

PUBLIC CASE REPORT

School journal 2/Koulumestari School

Linked to the pedagogical activity:

School children's Web journal. Publishing with Magazine Factory tool, [http://www.fictup-project.eu/index.php/School children's Web journal. Publishing with Magazine Factory tool](http://www.fictup-project.eu/index.php/School_children%E2%80%99s_Web_journal.Publishing_with_Magazine_Factory_tool)

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1. General information _____	2
1.1. Project information _____	2
1.2. School background information _____	3
1.3. Participating teachers _____	3
1.4. Pedagogical material _____	4
2. Documentating the activities _____	4
2.1. The realised tutoring process _____	4
2.1.1. Detailed summary _____	4
2.1.2. Similarities and differences between the proposed tutoring model and realized process _____	6
2.2. Documenting the classroom implementation _____	6
2.2.1. Detailed summary _____	6
2.2.2. Main similarities and differences compared to the example scenario by expert teacher _____	9
3. Lessons learnt for improving the materials and the tutoring model _____	10
3.1. Suggestions for using and improving the materials _____	10
3.2. Suggestions for applying and developing the tutoring model _____	11

1. General information

This report describes the organisation of ICT-related class work by a novice teacher who was willing to be helped by an experienced teacher in the field.

1.1. Project information

The report has been produced within the framework of the FICTUP project, which involves four countries (Finland, France, Hungary and Italy). FICTUP's objective is to develop innovative training material describing specific pedagogical activities entailing the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), combined with a closely-directed tutoring process, and to test the impact of both the material and personal support on teachers who are novices as far as ICTs are concerned. The training material devised for each case includes a report describing the activities in detail: the topic, the objectives, students' outputs, the material required (software, worksheets to be completed by the students, etc.), the different pedagogical stages, and for each of these a description of the role of the teacher and the tasks of the students, etc. Each case report is accompanied by three short training videos. During the first year of the project, this training material was jointly designed and developed by a teacher experienced in using ICTs in teaching and another who had never taught using them, to ensure it could be easily used by others.

During the second year, the material was tested in the classroom by a teacher who was a novice as far as ICTs were concerned. She was tutored by the expert teacher who had designed the material. This phase was observed (and filmed), analysed and evaluated by the partner researchers. The ultimate objective is to draw on the experience of the project in order to adapt and improve the training methodology tested (organisation of the tutoring, specifications for the content of the training material, etc.) and to offer it for future use in educational institutions.

Each country's researchers had the following material for each case:

- the report on the pedagogical sequence and the three related videos;
- reports (notes and/or videos) on the meetings between the expert teacher and the novice teacher during the tutoring process (the two meetings prior to the experiment, and the meetings between the expert and the novice between each session);
- the answers to a short questionnaire given to the novice teacher before and after each class, asking her what she felt about the session and what she planned to do in the next one;
- the video recordings and/or observations of the researchers for at least three class sessions;
- the novice teacher's activity book;

- the final review meetings with the novice and expert teachers following the experiment;
- evaluation reports for materials that have been subject the interim evaluation by other teachers and trainers.

1.2. School background information

Koulumestarin koulu (<http://www.koulumestari.fi/>), in which the case was conducted, is a primary school including grades 1-6 (age of the pupils is from 7 to 12). The school is located near the center of Espoo city, the second biggest city near Helsinki. The school surroundings, however, are suburban and very peaceful. The school is three years old. The school is described in its website in the following way: "Koulumestari School will be a safe school which aims to provide students with good basic knowledge and skills, realistic self-image and good social skills. We consider braveness, creativity and innovation our main principles." The school has special emphasis in technology education. There are about 150 pupils at the school, about one third of them special needs pupils. Ordinary teaching and special needs teaching are carried out based on co-teaching, and special needs and regular classes co-operate closely. Classes participating in the FICTUP project were from the fifth grade (Expert teacher's class) and from the second grade (Novice teacher's class).

1.3. Participating teachers

The Local Expert teacher (LET) is a male having 26 years' teaching experience, two of them at the current school. He has used ICT about 15 years in teaching, about 17 year in all. He is an active developer also outside the school and has belonged to an ICT expert teacher team in his city for several years, training other teachers to use various ICT tools in teaching. He can be regarded as a key teacher in ICT also at the municipal level. He teaches all 5th grade pupils of the school through co-teaching with two other teachers.

The Local Novice Teacher (LNT2) is a 32 years old male teacher who started working at Koulumestari school in the current school year. He had worked as a teacher for 5 years. He had used various ICT tools somewhat with his pupils during all the 5 years (e.g. text processing, graphics, interactive white board) and for personal purposes already for 15 years, but the Magazine Factory application, used in the present case, was new to him. He teaches almost all subject domains for a class of second grade pupils (8 years old), including 21 pupils; several of them are children with special needs. In addition, he runs a physical exercise club in his school.

1.4. Pedagogical material

The example scenario used in the case was titled “School children’s Web journal: Publishing with Magazine Factory tool”. In the example scenario created by the ET, Primary school students learn the principles of publishing activities through working like an editorial staff in making a Web journal for their school (Into@). The duration of the unit is 10 lessons (45 minutes each). Pupils practice digital photographing and picture manipulation as well as collaborative writing skills by making newspaper stories in teams and commenting on others' writings. The journal is aimed to document the school's history and is openly available on the Web (<http://magazinefactory.srv.hosting.fi/magazines/Into/index.php>).

The example scenario and videos are available in the following web address: http://www.fictup-project.eu/index.php/School_children%E2%80%99s_Web_journal._Publishing_with_Magazine_Factory_tool

2. Documentating the activities

2.1. The realised tutoring process

In the beginning of the case study, the teachers were provided with the tutoring model created in the FICTUP project, including suggestions about the exploration of the example videos and case description, pre-and post-meetings, and some minor tutoring exchanges during the novice teacher’s classroom implementation.

2.1.1. Detailed summary

The following table presents a summary of activities conducted by the novice and the expert teacher during the entire process. The table is constructed based on the novice teachers’ diary, interviews, those tutoring meetings in which the researcher was present, and classroom observations.

Type of activity	Date	Duration	Modality	Participants	Remarks
Introduction of the case study	02/03/2010	1 h	Classroom at the school	NT and researcher	Explaining the FICTUP-project, the materials and the case study
Exploring the videos and case description	First two weeks of April 2010	Not known	At home or school	NT	NT watched the video and read the scenario text independently.
Short tutoring discussions	Second week of April	Not known	At school premises	NT and ET	Discussed topics: Functionalities of Magazine Factory, ET’s way of

					organizing the journal writing project; schedule planning
Lesson 1 of the classroom implementation	15/04/2010	1*45 min lessons	Regular classroom with laptops	NT and ET	NT and ET started the project together in NT's classroom.
Short tutoring discussions		10-20 min	At school premises	NT and ET	Discussions during breaks
Lesson 2 of the classroom implementation	19/04/2010	1 h	F2f discussion in computer lab	NT, school helper ¹ , and five 5 th grade pupils from ET's class; research observer	5 th grade pupils helped pupils in NT's class to start making stories.
Short tutoring discussions		10-20 min	At school premises	NT and ET	Discussions during breaks
Lesson 3 of the classroom implementation	26/04/2010	1*45 min lessons	Regular classroom with laptops	NT and ET, professionals from a national broadcasting company; research observer	ET demonstrated the Magazine Factory program for the pupils; he took the lead because a national broadcasting company shot the lesson for a TV program about media education
Tutoring session	03/05/2010	25 min	Regular classroom with teacher's computer and IVB	NT and ET; research observer	Discussing the state of pupils writing process and plans for the next lesson. ET demonstrated how to add pictures in the web journal.
Lesson 4 of the classroom implementation	03/05/2010	1*45 min lesson	Regular classroom with laptops	NT and school helper ¹ ; research observer	
Lesson 5 of the classroom implementation	06/05/2010	1*45 min lesson	Regular classroom with laptops	NT and school helper ¹ ; research observer	
Tutoring session	10/05/2010	10 min	Regular classroom	NT and ET; research observer	Discussing the state of pupils writing process, plans for the next lesson and ways of using the tools. There were some problems with saving materials in the school server, and with personal accounts.
Lesson 6 of the classroom implementation	10/05/2010	1*45 min lesson	Regular classroom with laptops	NT, research observer; ET in his own class with two pupils	ET took a pair of pupils to make photo reportage from the night school; NT continued with the rest of the class.
Tutoring session	17/05/2010	10 min	Regular classroom	NT and ET, research observer	ET asked about NT's experiences of the Magazine Factory tool and the process; discussion of ideas about collaboration between two classes also for next school year

Lesson 7 of the classroom implementation	20/05/2010	1*45 min lesson	Regular classroom with laptops	NT, research observer	
Lesson 8 of the classroom implementation	27/05/2010	1 h lesson	Regular classroom with laptops	NT and school helper ¹ ; research observer	
Post-meeting between NT and ET	02/06/2010	10 min	F2f discussion in the classroom	NT and ET; research observer	ET and NT evaluated the experience and the process; discussions about the role of school journal for the whole school's common practice

¹School helpers' task is to help pupils with special needs.

2.1.2. Similarities and differences between the proposed tutoring model and realized process

The teachers participating in the present case did not have any longer tutoring session as was proposed in the tutoring model created in the FICTUP project, and NT did not make a separate, written scenario plan before the classroom implementation. Instead, the plans and discussions between the teachers were conducted among the everyday school work, during breaks or through co-teaching in NT's class. New plans were made for each lesson separately based on the progression of the pupils' writing process in previous lessons, although ET's scenario worked a great deal as a model for the phases of the process.

2.2. Documenting the classroom implementation

The general idea in the implemented process was that pupils get acquainted with the practice of writing stories in the schools' web journal using the Magazine Factory service. First pupils examined existing stories in the school's journal and got guidance about the writing and publishing process from ET and pupils from ET's class. Then pupils started writing short stories in pairs or groups of three (jokes, descriptions of pets, evaluations of computer games etc.). First versions were written with a writing program and ready-made stories were copied to Magazine Factory. Pupils were also taught to take digital photos and make photo reportage with Magazine Factory. Some pupils got a task to make photo reportage of the classes "night school" activity. Generally, the pupils published varying number of stories in the journal during the process.

2.2.1. Detailed summary

Pedagogical sequence/unit	
Subject(s)	Native language, Writing, Production of digital material

Class level	2nd grade, age 8-9 years (N=21)
Duration of sequence/ unit	The duration of the sequence was 8 lessons, which were distributed in six weeks (15/4-27/5). In the first two weeks, there were two lessons per week, then one lesson per week.
ICT tool(s)	
Tool 1: Name, official website, tool type	Web-based publishing tool/service Magazine Factory, http://magazinefactory.edu.fi/
Tool 2: Name, official website, tool type	Interactive white board in the regular classroom
Tool 2: Name, official website, tool type	Some digital cameras
Tool 2: Name, official website, tool type	Writing application Office Word
Description of the sequence/unit	
Objectives of the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to make short stories to the school's journal • Practicing writing with computers • Learning to log in and upload stories in the Magazine Factory program • Learning to take photos with digital cameras
Description of the phases of the sequence	<p>Lesson 1: Orientation to the task. NT and ET started the project together in NT's classroom. ET showed pupils the structure and current content of the schools' journal and then the teachers discussed with pupils about their suggestions for new stories. Pupils read journal stories using laptops but did not log in the program as editors. After the lesson, ET added some topic areas in the web journal, based on the pupils' suggestions.</p> <p>Lesson 2: Demonstration of publishing with Magazine Factory and starting the story writing. First NT showed shortly with the interactive white board how to log in to the Magazine Factory program and how to start story writing under some topic section. He also divided pupils in pairs or groups of three for story writing. Pupils logged in with the help of five 5th graders which were present in the lesson from ET's class. Then some of the 5th grades presented, with the help from NT, how they had created their stories first by writing them with a writing program and then copying them in Magazine Factory. Pupils started writing their stories with Word and saved them in their own user accounts in the schools' server; 5th graders worked as tutors.</p> <p>Lesson 3: Reviewing already published stories and getting</p>

	<p>acquainted with using digital photos in journal stories. So far about seven pupils had finished sort stories (e.g. jokes). Some pupils had written or continued stories at home. ET showed with the IVB how the already published stories look like in the school's journal; the idea was to motivate the pupils to make more stories. ET also told about a possibility to make a picture story by using photos from "the night school" (pupils spend one night at the school doing something else than typical school work) which the class had have next week. A national broadcasting company shot the lesson for a TV program about media education at schools. The end of the lesson was used for continuing unfinished stories or starting new stories. ET showed some pupil groups how to take photos with a digital camera.</p> <p>Lesson 4: Getting acquainted with adding pictures in journal stories and continuing unfinished stories. NT showed with the IVB how pictures can be uploading in the Magazine Factory program and how to make a picture story. Some pupils had taken photos in the night school and they were supposed later to make a photo reportage based on them. The end of the lesson was used for continuing unfinished stories or starting new stories. Those pupils who had not yet been able to finish any story, got story writing as a home work.</p> <p>Lesson 5: Practicing the making of photo reportage and continuing unfinished stories. The teachers showed in the beginning of the lesson how to make a photo reportage with Magazine Factory. Each pupil pair practiced making reportage with some pictures uploaded by the teacher in the server. After that, the pupils continued their unfinished stories.</p> <p>Lesson 6: Story writing continues. At the start of the lesson, the class viewed published stories together from the IVB, and NT encouraged pupils to create ideas for new stories. NT had given a pair of pupils a task to make a photo reportage using the pictures taken from the class's night school; those pupils went in the ET's class where he supervised them in the task. Other pupils continued making stories from topics chosen by themselves (e.g. about jokes, pets or computer games).</p>
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	<p>Lesson 7: Story writing continues. The project continued in lessons where only half of the class is present, to make the guidance and supervision easier. The other half continued the work in a separate lesson. First NT showed pupils how to check the remaining battery power of the laptops and use power cable if needed. Then the whole group reviewed together through IWB, which new stories have been sent for publishing or published. The rest of the lesson was used for writing new or unfinished stories.</p> <p>Lesson 8: Finalising the journal stories. The only goal for the lesson was to finalize stories that were still unfinished, because the project and the school term were ending. NT and the school helper guided the pupils pairs based on the situation of each pair and helped them to finalize their stories. At the end of the lesson, pupils logged off and carried the laptops to their place of storage in the 5th grader's classroom.</p>
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2.2.2. Main similarities and differences compared to the example scenario by expert teacher

Many of the activities and the general idea in the process carried out in NTs class were similar as in the example scenario: learning to use Magazine Factory tool, learning to take photos with a digital camera, and writing stories in the school's web journal. Differences in the scenarios related mainly to the organization of groups and the nature of writing process.

In ET's scenario, each pupil group made one longer story through which they systematically practiced all phases of the publication process: brainstorming and planning, writing, peer-commenting and revising, taking and adding photos, and sending the final text for publication. NT organized pupils to write stories in pairs or small groups so that their assembly somewhat changed from one lesson to another, depending on who was present and who had finished his or her stories. Writing activities concentrated more on writing one or several short stories (jokes, description of pets or a computer game), without much planning or revising of texts. One reason for conducting more modest writing process might be that the pupils in NT's class were much younger (2nd graders, 8-9 years old) whereas pupils in ET's class were already at 5th grade (11-12 years old). NT reported considering quite carefully, how he should apply the example scenario to suit such young pupils; he described that the idea was to give pupils the first "surface" experience of the journal writing process.

Concerning the usage of technology, ET taught new technical skills (writing stories with a writing application, copying the final text to Magazine Factory, taking and uploading photos) for each group separately when they had progressed to the phase where they needed them. ET taught technical skills for all pupils at the same time in common sessions, demonstrating the procedures with IVB. It might relate to the issue that there were more pupils in NT's class and it would have been impossible to organize the teaching of new skills for each pair or group separately.

In the example scenario, one important phase was the reflection session in the last lesson, where ET directed pupils to evaluate the whole process and the outcomes both from the point of view of individual pupil and the group work. NT did not have any special finalization for the process, and there were not any self-evaluation activities included, at least in the lessons that were observed by the researchers.

3. Lessons learnt for improving the materials and the tutoring model

3.1. Suggestions for using and improving the materials

Based on the experiences of the present case, the scenario description and especially the videos (see http://www.fictup-project.eu/index.php/School_children%E2%80%99s_Web_journal_Publishing_with_Magazine_Factory_tool) are useful in orientating a tutored teacher in the new practices. Examining them quickens the process and saves time from the tutor to explain everything, but still the most important support for the tutored teaches are the discussions with the tutor. There did not come any suggestions to improve the materials from the participating teachers.

One issue that was important in the present case was that the pupils in NT's class were much younger than the pupils in the example scenario, and there were also more pupils in the class. Especially the writing skills of 2nd graders are much more modest than those of 5th graders' skills; therefore NT had to revise the goals of the task quite a lot. Also some ways of integrating the usage of various technological tools in the process were perhaps too complicated for the pupils. One idea might be to include in the example scenarios some hints about alternative ways of organizing the practices depending on the target group and context. Another possibility might be to collect, using social software tools, user descriptions from teachers about alternative ways of appropriating the example scenarios in different situations.

3.2. Suggestions for applying and developing the tutoring model

The present case witnessed that there can be several ways to organize the tutoring activities and the teachers should have degrees of freedom to choose a way that suits best to their situation, style and goals. The FICTUP tutoring model was given to the teachers of the present case but they did not feel it comfortable to follow it directly. One question is, in what form the tutoring model should we provided for the teachers so that it can help them to systematize and structure the practice transformation process in a productive way, without directing it too much.

This case was special in a sense that the journal writing scenario was intended to be established as the whole school's common practice. Rather than a process resembling teacher training, the tutoring process in this case was more as a way to accustom a newcomer into the school's established or to-be-developed common practices. For this specific school, this tutoring experience probably helps the expert teacher to disseminate the practice among other teachers, too. In this case, also the tutored teacher experienced that the tutor's way of guiding him is a good model about how to support and supervise a colleague from the same school in learning new teaching practices. In addition to developing training materials that describe good pedagogical scenarios in classroom (like FICTUP scenarios and videos), it might be useful also to create several example models about successful tutoring practices for different purposes. One nice practice that the teachers in the present case applied was that the older and more experienced pupils from the expert teacher's class participated in the novice teacher's lessons as tutors for his pupils.