY, (2014, September 4). Annual Report 2014: Greek Economy and Employment. (p.230).

In <http://www.inegsee.gr/ekdosi/etisia-ekthesi-2014-i-elliniki-ikonomia-ke-i-apascholisi/> (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

23 Vienna Institute of Demography, The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Labour and Education in Europe, 2010, p. 5

crisis, have declined in all Member States by plunging the European economy into recession and rising unemployment. The reduction in employment and social protection expenditure, particularly in the southern countries including Greece, has led to the transformation of the economic crisis into a humanitarian one, widening the inequality and cohesion of the European Union more.

In the context of the austerity policies applied in European countries, it exerts strong pressure on wages and collective bargaining, which either takes the form of direct direct intervention in the amount and level of pay or is pursued indirectly through system reforms, mechanisms and wage-setting procedures, with the main aim of decentralizing collective bargaining. This is particularly the case in the countries implementing adjustment programs under the supervision of the Troika (or the International Monetary Fund), but also in countries in an ‘informal’ memorandum where the European Central Bank sets the reforms in business as a condition for its intervention in the secondary government bond market. Although the Treaty of Lisbon stipulates that salaries are explicitly excluded from Community competence, the European Commission, the European Central Bank (and the International Monetary Fund) intervene directly in the countries in an adjustment program to request or to impose wage freeze or salary reductions (public sector, Minimum Wage) as well as reforms that weaken the institutions of collective bargaining at national and sectoral levels in exchange for the financial “dissemination” of the states²⁴.

The fiscal policy pursued in Europe did not leave the Social Security System unaffected. To address the budget deficit, measures such as increasing retirement ages, changing the way in which pensions are calculated and the working life of insured persons have been introduced. Increasing retirement age limits the level of enterprise productivity and is at the expense of competitiveness, growth and GDP. Thus, rising unemployment, aging populations, rising life expectancy, declining growth, rising public deficit and debt levels, and falling employment have made the state of pension systems’ viability worse in the Member States - Member of the European Union.

The effects of the crisis on the education sector are more difficult to assess. Because of the rigid temporal structure of education systems, the effects themselves are slower to unfold, and secondly because statistical indicators for the education sector are generally only monitored annually and published with delay. Much educational spending is non-discretionary, and changes to funding formulas, mandated staffing ratios or teacher salaries may require legislative action, with the associated delays.

24 Kapsalis, A. & Triantafyllou, C. (coordinator Kouzis, G.), (2014). INE notebooks, Developments in collective bargaining and wages in 2013. In http://inegsee.gr/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Meleti-42_-Eidiki-ekdosi-Tetradia-INE2.pdf (accessed on: 3-5-2015)

At a time of eroding tax bases and enormous public deficits, it is not surprising that in many instances public educational investments have been suspended, such as the construction of sports fields and purchase of laptop computers in Poland²⁵, or seen severe cuts, as in Hungary or Latvia for instance²⁶, the latter having seen teacher salaries being reduced by twenty percent in 2009, despite the fact that a teacher shortage has been diagnosed²⁷.

Indeed, in many countries, in Europe as elsewhere, “education is an integral part of recovery plans”, and these countries have demonstrated a commitment to increasing funding for education. For example, in Ireland, the Department of Education and Science received and increased budget allocation for 2009 compared to 2008 one of only two government departments to do so, and several European countries have allocated large sums to the construction, refurbishment or maintenance of school buildings²⁸.

In Europe the crisis can act for enrollment in higher education in different and potentially contradictory ways. Students who rely on financial support from their parents if they do not face a loss in their income due to the crisis and rising unemployment. Access to student loans can be made more difficult under restrictive lending policies. On the other hand, young people may face an increased incentive to enroll in tertiary education as an alternative to unemployment, seeking to either increase their qualifications or wait for the crisis to pass.

Where schools are funded by municipalities, changes in funding can vary greatly from locality to locality and, it is possible for there to be increased national investment, yet spending cuts at school level. Universities’ autonomous budgets are also under pressure. In countries where higher education institutions are financially autonomous, university endowments invested in the stock market are known to have suffered substantial losses.

Past experience shows that demand for tertiary education generally rises during the economic downturn. Empirical evidence (OECD) suggests that the full range of demand for tertiary education has increased.

In Norway, Sweden, in the United Kingdom, university applications for the academic year 2010-11 were reported by the UCAS 2010 to have increased by more than twenty percent last year. Similarly, in Ireland the applications of

25 EI (2009a). Education: The Cost of the Crisis. A study on the effects of loans from international financial institutions on the education sector in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Brussels: Education International (EI).

26 EI (2009b). Brief overview: the impact of the financial and economic crisis on education in CEE countries: A summary of answers received to four key questions sent to EI affiliates attending the High Level Seminar & initial responses to the follow-up survey on the impact of the crisis on education. Brussels: Education International (EI).

27 Eurydice (2010). Eurybase Database. In :http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php (Accessed 22/06/10)

28 Bray, M. and Varghese, N. V. (2009). Education and the economic crisis. In IIEP Newsletter, volume XXVII. UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Paris, p.2

“mature” students increased by more than thirty percent between 2008 and 2009 (OECD 2010).

One segment of the education sector that may be expected to be tied particularly closely to the state of the economy is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), especially where employers play a major direct role, such as in Germany. As such, changing patterns of educational investment by private enterprises are important to take into account. A priori, one might expect “apprenticeship offers [to be] declining because of bankruptcy and a decline in business activity”²⁹.

According to OECD (2010) reports, the sector appears to have been negatively affected in Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Hungary. By contrast, in Germany, a significant shortage of training places as a result of the crisis could not (yet) be observed.

6. Conclusion

European economic, fiscal and monetary policy makers, under the pressure of surplus countries, require Member States to implement a rigorous fiscal discipline policy by increasing taxes and reducing incomes, without creating conditions for the growth and production of primary surpluses to convert their budgets from deficits to surpluses. However, the policy of “internal depreciation” in the member states, which is a cumulative process of successive wage and price reduction cycles, is changing into a process of recession and a rebounding deterioration in the standard of living of citizens through the institutionalized introduction of shrinking labor, income and social rights³⁰.

A multi-speed Europe is being created, which exacerbates and aggravates the inequities of its members. A Europe of unequal growth, consisting of the weak productive, technological and social countries of the South as opposed to the developed countries of central and northern Europe.

Member States are currently opting for a promising and embarrassing method of collecting and ineffective logic to finance the deficit and securing resources in ways (reducing retirement benefits and aggravating the conditions and conditions of retirement) widening the social deficit and shrinking, the conditions of social cohesion and convergence, gradually transforming the European model of the welfare state into a model of charity state³¹.

The crisis in Europe has been transformed from a fiscal debt crisis

29 Hugonnier, B. (2009). Innovative investments in education in OECD countries. In IIEP Newsletter, volume XXVII. UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Paris, p. 12

30 Robolis, S. (2012). Economic crisis and the Social State. Thessaloniki: Spotlight, p. 61

31 Robolis, S. Social Security: Findings-Prospects-Proposals. In <http://www.robolis.gr> (accessed on: 3-5-2019)

into a crisis of the Eurozone and soon into a complex social and political crisis whose end and consequences are not yet predictable. The global financial crisis hit the EU at a time of growing diversity, disorientation and local disparities when its polarizing single market was not balanced and combined with common or synchronized economic policies. Nor was it expanded because of de facto solidarity from the center to its periphery. Facing a deficit of a legitimate and accountable supranational government, capable leadership and crisis management capabilities, the EU is in a state of self-destruction³².

The countries of Southern Europe (Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy) implementing economic adjustment programs have been more severely hit by the effects of the economic crisis. The implementation of strict restrictive programs in these countries, from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Commission (European Commission) and the European Central Bank (ECB), has exacerbated the phenomena they wanted to fight (high fiscal deficits high public debt, problems in the financial sector).

Europe is divided into zones and spheres of influence and the vision of convergence has been replaced by the relentless pursuit of the powerful to diverge as far as possible from its “economic” deconstructed South to transform into satellites of a centralized European (German-led) guardianship³³.

The rescue plans promoted by the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, in the form of loans, are, among other things, institutional European austerity and ‘time’ platforms by the Community institutions, which are exploited to the full by markets and speculators³⁴.

The policies implemented in the European Union are aimed at stabilizing the European economy by reducing wages, incomes, by deregulating labor relations, the Social Security System and education. Unsuccessful policies that not only did not solve the problem, but also led to a stalemate in many Member States.

Europe’s exposure to the crisis challenges our understanding of the role of banks and financial institutions in European models of capitalism and the complex relationship between economic, monetary and financial integration within the EU. The EU’s response to these events shows Europe to be both a global vanguard and a victim of global circumstances and invites further reflection on why, from the point of view of their legitimacy, European policy-makers appear to be damned if they do act and damned if they do not. The impact of the crisis

32 . Ferenc Miszlivetz (2012). Europe’s multiple crises. (Translated by Angeliki Nevsehirlioglou), *D0lkelet Eur0pa - South-East Europe International Relations Quarterly*, Volume 3. No.1 p.8.

33 Mitropoulos, A. (2012). At the mercy of the Memorandum. (page 45), Athens: Livani.

34 Robolis, S. (2012). Economic crisis and the Social State. Thessaloniki: Spotlight, p. 64

on EU decisionmaking provides an opportunity to explore further the scope and limits of decentralized decision-making and to understand the extent to which economic and financial interdependence can be a driver of, and a deterrent for, European integration. For these reasons and others, the global financial crisis will undoubtedly live long in the debates among students of European political economy³⁵.

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35 Dermot Hodson, Lucia Quaglia, *European Perspectives on the Global Financial Crisis: Introduction*, JCMS 2009, Volume 47, Number 5, p. 950

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Author's CV

Konstantine Memos is a member of the educational and scientific staff (EDIP) at the Department of Social Policy of the Panteion University, in Social Security and Reserve Management. He graduated as an Engineer of Biomechanics Information from the Technological Educational Institution of West Macedonia and received his Master's Degree in Finance Analysis for Cooperate Members from the University of Piraeus. He is Financial Engineering researcher in the management of social security reserves. He has lectured Stock Market Information as an assistant Professor in the Technological Educational Institution of West Macedonia. He has also worked as Finance Analyst in the international Finance Group and as an IT Technical Assistant in an IT company. He is also author of articles in scientific journals.

Menelaou Niki

Is there really a substitute for personal contact?

Abstract

The paper examines the extent to which online communication can serve as a substitute to personal contact. At the beginning it focuses on the positive outcomes of the evolution of technology in communication. Subsequently, it discusses several negative aspects of communication via the New Media, like the use of abbreviations and deviant uses of language, the loss of ‘standards’ in writing, as well as the great speed in which people communicate. A lot of discussion takes place regarding the fact that physical presence, the familiarity and warmth of the voice, touch and facial expressions cannot be effectively substituted by a visual message passed on through the computer. The role of emojis and possible misunderstandings regarding their meaning and the importance of the achievement of a deep understanding of the meaning of a message by its receiver are also accounted for. In general, the need for quality in communication is annotated.

Key words: Language, Social Networking, Online Communication, Emojis, Quality.

1. Introduction

“Some of the best decisions and insights come from hallway and cafeteria discussions, meeting new people, and impromptu team meetings.”

Marissa Mayer, CEO Yahoo

With the nullifying of space and time that the advent of the New Media has brought, discussions over communication issues stress the enormous progress and beneficial outcomes to society and individuals who are today able to communicate with others, raise issues, participate in dialogues, discuss, advertise, inform and express themselves in every possible digital way just by touching a button. Additionally, since such interaction energizes participation by large numbers of users, a sense of community is created to which people often tend to cling. This technological success has been widely recognised by many scholars and internet users.

However, it is interesting to discuss to which extent such a kind of communication can serve as a substitute to personal contact. One can argue that humans are ‘designed’ to communicate and interact via their five senses and excluding whichever sense deprives them of communication in its full magnitude.

Which are the consequences and which areas of communication can be negatively affected when someone restricts himself/herself in communicating electronically?

2. Language and Social Networking

The use of language in social networking is a major issue for discussion. Too much engagement with the social media affects the way we use language on a daily basis. We share more personal information, but also communicate with larger audiences. “Our communication styles consequently become more informal and more open, and this seeps into other areas of life and culture. When writing on social media, we are also more succinct, get to the point quicker, operate within the creative constraints of 140 characters on Twitter, or aspire to brevity with blogs” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2017).¹ The impact of social networking on language is huge. Every day communication patterns have become quicker with the use of shorter or abbreviated terms; this is not always positive as grammar and syntax errors have occupied oral or written expressions in a threatening way particularly for the younger generations. If one had the opportunity to be taught his mother language and any other language properly and just uses social networking language on the web, the danger of distorting language is not so imminent. However, what

1 Oxford Dictionaries, *How social Media is Changing Language*. In: <http://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/2014/06/social-media-changing-language/> (accessed on 15/9/2017)

experience from the web has taught us is that children, teenagers and young people who get used to such a language forget or refuse to speak and write properly. As a result, they are facing the danger of lacking the most important elements of education passed through generations through the correct use of one's language and particularly they face the danger of lacking communication skills. Crystal (Crystal, D., 2008)² argues on this phenomenon: 'The popular belief is that texting has evolved as a twenty-first-century phenomenon as a highly distinctive graphic style, full of abbreviations and deviant uses of language, used by a young generation that doesn't care about standards'.

2.1. A personal meeting means an important meeting

If a person travels to meet someone, especially from a distance, this means that the meeting is important to him/ her, as time and effort are required to make it happen. If the meeting is a professional one, then some preparation may be needed and ways to generate discussion and facilitate the communication amongst the interested parties are planned. If the meeting may raise sentimental issues, again an emotional preparation is needed in order to cope with positive or negative feelings that may be generated during discussions. Other types of meetings and gatherings that involve a number of persons surely are considered important by those who participate, otherwise they would simply not bother to attend them.

Regarding professional meetings, Marc Prosser³, CEO of TravelCarrots, argues that "the five minutes before a meeting starts and after a meeting ends provides as much valuable information as the meeting. During these "off the record" communications which usually occur face-to-face, people feel more comfortable sharing their true thoughts". Prosser gives the example of YAHOO! CEO Marissa Mayer who insisted that YAHOO!'s employees went to work instead of working from home. Her decision attacked a strong belief that is held by a growing number of people, the belief that "Electronic communication like video conferencing, phone calls and emails can be a substitute for in-person communication". As Prosser argues, in the e-mail to employees, Mayer suggested that working at home does not yield the same results as personal interactions and quotes Mayer: "*Some of the best decisions and insights come from hallway and cafeteria discussions, meeting new people, and impromptu team meetings.*"

There are many examples in real life when individuals have managed to persuade others on important issues, on which they had different and in many cases opposite opinions, to share their own views and approaches solely through the power of oral speech accompanied by gestures and facial expressions, which

2 Crystal, D. (2008). *Texting: The Gr8 Db8*. New York: Oxford University Press

3 Prosser, M. (2013) *Electronic Communication No Substitute for Personal Contact*. In: <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4243-personal-communication-necessary.html> (accessed on 15/9/2018)

strengthened or even enchanted their speech.

Wide and instant communication worldwide through the internet and the social media can result to the exclusion of the individual from the fuller kind of communication, which is the physical, personal communication; it cancels the effect of non-verbal communication like the kinetic communication, that is communication with the body (movement, posture etc.), with the eyes (expressions indicating intentions or feelings) and with the face (expression sentiments with face muscles' movements e.g. joy, surprise, anger, fear etc.).

According to Verderber⁴, *paralinguistic* communication is also cancelled, that is communication with non- phonetic sounds, but with the verbal characteristics of the tone of the voice, the volume, the rhythm and its quality and with sounds interrupting discussion but imply reactions and meanings (e.g. hm... or em...before a phrase or a sentence). This is spoken communication that does not involve words. Also, when face to face communication is absent, the effect of the appearance of the individual is nullified (physique and clothing), touch (tapping on the shoulder, hugging etc.) and allocation of time in communication do not exist. Additionally, the way space is used in communication is cancelled, in the sense of how near one sits to another during conversation or in the sense of the way someone avoids to sit or stand next to a person etc.

3. Senses and Online Communication

Physical presence, familiarity and warmth of the voice, touch and facial expression cannot be effectively substituted by a visual message passed on through the computer. Even video messages don't provide the same level of information about what a person is thinking or feeling as a face-to-face meeting. People tend to alter their behaviour and control their expressions and gestures, even the tone of their voice, when they know that they are communicating through a camera, so their body language is not as genuine as when they interact in person. Positive or negative feelings do have an effect on the physical plane surrounding an individual and this can be sensed by those nearby in a face-to-face contact.

On the contrary, in modern online communication, from the five human senses only vision and hearing are involved. However, as stated above, human beings have been created to perceive their environment with the use of all five senses. The full perception of the environment or to be more precise a better perception of the environment (since there are visual planes, sound vibrations and elements in the atmosphere that human senses are unable to capture), can be effected with perception using the five senses simultaneously. As a result, the best possible participation in the environment can take place with the use of all

4 Verderber F.R. (1998). *Speech for effective Communication*. New York:Holt McDougal

senses, so by definition the media cancel stimulations that may play an extremely important role in the decoding of messages.

Evaluating and understanding the messages emitted through body language is a whole area of knowledge on its own. For example, the meaning of face micro expressions and subtle expressions is regarded as an area of expertise in body language. Dr Paul Ekman,⁵ supports the view that face to face interaction fosters a greater sense of personal connection and talks about the importance of mapping the vocabulary of gestures, providing a tool for measuring facial expressions, and proving the evidence of their universality. Body language can be used to approach people, to soothe people, to persuade people, to create a first impression and to accomplish many other intended goals regarding personal communication. Body movement is also important in expressing intentions and in understanding the intentions of others, as they reveal what is in the mind of the moving individual.

However, who takes the time and effort to look into this reality today, when everything is sacrificed for the sake of rapid, robotic and defective way of living that the media and particularly the New Media have brought about, most of which aspire to a short-term financial profit with the use of the tool of immediate information? And the term ‘defective’ is used to describe modern living with the New Media, as people, especially the younger ones, have forgotten the joy and value of taking a walk in the park or in the woods, going fishing, staying outdoors and enjoying the beauty of nature of which they are a part and to which they belong. Being restricted in a room with the company of the internet deprives an individual of the understanding of the real meaning of his/her existence. There is no doubt that nobody can survive on his/her own as everybody is part of the ‘whole’, which is the world that includes everything and everyone that surrounds us.

4. The notion of ‘care’ in communication

The defective way of living generated by our resistance to living as part of our natural surroundings and the lack of effective communication has a negative effect on the personal, social and professional development of the individual. For example, teachers, sales persons, doctors and people working for the media can be successful only if they possess excellent communication skills. The student, the buyer, the patient and spectators or audiences, need to be convinced about the objectivity and the quality of the service, product or information offered to them and feel secure that they are taken care of. The notion of “care” is the key for success in any service offered by either a person, an institution or society in general. Caring is an excellent way of enhancing communication since if care

5 Ekman, P., (2016). *Nonverbal Messages: Cracking the Code: My Life's Pursuit*. New York: Amazon

is experienced by an individual through the actions or through the behaviour of another individual or a social group, a feeling of trust is generated among those involved; and trust means being able to communicate more openly with others and in more depth. Communication in its turn yields huge benefits for an individual.

The famous Hollywood actor Woody Allen once said that: “If all my possessions were taken from me with one exception, I would hope to keep my power of communication — for by it I would regain all the rest”.

5. Communication before the Technological Evolution and Today’s Emojis

Before the advent of technology, communication in humans manifested in several ways, first and foremost through speech. According to Lieberman and McCarthy (2007), human language and *speech* is believed to have *evolved* between 100,000 and 50,000 years ago⁶ despite the fact that our species originated about 200,000 years ago. Apart from speech, communication was enhanced with cave paintings from the Upper Palaeolithic period which was the first form of depicted communication, i.e. communication could endure, as it could be preserved and as it was not just flying words ‘*verba volant, scripta manent*’. This figurative art was a way of expression and sending messages. The earliest of such messages are the paintings of the *Chauvet Cave* in France. They date to earlier than 30,000 BCE (*Upper Palaeolithic*) according to radiocarbon dating, although some researchers believe the *drawings* are too advanced for this period and question this age.

Another kind of communication were symbols that could represent ideas, ideograms, as well as pictograms, i.e. pictures and finally writing, which was at first based on pictograms and ideograms.

However, such kind of communication, despite its importance in giving us valuable information on primitive human life, does not provide clues in detail about interaction among individuals. Visual and written communication can be a fast way of sending messages to others, but it is impersonal; and being impersonal, most of the time does not render it successful.

What happens today with the various symbols or ideograms used in social networking?

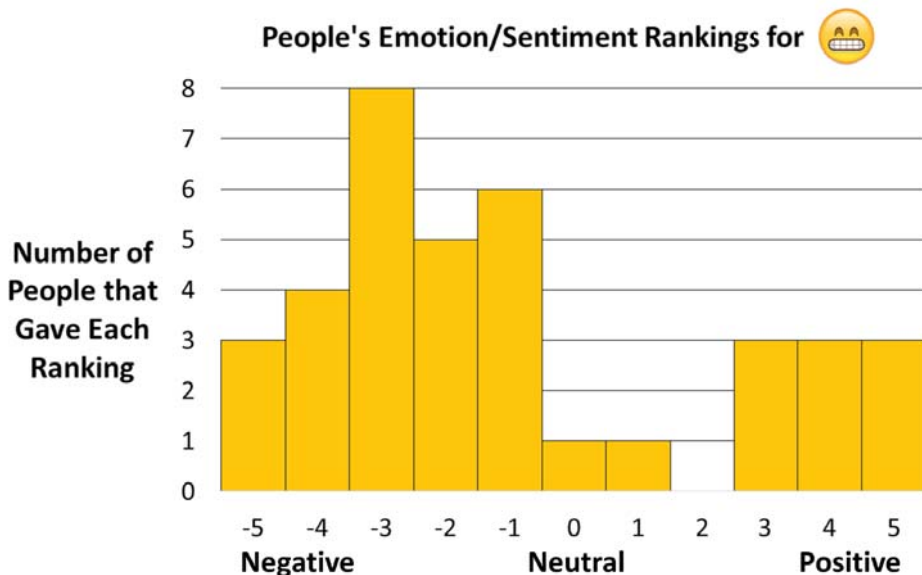
Today on online communication we have the example of reacting to posts on the social media through the use of emojis, (from the Japanese words *e* which means picture and *moji* which means character) i.e. the ideograms and smileys that serve as ways of expressing reactions to actions or ideas on the web.

6 Lieberman, P. and McCarthy, R. (2007). Tracking the Evolution of language and Speech-Comparing vocal tracks to identify Speech capabilities. In: <http://www.cog.brown.edu/people/liberman/pdfFiles/Lieberman,%20P.%20&%20McCarthy,%20R.%202007.%20Tracking%20the%20evolution%20of.pdf> (accessed on 15/10/2018)

These small pictures are becoming increasingly popular particularly in western societies and they are constantly enriched with new characters and symbols. Such ideograms may indeed convey meanings and expressions. However what emojis do not succeed in doing most of the times is to express the extent to which a certain sentiment is experienced. Additionally, other communication problems with the use of emojis have been noted. Research has shown that emojis are often misunderstood. The viewer may give to an emoji a different meaning than what it is actually supposed to mean; or the user who receives an emoji may not see it in the same way as the sender does, according to Miller (2016)⁷:

“One finding that really surprised us is that a good deal of the potential for miscommunication may come from *different interpretations of the exact same emoji rendering*. In other words, two people looking at the exact same emoji on the same smartphone platform can interpret that emoji quite differently. For example, in the case of the Apple grinning face with smiling eyes emoji , there were some people who thought it was more positive while others thought it was more negative. The figure below shows the distribution of emotion/sentiment rankings for the grinning face with smiling eyes”:

Table 1:



7 Miller, Hannah (April 5, 2016). Investigating the Potential for Miscommunication Using Emoji, GroupLens. In: <https://groupLens.org/blog/investigating-the-potential-for-miscommunication-using-emoji/> (accessed on 12/11/2018).

As a result, the argument that face to face communication is the best way of interacting with others and most importantly being completely understood sounds true and rational.

6. The significance of being heard and being taken into consideration

People often attend lectures but most of them listen only to a small part of what is actually being said. When someone speaks, it does not necessarily mean that he is taken into consideration. If the speaker manages to generate feelings in his/her audience, automatically this means that he/she is taken into consideration. Even the most inspirational and eloquent speaker may not succeed in passing on messages if he/she does not succeed in creating an extent of emotional state which serves as a bond between speaker and audience. Physical presence, including the expressions, gestures and the way someone moves are also important, as already noted. If nobody takes the speaker into consideration, then there is no point in giving lectures or trying to consult or persuade others on some issue.

In other words, face-to-face communication is the most important form of communication as long as it has a ‘bonding’ effect on both participants. Such an effect allows for a more in-depth transmission of a message and a deep understanding of its meaning and importance by the receiver.

When someone meets a person, usually he/she gets information about his/her age, social status, occupation, where he/she lives, etc. Later on, a more personal state begins when the two people interact and start a dialogue sharing experiences, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, etc. In this face-to-face communication pattern, the ‘bonding’ effect stated above, makes people communicate in a less formal manner and with a friendly attitude. Finally, the persons involved in a state of communication, either imply that they will meet again in the future or they simply do not make any future plans, as they do not wish to continue their interaction.

7. The need for a reduction of uncertainty in communication

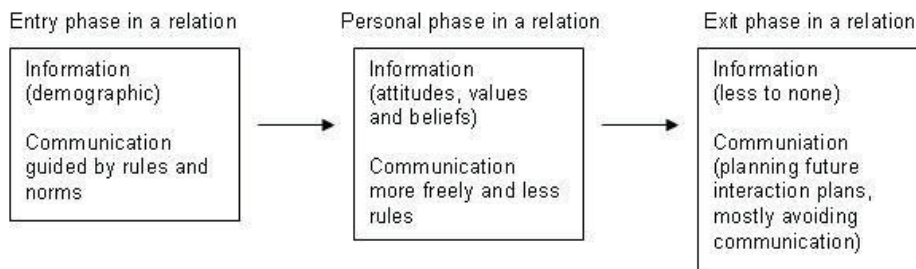
Heath & Bryant (1999)⁸ argue that people communicate and interact in order to reduce uncertainty and present their “Uncertainty Reduction Model” which consists of three developmental stages: Entry, Personal and Exit.

Comparing the phases between face to face meetings and online communication, one could argue that the entry phase is clear and straightforward, as one can study the profile of a person with a social media account and get

8 Heath, R.L. & Bryant, J. (2000). *Human Communication Theory and Research*. Concept, Context and Challenges. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

informed about him/her. As a result, the researcher of a social media profile may be satisfied if it is compatible with rules and norms that apply in social systems or he /she may be dissatisfied and act accordingly.

Table 2:



However, users in many cases post false information about themselves, or exaggerating comments about their ways of living and actions or even create false profiles; in this respect, the entry phase is an illusion. The second and personal phase suffers online as it lacks all the elements of communicating through all the other senses apart from vision and additionally, it ignores non-verbal communication, as already discussed.

Another important argument is the fact that when communication is not face to face, it is much easier for misunderstandings to take place and not be resolved whereas in personal contacts it is easier to justify certain behavioural patterns, as one can retract at once. The case of misunderstanding the real meaning of an emoji, was mentioned above. Now, what happens with the third and final phase? The third phase suffers as well, as one cannot avoid getting messages i.e. accepting future interaction unless he/she blocks the other person, whereas it is much easier to plan future interaction with written messages. As a result, we may state that problems in communication are taken a step further and become more apparent with online communication.

8. Quality in online communication

If someone is having an online conversation that has been left halfway and needs an explanation or a reply on a matter that is of importance to him/her, then a few hours of waiting for a response may seem a really long time. With face-to-face conversations one can more effectively lead the other person to give an immediate response.

Also, written responses take a much longer time to reach their receivers

than oral responses and they may sometimes be much briefer than oral ones as it is harder to give details in writing. In such cases, online conversations tend to be incomplete compared to personal ones and they lack the quality of communication gained by face to face interaction.

Bonetti, Campbell and Gilmore (2010)⁹ made a survey with six hundred and twenty-six students aged between 10 and 16 years of age on the differences in the usage of online communication patterns between children and adolescents with and without self-reported loneliness and social anxiety. They found out that “children and adolescents who self-reported being lonely, communicated online significantly more frequently about personal and intimate topics than those who did not self-report being lonely. The former were motivated to use online communication significantly more frequently to compensate for their weaker social skills to meet new people”. In other words, the research did show that online communication helped lonely persons to meet their needs to interact with others. However, the researchers suggested further research to find out if this fulfilment of their need to interact indeed helped their real life or offline social relationships, arguing that relationships in “real life” are important for children’s and adolescents’ psychosocial development.

A few years later, Sharma (2018)¹⁰ argues that with the new technologies in communication “love and emotions are absent from communication. People just forward the content, communication is manipulative”. Sharma goes on to state that technology affects the peace of mind in the sense that users often use the New Media to show off their power in terms of luxury, money, reputation, position etc. He also argues that people are so busy that they forget their practical side of life. He gives the example of how being busy on a mobile phone while communicating with a person reduces the quality of communication between the two persons.

Another reality that Sharma comments on is the fact that we communicate so quickly that our behaviour has changed and we want to achieve everything quickly. We are always in a rush. We are more busy than productive as we feel that we have to communicate immediately when a message is sent to us. This paper suggests that there are more manifestations of communication today, i.e. more acts of communication, there is more bulk in communication among individuals but the quality of communication is poorer. There is interaction on the surface without deep understanding of what the others wish to convey and on many occasions, without being able to feel the state of happiness or distress

9 Bonetti L., Campbell MA and Gilmore, L., (2010). The Relationship of Loneliness and Social Anxiety with Children’s and Adolescents’ Online Communication. In: <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/full/10.1089/cyber.2009.0215> (accessed on 16/11/2018)

10 Sharma, V. (2018). How Technology has affected Communication. In: <http://www.klientsolutech.com/how-technology-has-affected-communication>. (accessed on 21/11/2018)

of others.

Sharma believes that today's communication is artificial. He predicts that "in the future, artificial intelligence and machine learning will affect the communication in an even bigger way (both positively and negatively) than we ever imagined; because the communication will be pre-planned according to the people and situations at hand".

9. Conclusion

Online communication has revolutionised the way of interaction providing unique opportunities for everybody to engage in dialogues and exchange messages globally. One of the main features of today's online communication is the speed of interacting, which on the one hand is a positive outcome of technology, but on the other hand it has not brought depth and understanding in communication.

Technology cannot replace personal communication; facial expressions, gestures and the warmth of the human voice play a crucial part in sending messages fully and without misunderstandings. Individuals can best communicate by using all their senses and not only vision and hearing.

A compromise is needed in the way we experience communicating with the use of technology and communicating face to face. Contemporary technology has invaded every aspect of our personal and professional life but it has to allow space for traditional ways of communicating if we wish to maintain all the qualities in human interaction.

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Author's C.V.

Dr Niki Menelaou was born in Nicosia. She earned a BSc degree in 'Social Science and Administration' from the London School of Economics and Political Science, a Master's degree in 'Media and Culture' from Middlesex University, U.K. and a Doctorate in 'Cultural Policy and Administration' from the same University. She has worked as a Journalist, a TV and Radio presenter and producer and a Cultural Officer at the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus. She is now a lecturer on Media and Culture at Frederick University. She has written the book 'Selected Writings on Media and Culture' by En tipis Publications and has published a number of scientific articles and research papers. Her academic work includes the participation in numerous conferences in Cyprus and abroad. Email: pr.mn@frederick.ac.cy.

Dr. Kauka Dimitra

**Art, Aesthetic Experience, Speech:
the utilization of visual works of art
in the production of written speech
in elementary education**

Summary

With this paper we attempt to point out the interconnection between the cultural and aesthetic education and the educational process. Specifically, we intend to demonstrate the contribution of visual works of art in the production of written speech.

Our educational proposal is based, on one hand, on the theoretical approaches about art and its utilization in the field of education, and, on the other hand, in its pilot application in elementary schools.

In the scope of this paper, we present the educational outline of this pilot application, as well as the results of this interventional action, as reported by the students' side.

Keywords: Art, artful thinking, aesthetic experience, written and verbal speech.

1. Introduction

Given contemporary educational demands, modern school is orientated towards the optimization of the educational process, through practices that make easier the access of students¹ to knowledge. The aim is the creation of a teaching environment organized on the basis of educational and social interaction, so as the student can create new cognitive patterns.

On this basis, the new educational role is developed². Starting from the principles of social educational process and differentiated teaching³, the modern teacher, utilizing the principles of critical self-reflection should and ought to contribute to the versatile development of children, the fortification of social and emotional skills, through the notion of “belonging”⁴.

In the scope of these specific theories and concerns, we have organized the interventional action, which took place during the school year of 2018-19 in three classes of the 4th grade in an elementary school of B’ Athens administrative district.

The purpose of the specific interventional action, was the expansion of impact of visual works of art in the production of written speech, in the form of stories, following the conventions of reported speech, description and narration.

In this theoretical scope we attempt to clarify concepts which constitute the content of this paper. Consequently, we present the outline of the pilot implementation, the enquiring questions, methodology, the research sample, the enquiring tools of evaluation of the results and, in detail, the environment of activities of the production of written speech.

Specifically, regarding the evaluation of the results, we assessed the quality research⁵ and in particular the technique of focus groups. Questions were given before, as well as after the intervention, adjusted to the age groups of students and their answers were evaluated based on enquiring tools, as presented in detail in the relevant chapter.

1 When used, refers to both genders.

2 Fridaki, E., (2009), *Teaching in the intersection of modernist and post-modernist thought*. Athens: Kritiki, p. 448

3 Stradling, B. & Saunders, L. (1993). Differentiation in practice: Responding to the needs of all pupils. *Educational Research*, 35(2), p.p.127-137. Tomlinson, C. (1995), *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. Tomlinson, C. A. (2010). *Differentiation of delegation in the classroom*, Athens: Grigoris. Koutselini M., Pyrgiotakis I., (2015), *Differentiation of teaching and learning*, Athens: Pedio

4 Mylonakou, Keke, Ir. (2013), *Social Education*. Athens: Diadrasi. & Georgogiannis, P., Orfanidou, I., Chourmouziadou Ch., (2012), *Motivation for arbitration and performance in Education*, pub. Ion

5 Bell, J. (1997). *Methodological design of educational and social research*. Athens: Gutenberg. Greek translation: Riga, A. B.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Clarification of concepts

The theoretical discussion of art, aesthetic experience, models of interpretation of art and the production of written speech, holds a prominent and significant position in the field of scientific and theoretical approaches.

In the present paper, we'll be limited in specific references, regarding conceptual clarifications, given the fact, that the extensive and analytical reference of those, escapes the purpose of this paper.

2.1.1. Art

John Dewey⁶ refers to art as the “international language”. More specifically, he claims that, «*Borders are demolished, prejudice, which confines us, disappears, when we understand Negro and Polynesian art. This unconscious shattering of limits is much more effective, in relation to a change influenced by logic, because the former enters directly in a person's worldview*». Art and world, according to Dewey, are in a constant interaction and communication, fueling our experience and knowledge.

Their interconnection, their points of convergence and interdiction point out their convergences and implications, given that the creation of art affects the world and, vice versa, the world and cultural achievements affect artistic creation.

Dewey's ideas about art converge with the theoretical approach of Michel Foucault, who emphatically points out that «*works of art indeed include meanings and meaning is a matter, not so much of desire and thoughts of artists, as of the era in which they live and work. Artists have common subject quests with others in science*⁷».

The value of art in education is indisputable, since it promotes creative thought and critical thinking⁸. It contributes to the re-evaluation of consensus view and, for this reason, art is a great educational “tool”.

In the present paper, by referring to art we focus on visual works of art, given the fact that, they are a major part in teaching handbooks, contributing in the approach of various issues.

2.1.2. The aesthetic experience

The issue of aesthetic experience has been the subject of scientific research and

6 Dewey, J. (1934), *Art as experience*. USA: The Penguin Group.

7 Freeland, Cynthia (2005), *But, is this art*; PLETHRON Publications.

8 Mega, G. (2011). Passage in A. Kokkos, and partners , *Education through art*. Athens: Metexmio.

studies. The importance of aesthetic experience for cognitive development has been proved by theoretical approaches and research conducted in the fields of psychology and education.

John Dewey, with his book “Art as experience” has given a primary role to aesthetic experience, characterizing it as a medium for the liberation of imagination. In parallel to this theory, Howard Gardner’s⁹ position is placed. He supports that aesthetic experience cultivates skills of processing information and interpretation of a number of meanings in a holistic way.

Consequently, the connection to art and education through it, broadens our cognitive and cultural horizon and liberates us from frigid and standard viewpoints. To the present thesis, aesthetic experience is considered the ability of the receiver, a student in this particular case, to distinguish, to interpret and compare. Goodman points out that «*aesthetic experience is dynamic and not static. It requires, conducting subtle distinctions, the discovery of complex relations, identification of symbolic systems and characters in the frame of this systems, as well as that which is declared or exemplified by those specific characters. It also requires the interpretation of creations and the re-construction of the world by the terms of those creations as well as the re-construction of the creations by the terms of the world. During this conjunction many of our experiences and abilities are recruited, which are in fact possible to be transformed through it*»¹⁰. Consequently, the development of a supportive educational environment constitutes a necessary condition for the cultivation and enrichment of aesthetic experience for students.

2.1.3. Speech

In the cross thematic curriculum framework for compulsory education¹¹(CTCF), as well as in the new detailed curriculum¹²(NDC), the framework of suggestions and requirements for the teaching of the Greek Language is discernible. According to CTCF¹³, language aims at: «the development of the ability of the student to handle sufficiently, confidently, consciously, responsibly, effectively, and creatively, written and verbal speech so as to actively participate in their school and wider society». The specific general aim specializes in the framework of NDC so as «*the student to use language as a code of communication to satisfy*

9 Gardner, H. (1973). *The Arts and human development*. New York: Wiley.

10 Goodman, N. (2005), *Languages of art*, (Translation: Athens: Ekkremes, 2005, p. 334

11 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, Official Government Gazette 303 issue B/13-3-03

12 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, Official Government Gazette 303 issue B/13-3-03.

13 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, 2003. Official Government Gazette 303 issue B/13-3-03.

practical, emotional, cognitive and social needs»¹⁴.

The students, having acquired the understanding of heterogeneity of language, thus, the various levels of registers¹⁵, are asked to produce verbal or written speech, based on the type they have been taught¹⁶.

Consequently, in this present paper, “Speech” is examined in the framework of NDC¹⁷ in the production of written speech, taking into account the role of the students and the necessary conditions for their response¹⁸.

2.1.4. The patterns of artful thinking

«Artful thinking» (ATP)¹⁹, as a model of approach and interpretation of works of art, shapes environments of functioning integration in the teaching-learning process and, in parallel, shapes networks of interconnection between artistic art and cognitive subjects, taught at schools. This specific model of interpretation of works of art metaphorically, prints the image of an artist’s palette, through which a large variety of colors emerges through the mixture of colors.

The palette of artful thinking consist of six ways or forms of thought²⁰ which correspond to six types, forms or patterns of thought and aim at reading and interpreting works of art²¹.

The patterns (Table 1) are brief forms which expand and deepen the thought of students.

The utilization of patterns in the educational process enhances students’ observation skills and contemplative interpretation, stimulates their curiosity and shapes the basis for systematic research²². They assist them in focusing on sub-strands of the artworks and in organizing their observations and ideas.

They can be used flexibly and repeatedly for the interpretation of works of art, but also in a wide variety of subjects.

14 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, Official Government Gazette 303 issue B’/13-3-03, p. 26

15 “Registers” are functional varieties and variations which offer alternative ways for expressing efficiently exactly what required. Mpaslis G., (2002), *Socioglossology*, Athens: Grigoris

16 Mpaslis G., (2002), *Socioglossology*. Athens: Grigoris

17 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, Official Government Gazette 303 issue B’/13-3-03.

18 Spantidakis I. I., (2011), *Problems in production of written speech of school children*. Athens: Pedio.

19 “Artful Thinking” is a program, developed by Harvard Project Zero in cooperation with Traverse City, in order to be applied in Michigan’s elementary schools (TCAPS). For more information refer to the website of Harvard University: <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/at/overview.cfm> and to “Teacher’s Guide in Religion, Elementary and Middle schools”, revised edition, Athens, 2014.

20 Question, examination, research: light blue. Observation and description: green. Comparison and connection: orange. Insight through the examination of complexity: violet. Examination from different angles of view: yellow. Interpretation and justification: red.

21 “Teacher’s Guide in Religion, Elementary and Middle schools”, revised edition, Athens, 2014.

22 “Teacher’s Guide in Religion, Elementary and Middle schools”, revised edition, Athens, 2014.

Table 1: Patterns of artful thinking

1. Question, examination and research	2. Observation and description	3. Comparison and connection
4. Insight through the examination of complexity	5. Examination from different angles of view	6. Interpretation and justification

The first pattern (1) includes activities, questions, examinations, research and is suggested through the framework of systematic examination and provocation of answers by suitable questions such as: What do you see? Why...? For what reason...? What would happen if...? For what purpose...? What would be the difference if...? Let's assume that..., What would change if...?

We use this specific pattern so as to help students to make careful observations, contemplative interpretations, stimulate the curiosity and set the basis for further research and quest²³.

The second pattern (2), following the first, encourages students to observe even more carefully and in depth details. They are challenged to develop skills of verbal descriptions, judge carefully and express valid opinions before they become judgements. A series of questions are a helping tool such as: What do you see? What do you think about what you see? What do you think is happening here? What did you observe which made you say that? If the specific work of art is the beginning of a story, what could follow? If the specific work of art is the middle point of a story, what could have happened before? What is the next thing to happen? If the specific work of art is the ending of a story, what could this story be? What colors, lines and shapes can you distinguish?

In this specific pattern, students are trained in “strict” observation and the expression of conclusive sentences.

The third pattern (3) is a pattern of summaries and focus on the core of a subject but also the connection of new ideas to previous knowledge. In this specific pattern, questions such as: In which way the information presented as linked to what you already knew? Which of the new ideas you acquired expand or urge your thought to new directions?, contribute effectively to the connection of the artistic work with a series of subjects which student already know.

The fourth pattern (4) focuses on the deepening of a subject through the examination of complexity. The specific pattern helps students recognize the complexity of a subject, defining its different aspects. The mapping of complexity

23 “The specific pattern is more effective when the student answers working at three stages (see, think, wonder), like it is referred to in detail in chapter four. In the case however that students use a stage every time, a “scaffold” should be created, through a question, which leads them to the next level”.

helps students emphasize known and unknown fields, and make the appropriate expansions.

The fifth pattern (5) focuses on the familiarization with the inner and non-visible angles of view at first sight. Questions such as: What could the person in this specific artwork understand, think or feel? What could they possibly care about?, enhance contemplation and help students familiarize themselves with the non-visible angles of a picture.

Finally, the interpretation and justification, in the frame of the sixth pattern (6) is an exceptionally interesting process, given that it consists of two important requirements of all cognitive subjects of NDC.

The choice of patterns in the learning process is dependent on the goals that we set each time. The goal-setting environment for observation, description, comparison, etc emphasizes each time the need for utilization of different patterns, so that the students' interpretive approaches are regulated and substantiated on the basis of a specific scientific framework.

2.2. The production of written speech in elementary schools and the contribution of art

The issue of the production of written speech in elementary schools has been the subject of research in the scientific community. Bamboukas emphatically points out that from all the linguistic acts of communication, writing in the sense of the production of written speech, may be the most complex and demanding procedure²⁴.

Basic parameters for the response of students are their cognitive load and their experiences as much as the educational framework adopted by the teacher²⁵.

Research data points out the importance of a supportive environment in the school class for the production of written speech so as for students to express clearly and effectively what they are thinking²⁶.

One of the problems of students during the production of written speech is the production of ideas. To the teacher's question "Why aren't you writing?" a common answer is "Nothing comes to mind", Spandidakis²⁷ observes.

In contrast to verbal speech, which is an easier expressional procedure,

24 Bamboukas, I. (2004), Preface for I. Spantidakis, *Problems in production of written speech of school kids* (p. 13 – 16). Athens: Ellinika Grammata.

25 Lerner, J. (1997). *Learning disabilities: Theories, diagnosis and teaching strategies*. Boston. Houghton Mifflin & Bereiter, C., & Scardamalia, M., (1987), *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

26 MacArthur, C. A., & Graham, S. (1987), Learning disabled students' composing under three methods of text production: Handwriting, word processing, and dictation. *Journal of Special Education*, 21(3), p.p. 22-42.

27 Spantidakis I., (2011), *Problems in production of written speech of school children*, Athens: Pedio.

the form of “Stories”, following the conventions of reported speech, description and narrative³⁴.

3.2 General question

Can the visual works of art serve the demands of the NDC in the subject of language for the production of written speech in elementary schools?

3.2.1. Sub-Questions

- a. Can visual artworks influence the production of ideas in the production of written speech?
- b. Can the utilization of patterns of artful thinking develop meaningful conversations about the content of visual artworks and shape environments for meaningful teaching?

3.2.2. Methodology

The interventional action was utilized during the school year 2018-2019 from October until June and was implemented in three classes, for six hours a week, two hours per class, during the “Flexible Zone” lessons.

The bibliography, has developed various methodological suggestions of utilizing art³⁵ in the present thesis, the model of artful thinking program (ATP) has been selected, which shapes the conditions of active and communicative participation of students in the learning process on the bases of the patterns it suggests.

During the first cycle of the interventional program October-December, works of Degas were used, “Women ironing” and “Waiting”. During the second cycle, January-March, works of N.Lytra were used, “Naughty Grandchild” and “Anticipation” and during the third cycle works of August Edwin Mulready, “A passing cloud”, and J.Iakovidis, “The sleeping flower seller”.

At this point it’s worth pointing out that in the NDC and the subject of Greek Language the utilization of visual arts for the detection of meanings is suggested³⁶. In parallel, in other subjects, such as for example in the artbook of

34 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, Official Government Gazette 303 issue B’/13-3-03, p.p. 27,28, 29 & 37.

35 O.P. & Perkins D., (2003), *Making thinking visible*. NewHorizons for Learning. USA, www.newhorizons.org.

Mega, G. (2002), *Art as a medium of effective learning: the example of the Language Subject*. PhD Thesis, School of Education, University of Crete.

Mega, G. (2011). Passage in A. Kokkos and associates: *Education through the Arts*. Athens: Metexmio.

36 Detailed curriculum (NDC) of Greek Language for Elementary school, Official Government Gazette 303

because of the immediate communication with the other person talking, written speech requires supporting procedures.

Consequently, the role of the teacher is extremely important so as to encourage students to produce ideas²⁸.

On the basis of this reasoning in the present thesis, the relationship between art and the production of written speech, focuses on each supporting role during the procedure of producing ideas.

At this point, the question, about the ability of the artistic work to contribute creatively in the production of written speech by students, emerges.

During the preview of theoretical approaches towards art and its abilities, we document some important viewpoints which, to a large extent, answer the question we have posed

The methodical and systematic observation of works of art, Perkins points out, gives the ability to the observer to cultivate the contemplative and creative attitude²⁹ and mainly to draw meanings³⁰ through their systematic observation. Through art, Eisner emphatically points out, our observation becomes intelligent. The observer, while observing, cultivate their thought and expand their imagination³¹.

Consequently, the utilization of art in the learning process can shape conditions of procedural learning³² and construct environments of communicative character³³ through works of art which ignite contemplation, bring out experiences and offer chances for the examination of values and disfunctional ideas .

3. Pilot application

3.1 The purpose of the program

The purpose of the specific interventional action, in the frame of its pilot application, has been the examination of the effect of artistic work in the production speech, in

28 Fayol, M., Largy, P., & Lemaire, P., (1994). Cognitive overload and orthographic errors: When cognitive overload enhances subject-verb agreement errors: A study in French written language. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology A: Human Experimental Psychology*, 47A(2), p.p.437-464.

29 Perkins D., (1994), *The Intelligent Eye: Learning to Think by Looking at Art*. The Getty Education Institute for the Arts: Los Angeles, California.

30 Olson I. (2000), *The Arts and Critical Thinking in American Education*. Connecticut. London: Bergin and Garvey Westport.

31 Eisner, E (2002). *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

32 Dewey, J. (1933), *How we think, a restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston, New York. D. C. Heath.& Bruner, J., (1960), *The educational process*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

33 Mithis N., (2004), *Teaching of language under the prism of communicative approach*. Athens: Gutenberg, p. 281 & Bereiter, C., & Scardamalia, M. ,(1987). *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

the 3rd and the 4th grade we come across the demand for writing stories deriving from visual works of art³⁷.

It is obvious that the demand to write “stories” is integrated in the teaching-learning trajectory of different subjects.

This specific demand has worked to empower the utilization of the interventional action which we are writing about.

Regarding the criteria for the choice of visual works of art, they were two:

- First criterion was their presence in school books which required processing and in depth understanding. Visual works of art, to which students had direct access, automatically created the conditions for further research and study of the others works of the same artist³⁸.
- Second criterion was the development of issues of cross-subject approach in the school class like children’s projects or the modern family, which were enhanced through the works of Degas and August Edwin Mulready.

We should also point out that the choice of the visual works of art which were the subject of processing was done through the presentation of other artwork by the same artist and for the final decision the interest of the students was taken into account.

At the stage of planning we took under consideration the parameters relating on the one hand to the population of the class and on the other hand to the procedures and the methodology of the utilization of the program.

Given the fact that every school class has disparate composition, as regards their cognitive and learning abilities, our priority was the choice of patterns which would make the participation of all students in the learning process easier.

In the center of the interventional program we set the credibility of implementation, by imposing a common way of intervention to all groups of students.

In addition, the factors, taken under consideration, were regularity of intervention, the combination of methods, the duration and the potential of the continuity of the intervention³⁹.

The examination of the existing knowledge of the students about Art was the starting point for the development if the interventional action with questions such as : what does Art mean to me? What forms of art do am I aware about ?

issue B’/13-3-03, p. 28

37 Art Subject 3rd and 4th grades notebooks, pages 37, 44.

38 In the subject of Religion, in the 4th grade, p.77, we come across the work of N. Lytras, “Carols”, in the students Art notebooks of the 3rd and 4th grade p.37, Section 3, we come across the work of J.Iakovidis, “Children Concert” and on p.37, in the school book in Environmental Studies, for the 4th grade, we come across the work of J.Iakovidis, “Mother and child”.

39 Barry, P. (2013), *Encounter with theory. An introduction to literature and cultural theory*. Athens: translation A. Natsina.

What can Art offer to us?

In the frame of the target setting of the interventional action ,students must respond to a series of actions, based on the patterns of artful thinking. They are called to decipher information of the visual work of Art and combine the relevant information with their preexisting knowledge so as to interpret the artistic content.

To support the previous activities we principally used the technique of brainstorming so as to imprint the student’s experiences through the questions which fortified the insight and the analysis of the visual works of art.

Basic condition for the success of the intervention was the creation of stages which are analyzed in detail inn the relevant sub chapter.

Apart from the cultivation of skills of production on written speech , an additional goal was the cultivation of inter personal communication and interaction , team spirit of work , exchange of opinions and support towards ideas.

The application was accompanied by a series of activities which are analytically described in the chapter about the educational framework of the theoretical suggestion and are the pillar of the educational intervention we are suggesting.

3.2.3 The sample

The specific intervention took place in three classes of the 4th grade in an elementary school of B’ Athens administrative district, in a total of 49 students. The demographic information of the participants is shown in the following table (Table 2)

Table 2: Participants by class and gender

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Totals
Boys	11	11	12	34
Girls	5	5	5	15
Total	16	16	17	49

Among the participants, there were children with special educational needs.

In the first class, two of the student participating were diagnosed with, the former with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and the later with autism. In the second class a student with dyslexia and in the third a student with learning difficulties. All the

students were members in the typical curriculum of education, while some of them attended inclusion classes in their school as well.

3.2.4. Research Tools

For the assessment of the result quality research⁴⁰ was used and more specifically the technique of focus groups. This refers to a quality tool of collection of data through group interviews which encourages the expression of various and often different opinions and is directed by the researcher. Group interviews which take the form of discussion, focus on a specific topic and are strictly related to the research questions⁴¹.

3.2.5. Method of the Collection of data

For the collection of data we worked with twelve (12) focus groups of four and sometimes five students, each at different times for each class. Questions were given before as well as during the intervention, adjusted to the age levels of students, for each member of the team and providing enough time to deal with the questions. After the discussion between the members of the team, each focus group announced the results of their projects to the whole class and notes were taken so as to provide the information for the research.

The questions addressed to the students before the intervention were:

First Question: What do you find difficult when writing a story about a specific topic?

Second Question: Do you believe that a visual work of art would be helpful?

These specific questions were a significant source of information regarding the problems which the students faced, during the production of written speech but also regarding their personal opinions and thoughts about the utilization of visual works of art.

However, we saw fit to address the students with questions after the completion of the intervention.

First Question: Did the visual works of art help you create stories?

Second Question: Did the stages of the intervention we followed and the questions helped you interpret the visual works of art?

All the questions were answered and the answers shed light on the questions we posed.

40 Bell, J. (1997). *Methodological design of educational and social research*. Athens: Gutenberg. Greek translation: Riga A.B.

41 Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., & Sinagub, J. (1996), *Focus group interviews in education and psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA. & Morgan, D. L. (1998), *The Focus Group Guidebook*. London: Sage.

4. The educational framework of the theoretical suggestion

During the pilot application of the interventional action the wide framework of patterns in artful thinking led us to the structure of three stages (Table 4) which combine in a functional and effective way the framework of patterns.

Table 4: The structure of the three stages

S/N	Stages
1.	Observe and assume
2.	Observe and interpret
3.	Observe and create

- In the first stage, “observe and assume”, the students, working individually, observe and make assumptions about what they see.

Using general questions of pattern number one (question, examination, research) and through brainstorming they attempt to make the first assumptions about the content of the visual work of art and give it a title. This specific activity is organized around the basic frame of the production of written speech⁴² in the form of “**titling a picture**” which in turn can be verified or refuted when the students learn about the artist and their work.

- In the second stage, “observe and interpret”, the students are asked to observe the artwork more closely. After they learn about the artist and their work, they work in teams and based on the pattern number one (question, examination, research), they fill in certain information as described in the relevant table, (Table 5). During this specific stage, the students confirm or reject their personal positions or ideas and comprehend the power of collaboration and interaction in the expression of ideas.

Table 5: Questions of creation of stages in Pattern 1

S/N	Pattern 1 Stages	Creation of stages
1.	See	Document what you see using words.
2.	Think	What do you feel about what you see? What is happening in this picture?
3.	Wonder	For what reason is it happening?

42 Creative process [The teaching/learning of writing includes not only the final product but also the preparing projects and actions a student performs], (Sorin, 2005: 66).

In the frame of this specific stage we incorporated activities of insight in matters of social and emotional approach of the work of art as well as technical processing of the elements which comprise it, thus utilizing patterns 2, 5 and 6 as described in the following table (Table 6).

Table 6: Questions of creation of patterns 2, 5 & 6

<p>Pattern 2 [Observation and description]</p> <p>What season do you think it is? What time? [How do you justify it?] How many people are there in the picture? Describe them (age, gender, how they are dressed, what they are doing) What colors do you distinguish? What shapes do you see?</p>	<p>Pattern 5 [Examination from different viewpoints]</p> <p><i>Remember the title of the picture</i> What could they be thinking about? What could the people in the picture be feeling?</p>
<p>Pattern 6 [Interpretation and Justification]</p> <p>In what era could this scene be taking place? In the modern era or in the past? [How do you justify it?] What does the place look like? [How do you justify it?]</p>	

- In the third stage, during the activity, “observe and create”, the students work in learning environments of creation stories and micro-stories as analyzed in the following table, (Table 7).

The patterns chosen meet creatively with expansive activities, thus fortifying the production of speech in a variety of topics.

Additionally, through “talking” and “talking and responding”, directional framework is formed as well as appointment of arguments in written speech in the form of correspondence, suggestions⁴³ etc as mentioned in the relevant table.

43 Egglezou F. *Teaching argumentation in Elementary Education*. Athens: Grigoris, p. 36.

Table 7: Questions of creation of patterns 2 & 3

Brief table of activities in the production of speech	
<p>✍️ 1a. Create a story</p> <p>Pattern 2 [Observation and description]</p> <p>Observe carefully the visual work of art and create a story the main character/s being the person/people in the picture.</p> <p>Pattern 3 [Comparison και Connection]</p> <p>Give a suitable title to your story.</p> <p><i>Assisting elements: place, people, plot, development, ending.</i></p>	<p>Expansive activity</p> <p>✍️ 1b. We change the story</p> <p>Using the phrase (...suddenly...) continue your story, mentioning an unpredictable, sudden event.</p> <p>Complete the story, giving an appropriate ending based on the changes you have made.</p>
<p>✍️ 2. Beginning or End?</p> <p>Pattern 2 [Observation and description]</p> <p>Choose one of the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this visual work of art is the beginning of the story, what could happen next? • If this visual work of art is the ending of the story, what could have happened before? <p><i>Use your imagination to write a story.</i></p>	<p>Expansive Activity</p> <p>✍️ 3. Nature, environment, shapes</p> <p>Assume there is one or more people in the picture you see.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are they, where are they what are they doing, how are they feeling? • Write a short story giving a title.
<p>Expansive Activity</p> <p>Our stories with sketches.</p>	<p>Expansive Activity</p> <p>Biographies of characters. The main characters speak. One of the main characters sends a letter or writes their biography.</p>

Conclusive Pointers

Our conclusive pointers about the contribution of visual works of art in the production of speech, are supported and verified by the evaluation of the results of the pilot application.

By the answers which the students gave us before the educational intervention, stems the need to connect visual works of art with written speech, a fact that was the motive to include the intervention in the learning process.

In the first question of what are the things which you find difficult when

wanting to write a ‘story’ about a specific topic the deciphering of answers of the students formed two basic pillars. The first is related to the lack of ideas and imagination and the second to the need of the presence of a supporting tool which can motivate ideas⁴⁴.

In the second question, about whether they believed that a visual work of art would help them, the deciphering of the answers formed a basic pillar regarding art and how it could help activate thought and imagination⁴⁵.

By the answers which the students gave us after the teaching intervention, the idea of the importance of the utilization of art in the teaching process and specifically in the production of written speech is enhanced.

Regarding the first question about whether visual works of art helped them produce “stories”, the students’ answers agree on its positive contribution, recognizing in art the potential of creating thought, questioning, as well as the inducement of contemplation⁴⁶.

Regarding the second question about whether the stages they followed helped them with the interpretation of works of art, all students gave a positive response emphatically stressing the fact that our international teaching helped posed a safe educational environment in the matters of interpreting art⁴⁷.

The specific answers of the students which are recorded in their authentic form, prove the fact that, indeed visual works of art positively contributed in the production of speech, the inducement of interest but also the revelation of the multitude of different “stories” which can result from the same visual motive-work of art.

Consequently, the answers which the students gave us prove positively the general research question regarding the ability of visual works of art to serve the demands of the NDC for the Greek language subject in the production of written speech.

Furthermore, the side questions are viewed upon as positive as well, on the one hand because of the ability of visual works of art to activate the production of ideas and on the other hand due to ability of the patterns of artful thinking to contribute to the development of discussion on the content of the works of art but also to the creation of environments of collaborative and interactive teaching⁴⁸.

44 Encoding of original answers: “Many times I don’t know what to write, I don’t have many ideas, I lack imagination, I need something to help me”.

45 Encoding of original answers: “I would take ideas from the picture, What I saw I would describe, It would help me start, It would help me think of something and write a short story”.

46 Encoding of original answers: “What I saw made me think, I started thinking of a story by seeing the picture, I wrote something and I could continue because I got ideas, Every object I saw helped me find words, The colors I saw helped me talk about moments in the story, I am not afraid to write texts, I’ve learned more words”.

47 Encoding of original answers: “I saw a visual work of art and judged only if I liked it or not, I hadn’t learned ways to interpret it, I couldn’t imagine that so many stories could be written from a work of art”.

48 Encoding of original answers: “We learned to cooperate, We learned to work as a team, We learned to

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discuss with each other, We learned to conclude to a decision-suggestion, We learned to listen to one another”.

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Author's CV

Dimitra Kauka studied Political science and Public administration. She also has studies in Education and has a Masters degree in the field of Human studies in the Educational department of the Athenian University from where she received a Masters degree in History teaching. In turn, she received a PhD in modern Greek history. She is currently teaching in the public educational sector.

Mandalovas Efthimios
Tsiaka Dimitra

**Mythology provides the theatre
with original works and the theatre,
in turn, assists to the better understanding
of mythological texts during
the teaching process in education**

Abstract

There are many ways in which the art of theatre can find its place in education. One such way is theatre education as a school subject along with a complete theatrical play before an audience. The most popular and common way to draw theatrical plays, especially in education, is mythology. This subject, being a key part of the curriculum, constitutes an educational tool that cultivates thinking, expression and creativity by serving simultaneously various other purposes, such as language development, both spoken and written. All these lessons help students understand themselves and their social surroundings and are excellent practices of collaboration, communication, imagination, creative expression as well as experiential recreation before an audience.

Keywords: Mythology, theatre, educational process

1. Introduction

Theatre activities and drama in general, are an educational process that will

allow education a passage from a school typical of memorization to a school that of personality development and expressive potential of its students. Theatre education contributes to the social, creative and enhanced critical thinking edification of students. However, in order for theatre to exist as a public-spirited creation that can be organized and realized by students, it is in need of a discipline enriching and supplying it. The best source of play adaptation and presentation lies with mythology. This specific subject in combination with creative writing, requires scientists that are engaged in both educational goals and theoretical support of these lessons as well as their precise planning. This is achieved if love, passion for teaching and solid scientific support on behalf of the state are brought together¹.

2. Purpose of the paper

Considering mythology as the starting point of a differential teaching with the main goal of promoting and cultivating the theatrical education, an attempt will be made to highlight how much myth teaching helps to better understand the lessons in general, and how it offers alternative ways of teaching to teachers and students, assessing the given knowledge. In short, it will prove how easy it is to move from theory to practice in the classroom, to a group of students. A good teaching experience within a class is the effort to write a story or a myth in general. Also, the teacher enters the role and all students together compose, write, correct and the learning effect becomes more constructive.

3. Clarifying denotations

3.1 Mythology

The term mythology is hard to define, as it is open and does not accommodate only one strict definition. Mythology is an art not leading to scientific truths but rather to engaging parties and activities not linked with intellect laws, but diverging from them using imaginary compositions and links. A myth is not only a creation of irrational elements as in this case it would not be consciously accessible. Instead, it fabricates a story that at times complies with a partly rational world and in other cases aligns with a world of no sense. Unlike science, a myth requires time, space and justification, yet it is in no need of a mathematical conceptualization².

This art was once dominant before losing its place to science and it originates from the need to avert the fear of the unknown, the invincible and the

1 Avdi, A. & Chatzigeorgiou, M. (2007). *The art of drama in education. 48 suggestions theatre education workshops*. Athens: Metaichmio Publications, p. 13.

2 Burkert, W. (1990). *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*. Berkeley. p.15.

desire to realize in imagination the things that cannot be done so in reality. It was expressed through the desire to view a limited to reality power branching out to omnipotence and the anxiety to see death be overcome by undying beings. In general, a myth wishes to see the things that desires become a reality. The rationally unfeasible are turned into feasible within a world of fantasy. Thus, mythology emerges when the human conscience compiles rational and irrational elements every time it longs to go beyond knowledge and history, having as a source a world beyond nature or history³.

3.2 The theatre and the theatrical play

Theatre is the art form dealing with the production and the teaching of live depictions either real or imaginary, aiming to please and educate an audience. The theatrical play does not constitute a complete autonomous happening but a representation of an act, a situation or an incident which in its primary and literal version, it takes place within the historical or mythological reality. This definition is the evolution of the Aristotelian conviction according to which “imitation is the illusion that is held integral to the actual event and which is led within a setting on stage”, whereas the psychological and ideological recognition of the staged events appears to be already familiar to the audience watching. Yet, in order to perform an imitation and bring the theatrical illusion to life, actors must identify with their roles and the audience with the play likewise. During the play, actors cease to act as individuals. Forsaken of their social roles, actors reprise and identify with their theatrical roles led not only to imitation but much more to an experiential relationship with the person they play⁴.

An according phenomenon is observed within the audience which ceases to act as a self-existing social entity. By creating exceptional time and spatial conditions, the audience assisted by the siding audiovisual elements of the play and the distinctive place it holds within the sight on offer (architectural space dimension), it escapes its own historic reality and is shifted to the staged time dimension that is shown or transfers the latter to its own, in full accord of two parameters of the same kind in terms of quality and essence⁵.

3.3 The teaching process

This is the teaching method used by all teachers educating their students. It is also the number of techniques used in teaching trying to enrich the organization and

3 Crane, B. (1995). *Structure and Value*. Theoretical Foundations for a Diachronic Structural Analysis in the study of Myth. Diss. Emory Univ of Atlanta Ga. s.s. 32- 64.

4 Grammatas, Th. (2009). *Theatre and education*. Athens: Self-publication.

5 Mourellos, G. The theatrical experience of time., *Metamorphoses of time*, Thessaloniki, Konstantinides Publications, Dokimio Series, art. 2.

structure of a lesson with new formulas. Progressive education emerged in the early 20th century and challenged the existing system, focusing on the teacher in which the pedagogic intellectual, inefficient memorization and self-regulation prevailed. Progressive education calls for teaching to become student-centered, meaning accordingly to student needs and interests. Progressive teaching attempted to shape a school that endorses active and experiential learning as well as free expression, a creative school aiming to fully develop, and in all aspects, the personality of children. It outlined the innate creativity of children and placed emphasis on art cultivation within a school⁶.

The educational process will be more effective one step beyond this educational process, in a game of free self-expression and experiential search for the lessons being taught. Taking into account empirical psychology research, and Vygotsky theory of the “near-growth zone”, one can assume the concept of “scaffold”. It is a support system used by teachers, mainly in primary education, to move children to the near-growth zone. In the same way that manufacturers use a rack as an aid to the gradual construction of a building, teachers can use a support system, a modulated set of teaching tools (providing appropriate materials, assigning appropriate tasks, clear instructions, clarifications, etc.) to encourage children to develop themselves and move on to higher spiritual functions.

Regarding senior or junior high school students, there is the “the banking model of education”. Here, teachers act as depositors and students as “savings banks”. Teachers deposit and students saving within their memory or a portfolio, strive to bring to life, in an experiential way and through critical intervention, the lesson taught⁷. Besides, the aim of this teaching process is to offer the participants both the necessary, practical and theoretical knowledge so as to promote “a humanized child-centered curriculum” through which students will develop critical conscience in order to shape history and culture later on⁸.

4. Historic retrospection to the origin of the myth

The most ancient collection of myths that has been saved and known to us is thanks to a segment of the Rylands Papyri, dating back to the 1st century A.D. It was a collection of myths written in verse and was called “The Collection Augustana”. This collection was used as practice in rhetoric schools and it was named after a code kept once in Augsburg and now in Munich⁹. A vast collection of ancient myths and narratives was found in the Aesop’s tale. The manuscript was found in the New York Library and was proved to be the same manuscript that was lost from Grottaferrata during the Napoleon era. It is the most ancient of the manuscripts and it contains the Aesop tale in its most explicit form. Most

6 Rohrs, H. (2001). *Progressive Education*, ps. 54-65.

7 Freire, P. (2007). *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. Athens. Kastaniotis Publications. p. 90.

8 Grollios, G (2005). Paulo Freire and the curriculum. Thessaloniki. Vaniias.

9 Lesky, A. (1981). *History of ancient Greek literature*. Thessaloniki. Kyriakidis Bros.

of the collection material has been taken from the voluminous treasure of folk myths. This is why we have to accept that from early on, myths regarding animals were very popular. Without a doubt, many of them originate in the East. The Ionian spirit is evident through many myths as they were the right storytellers living in Asia Minor. Surely, the part of the Greeks in these myth treasures cannot be deemed limited, however, it goes without saying that it is hard to define¹⁰.

It is possible that each nation separately and impulsively conjured the same myth. The story that God is at times angry with human malice and decides to obliterate the human kind by drowning Earth, is known from the Epic of Gilgamesh as a Babylonian story, the Old Testament as Judaic, Pindar as Greek but it is also found in other parts of the world as in the East Indies, Korea, Indonesia, Australia, the Americas and others. Believing in a monocular, human-shaped monster is common in Greece, Finland, Ireland, Iceland, Greenland Eskimos, the East Indies, in China and elsewhere. To understand that a myth was passed on from one country to another, it must first make sure that a direct or indirect, trade or of other kind of communication was formerly established so as to justify the transition of spiritual commodities¹¹.

The formation of the Greek myth started in the Mycenaean era. It is hard to imagine the chivalrous society of the Mycenae without legends, songs and great achievements. A legend requires ruins. And in ruins it is that Linear B appears with numerous names such as Ajax, Achilles, Hector and Theseus. Historical memories of a more freestyle metaplasia can be found in ancient god stories, in worshiping rituals that join age-old tale themes or findings that the pure joy for fiction bears¹².

The Greek written tradition speaks of the endless presence of fictional and nonfictional themes in the heroic traditions that constitute proof that the ancient Greeks had tales and prose.

5. Role-play techniques of myths through theatre in education

5.1. The theatrical mythology is turned into teaching fiction

The myth acts as a canvas of the theatre during the entire historic course and the educational thread in our time lies within reflective and experiential teaching. The aim of this teaching is the search for ways and techniques to understand better and consolidate lessons via drama. In curricula, a myth can be characterized as a “probe workshop” in which teachers set up “learning scenarios” for students. Within this environment, all students are enacted, participating through questions, discussions and experiential ways of role-playing the object. It is a form of acting

10 Lambert, W.G. (1990). *BabylonianWisdomLiterature*. Oxford. 213.

11 Godelierr, M. (1998). “Mythe et Historie” *Annales26*°Special Edition: Historie et structure.

12 Nillson, M. P. (2001). *The Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology*, ps. 55-67.

known by the term “Living through Drama”¹³. It is as if students are experiencing the drama events here and now.

This form of theatrical myth is based on improvisation in which the whole group participates as well as the teacher who assumes a suitable role. The teacher presents the children with the learning object in the form of a problem which students are asked to solve. Students feel as if they are found in an organized theatrical-electronic game and are all required to provide answers by engaging with their own critical thinking, because if they fail to answer, they “block” the plot from unwinding. Anyone who participates, is in a state of anxiety and alert and is not idle and this is why this kind of learning is referred to as a “man in a mess”¹⁴.

The children are emotionally involved and interact with each other and their teacher, feeling as if they are “living” the events here and now. However, it is vital that the whole class process in depth this whole experience and draw conclusions, all on a secondary level. In fact, they are able to use different techniques every time and reflect upon the events and the consequences of their actions within the imaginary world of the myth. Furthermore, the teacher is able to interrupt the improvisation in order to give a different twist in teaching the myth and the message it has to convey¹⁵.

Thus, in order for the students to better understand the lesson, they have to function as actors by playing a role. They feel that the predicament or the problem presented in the teaching core is of concern to them. As such, they are under the impression that “whatever is happening is caused by me” while at the same time they monitor themselves and in relation to others like an audience would do, and they fulfill the continuation of the myth by being held responsible if the lesson is disturbed¹⁶.

This specific way of teaching can be applied to all subjects in primary education and the theoretical ones in the secondary, too. By secondary, it is the the ancient Greek, Language, Literature and History both in junior and senior high school. The commitment to work in groups and enjoy oneself is solid foundation for the creative contact among children in project groups, where are all at the same time and equally too, givers and receivers of stimuli while weaker students are assisted by the rest¹⁷.

To illustrate this, here is an example taken from the subject of ancient Greek in the 1st year of senior high school, in Book 2, “Historia Graecia” by Xenophon (16-32). The teacher, while explaining the Sicilian Expedition in the difficult points (Conon, upon seeing the attack... the big ship sails... to lift a

13 Neelands, J. και Goode, T. (2000). *Structuring drama work*. Cambridge University Press.

14 Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom Drama. A critical analysis*. London, Trentham Books in association with the University of Central England. σ.σ 178-240.

15 O’Neill, C. (2005). *Drama Worlds: a framework for process drama*. Portsmouth, Heinemann. σ.σ.48,114.

16 Avdi, A. & Chatzigeorgiou, M. (2007). *The art of drama in education. 48 suggestions theatre education workshops*. Athens: Metaichmio Publications, p. 34.

17 Sextou, P. (2007). *Dramatisation: The book of a theatre-educationist*. (Methods-Applications-Ideas). Athens. Kastaniotis Publications. ps. 19-20.

shield...)¹⁸ is in need of a stage truth to which the student can relate. In this technique, the teacher uses the method that Stanislavski suggests to actors: “Breathe life into all of these imaginary situations and actions, until you fully satisfy the sense of truth within you and awaken the sense of belief that what you are feeling is real. This entire method is what we call *experiencing the role*. Even the weakest students must experience every teaching moment for it to be active, constructive and convincing and for them to always reap its always scientific benefits¹⁹.

5.2. The timeless universality of myths becomes an unveiling reality

A different teaching method and contemporary experiential learning tactic that derives from myths and approaches theatre is the one drawn by the Paulo Freire Theory of Education. He spoke of the “banking concept of education”. Through this specific education, students assisted by their teachers, draw upon a creative force, reinforce their concerns and constructively intervene in reality²⁰. As this technique deals with self-examining education, it is able to be applied to more practical subjects of an applied nature (Maths, Physics) or to Composition Writing in senior high school. Through input or topics given by teachers and tasks or questions, students must climb a head taller than themselves, by developing in common a humanized pedagogical framework used to record essays or discourse²¹.

The trainees assume roles and topics to be explored and within a library they seek information, either individually or as a total, claiming authenticity as a way of persuasion. They are engaged in recording reality, attempting to make judgements, criticize and make rights with the social state of things. They monitor human behavior and historical circumstances, as they have been created within the context of the modern urban world. They try to become young writers or literatures and in a self-narrative or non-personal way they take a stand within, beyond or over a text, side by side or opposing the reader. To see this entire project through, the young writers rely upon dialogues, which in turn constitute a dynamic theatricality, without dividing the script into scenes and acts but through team writing they are led to the unveiling reality²².

The last parameter is a worthwhile tactic in the meticulous writing of a formal text influenced by a mythological equivalent and can be realized individually or collectively with the aid of high-profile published articles by professionals or not, journalists or critics in special publications, news magazines

18 Ancient Greek historiographers (Xenophon, Thucydides), 1st Grade Senior High School, Textbook.

19 Stanislavski. K. (1990). *An actor prepares*. Athens. Damianos.

20 Freire, P. (2007). *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. Athens. Kastaniotis Publications. P. 90.

21 Grady, T. και O’Sullivan, C. (1998). «*Ahead taller*». *Developing a humanizing curriculum through Drama*, Birmingham: The University of Birmingham.

22 Grammatas. Th. (2009). *Theatre and education*. Athens: Self-publication. p. 126, 140.

or even in the daily press. Due to the power of the printed publications in modern society, this likewise printed student writing, proves to be a primary factor towards the evaluation of a crucial social matter or an improvement over a pathogenic state. What is more, every similar viewpoint can be reinforced or become a starting incentive for an event taking place before numerous students of a class, or with the presence of an authoritarian or frequently an unbid specialist over a specific event during which *a priori* stated issues will be resolved, meeting certain ideological or aesthetic criteria²³.

5.3. Myths and their intertextual composure

In the first half of the 20th century, two major changes were noted in the science of mythology:

1. The insertion of myths within their social context. 2. The approach to their symbolization from a psychological aspect. The first change derives from the blending of mythology with social sciences, especially that of Social Anthropology. The second is a result of condensing mythology with the science of psychology, which in turn will take its place in the cohort of social sciences. Over the last decade, these changes enriched by the criticism they have seen, are in fact integrated significantly into a new way of analyzing and conjuring myths, their intertextual composure and adaptation to a theatrical text. The advantage of a structural analysis and composure is that it respects the special nature of myths. That is to say, based on the original myth a new dialogue-based form is molded with changes that do not entirely stray further than their initial conception, are not subject to divergences, or have been presented in a way different enough to question its accuracy. Instead, they remain undoubtedly distinctive and intertextual composites²⁴.

The greatest technique is that which clearly lays out the structure of the play and is broken down into the plot development, conflicts, dramatic situations and eventually the prominence of the characters. By utilizing the mentioned elements, the theatrical text, assumes a status, enabling stage figuration in a way that the two-dimensional nature of narrating and describing the mythological text turns into a three-dimensional performing of the theatrical language. Nowadays, a lot of changes take place on all levels and forms of art defining the lines among literary genres. By the adaptation and intertextual composure, narrative language seizes to exist and techniques along morphological standards are used under which a theatrical play is created. Dialogues and crosstalk are main features. The adaptation should not take place on a whim and suggest new hybrid genres. It is

23 Lerminier, G. (1998). "Engagement et disponibilité du critique dramatique", *Le théâtre moderne. Hommes et tendances* [col.], Paris, ed. Du CNRS, 37-47.

24 Levi-Strauss, C. (1997). *La pensée sauvage*. Paris: Plon

more feasible and doable in terms of setting for the playwright to reassemble and regenerate elements taken from the initial body of the play, as he sees useful and essential for its stage performance. If in all this, the role of technology and targeted audience preferences are added, then it is clear that every similar venture can be put forward as a viewpoint seeking the acceptance and praise of the audience²⁵.

Within the school environment, there is the potential to turn a classroom into a workshop of social change. A myth having an epic content can be turned into dialectical theatre. In this case students must conform to what Brecht urges: “Change the world! It needs so!”. Unlike the theatre that sought to delude and move the audience, Brecht demanded a theatre of tranquil reflection and emotional detachment, one of critical contemplation. The same potential lies with students, too. To examine the myth from their own perspective critically and deal with the social and moral issues that the play is about. In this effort, they will be able to dramatize a myth by adding dialogues critically thinking and being detached from its initial form, meaning that they use reflection²⁶.

6. Conclusions – Suggestions

The main question is what the future of myths will be. That is, what can be possible functionality and reference to the theatrical myth within the conscience of a future educational audience. What will be the content and potential be and how will it be morphologically expressed. It will carry on with the ascertained historic course or it will return full circle to a way that can reproduce religious and theatrical standards already familiar from the history of each civilization.

Thus, it is considered that in terms of theatre the next century will be typical of a triumphant presence of myths, entailing greatly a metaphysical character. Through myths, the artistic creation of a person as it is in a compound way expressed in theatre both the dramatization and the stage act will constitute a place for existential quest and communication exceeding the time and spatial sets, expanding into the dimension of timelessness and panhuman²⁷. The criteria that will help to bring out myths in education assisted by they are the following:

The theatrical reality lies within the ancient Greek mythology, is inferred or even substitutes the latter objectively many times, so as to enable cross-interpretation. Through the study of texts, the educational world interacts with the classical civilization and aims to shift from a historic-literary approach to that in terms of theatre. It studies texts not only from a linguistic point of view but as an artistic product and symbol of each era accordingly. Myths and theatrical

25 Grammatas, Th (2009). Theatre and education. Athens: Self-publication. Ps. 140-141.

26 Heathcode, D. (2002). *Drama as challenge in Hodgson, John* (ed.): The uses of drama. (EyreMethuen, 1972). 25-37.

27 Grammatas, Th. (2009). Theatre and education. Athens: Self-publication. p. 122.

plays are not only informative texts but are raised equals to any other sources²⁸. Through these texts, students interact with the Cretan theatre of the 16th and the 17th century, the Ionian theatre of the 17th and the 18th century and the modern Greek theatre that is placed within the set of a cultural reality and is imposed upon the coasts of the eastern Mediterranean Basin²⁹. The interaction of students with this drama production is conducted through the work of authors, who are fixed upon the aforementioned values and record the historic state of things of the enslaved Greek diaspora and the modern years. Also, the student community – through myths – interacts with the 20th century theatre and the urban drama. They know from an ideological viewpoint, the plays of this kind, they perceive the demands of the urban social class, the libertinism, the women's liberation and the behavior of individuals, the social norms and institutions of their time. They grasp the mentality of the Interwar period and eventually reach the modern and the postmodern text through the study of myths and the assistance of the theatre³⁰.

Multi-books allow students to deal with the object, linking texts and writers of different times and movements in a rounded and compound way, into an original creation or study of plays with narrative language that constitute some of the many versions of modern science and playwrighting. In addition to this, the one-sided attachment to the one and only textbook leading to an entrapment of creative inspiration and multiple interpretation of a theme is lifted. Like experiential teaching, the contemporary terms of inter-, hyper- and multi culturalism suggest new ways of studying and writing with the advent of intertextuality and the utilization of ancient Greek and modern Greek myths through various writers³¹. Without ignoring or downgrading the original element of the historic, social and anthropologic reality that was over-highlighted in the past by a lamenting writer, a multiple approach by objective data is attempted towards the total picture that multi books offer³².

The location in which students interact, gain knowledge and focus on action is of great significance as this location affects substantially the facts. Libraries are places in which students can study myths and turn it into a play by reinforcing their studying in an intertextual manner. Students are able to compare within a place of voluminous information, the oddity of myths when in the hands of tragedians. In this way, strong correlations and expectations are formed in terms of the events that are dramatized upon myths. It is also important to credit both the arrangement and the usage of the location as part of the play semiotics.

28 Baudrillard, J. (2001). *Simulacres et Simulacra*, Paris. Galilee

29 Puchner, W. (1994). *European theatre science*. Athens. Goulandri-Chorn Foundation. Ps. 139-157.

30 Helbo, A. (2007). (ed) *Theatre. Modes d'approche*, Bruxelles, Meridiens/Klincksiek, ed. Labor. s.79

31 Grammatas, Th. (2009). *Theatre and education*. Athens: Self-publication. p. 183.

32 Valsas, M. (1929). "The Ionian theatre "Chasis" *Ionian Anthology* 3. Ps. 15-17, 51-54, 66-68.

For instance, the importance of the space among individuals and exchanging opinions over studying, which is better to take place within a workshop or after a visit to a library³³.

Language is a dynamic tool that is constantly renewed. The growth of each country is owed to fruitful linguistic exchanges. Also, the advances in the field of science, technology, art and economy come mainly from abroad which makes appropriation necessary leading to the discovery of new aspects of public life and the more effective communication among nations. Yet, when appropriation is excessive, massive and is subject to uncritical adoption of foreign linguistic elements without a sign of respect towards the native language, then the very linguistic communication is sabotaged along with the national identity, as well. The sole, effective measure left to master the native language is the study of sources both ancient and modern. Naturally, myths and history are deemed as sources, too. An experiential functioning of learning and consolidating of the native language is the function of the spectacle too, which, aside from an image, gains self-efficiency turned language which is projected as a message to the conscience of the audience watching³⁴.

Through the experiential access to myths that is achieved through the theatrical play, moral, emotional, sociopolitical and internationalism values are forged. Myths, which can be then turned into theatrical texts, call for writers relieved of external pressures and expediencies and makers of plays that are more idealistic and with moral messages. Thus, when the writing takes place within a classroom with the students themselves acting as creators, the product complete is a distillation of wisdom and learning, while it is proof that the person in writing is mentally composed, linguistically cultivated and most importantly an individual acting in moderation and wisely. What is more, when the educational group lacks immodesty and exaggeration, it forges meaningful communication among the members of a society and initiates them to values of modesty, courtesy, eloquence, humanism and democracy³⁵.

Dialogue is a form of collaboration of the mind, the soul and the ethos, that is, a medium of shaping personality. It acts as a medium of socializing and constitutes a pillar of democracy. Engaging parties gain a rounded perception of events and situations and evade fallacy and ignorance. Myths and theatrical texts enable students to develop dialogues with their classmates resulting in the sharpening of the mind and the thinking while avoiding idleness and passiveness. In addition to this, each individual within the theatre group transforms into a “master” of composure, cultivating doubt and fertile questioning, understanding one’s deficiency too. They gain self-critique and improvement and become open

33 Woodland, B. (1999). *The teaching of drama in the primary school*. Ellinika Grammata.

34 Grammatas, Th. (2009). *Theatre and education*. Athens: Self-publication. p. 397.

35 Duvignaud, J. (2003).” Sociologie du theatre”*Lettres modernes* 35. s.s 49-50.

to listening, obeying, suggesting, taking into account their peers and contributing consequently to their moral maturation³⁶.

Turning myths into a theatrical play is the most characteristic case of development of the humanistic ideals within the group. Enthusiasm and grouping strengthen students and help them rid themselves of self-centered instincts and mentality, forging further relationships of collaboration, noble competition, warmth and love. To sum up, it should be pointed out that in the Greek civilization, man possesses a prominent place. Through Greek myths and their timeless representation in theatre, deep humanistic messages are drawn. This is ascertained through various sciences that are studied by students in education³⁷.

- In mythology, Prometheus Bound symbolizes free soul.
- In the arts, symmetry and soul purification are dominant.
- In science rationalism is the cornerstone.
- In sports the Olympic ideals prevail.
- In philosophy self-awareness and free contemplation are sought.
- In politics the right democracy is solid foundation for free speech and liberty.
- In Economics, the “house”, the self-sustainability and the exchange of goods, not “the money”³⁸.

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36 Kouretzis, L. I. (2008). *The theatrical play and its dimensions*. Athens. Taxideftis. 193-201.

37 Panagiotopoulos, I. M. (1994). *Reflection and Speech*. Publications by friends. Ps. 103-115.

38 Papanoutsos, E. P. (1980). *Practical Philosophy*, Athens: Dodoni.

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Authors' CVs

Tsiaka Dimitra is a graduate of the School of Philosophy of the University of Athens and a Professor of Philology in Secondary Education. Graduate holder in Theatrolgy, Information Systems and Management of Education. Doctoral candidate at the University of Western Macedonia, Pedagogical School - Department of Kindergarten, in the Arts and Theater in Education. For eight consecutive years she has served as a Director in Lyceums and Gymnasia in the Prefecture of Fthiotida. He is a writer of a literary book titled "I will make you a queen". She has screened many plays. Contact **Information:** dimtsiak@hotmail.gr

Mandalovas Efthimios is a graduate of the Polytechnic School of the University of Patras from the Department of Computer Engineering and Informatics. He holds a postgraduate degree from the Athens University of Economics and Business. He has a degree in Byzantine Music, Harmony and Guitar.

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