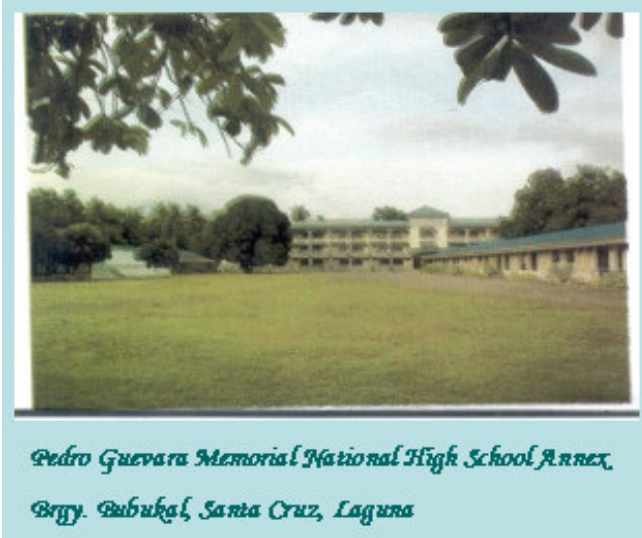


Mixing Creativity and Initiative:

Making Elearning Possible in a Resource-Poor School

(The Case of PGMNHS Annex)



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Abstract

This paper calls for teachers' initiative to realize creativity and elearning in teaching their respective subjects with or without ICT resources within their school. It shows how the statement "Teachers can help themselves and do innovation on their own" was realized" by the author through initiating the use of elearning methodology in teaching Values Education IV at Pedro Guevara Memorial National High School Annex, Santa Cruz, Laguna despite the fact that their school has an almost zero ICT resource.

I Background

Pedro Guevara Memorial National High School Annex is strategically located within the San Luis Sports Complex of Laguna. Being young at the age of five, this school still struggles to develop and improve their delivery of services to their students.

The choice of Values Education as content of the elearning project was done to address the problem in lack of time for teaching this subject. In the 2002 Secondary Education Curriculum, this subject is taught within just one hour per week for the second and third year levels and within just two hours per week for the first and fourth year levels. With too many lessons to be taught under too limited time condition, Values Education teachers find it very impossible to teach all the lessons under regular classroom instruction. They thus had to think of a teaching approach that will complement this kind of instruction. Having knowledge and skills in administering a website made the author think the use of elearning as the most relevant solution for the problem. She received discouragements due to absence of computers in the school but was even more challenged to realize what she had thought of and she was satisfied by the result!

Precursors of the Elearning Project

The author considers her affiliation to Eminima Movement (an ICT-Oriented Movement based at the University of the Philippines Los Banos) as the most influencing factor that helped her realize elearning in teaching Values Education IV in their school. The website she received from this movement, <http://www.annex.ph-islands.net>, was her primary tool in implementing the elearning project. The project was conceptualized during one of the many mini-tutorials she had with Eminima proponents.

II Objectives

The main objective of the author in doing the elearning project was to prove that minimal or zero ICT resource in a school is not a hindrance to implementing the elearning methodology in teaching a subject.

Specifically, this project is aimed to:

- a) develop self-directed elearning modules (about lessons 6 to 10 of each unit in Values Education IV) that will complement regular classroom instruction;
- b) to construct and deploy tests for online quiz taking.
- c) To monitor and evaluate the students' rate of participation in the online quiz taking

III Methodology

The following actions were taken before attaining the aforementioned specific objectives:

- o Identifying the elearning methodology fitted for a school without or with just minimal ICT resource;
- o Conducting informal interviews with IT people in the school to get opinions, comments, and suggestions regarding the project;
- o Diagnosing the students' knowledge on how to use computers through the following checklist:

Instruction: Mark check (/) the column that corresponds to your answer.

Points of Diagnosis		Yes	No
Has knowledge on...	1. the basic parts of the computer such as CPU, monitor screen, mouse, and keyboard;		
	2. opening and shutting down the computer;		
	3. the uses of the basic parts of the computer mentioned in item one;		
	4. opening a website;		
	5. researching any topic from the website;		
	6. using Microsoft Powerpoint;		
	7. using Microsoft Word;		
	8. using Microsoft Excel		
Has	9. email ad		
	10. computer at home		

- o Informing the parents about the project and the advantages it would entail unto their sons/daughters;
- o Forwarding to the Officer In-Charge the letter of request to implement the elearning project

The specific objectives were attained through the following ways:

- a. 1. Developing elearning modules that complement classroom instruction using the following module template the author had developed:

Aralin

PSSLC.

I Discussion (Pagtalakay)

Springboard (Lunsaran)

Questions Related to the Springboard (Mga Tanong na Kaugnay ng Lunsaran)

Guide in Values Processing (Gabay sa Pagpoproseso ng Pagpapahalaga)

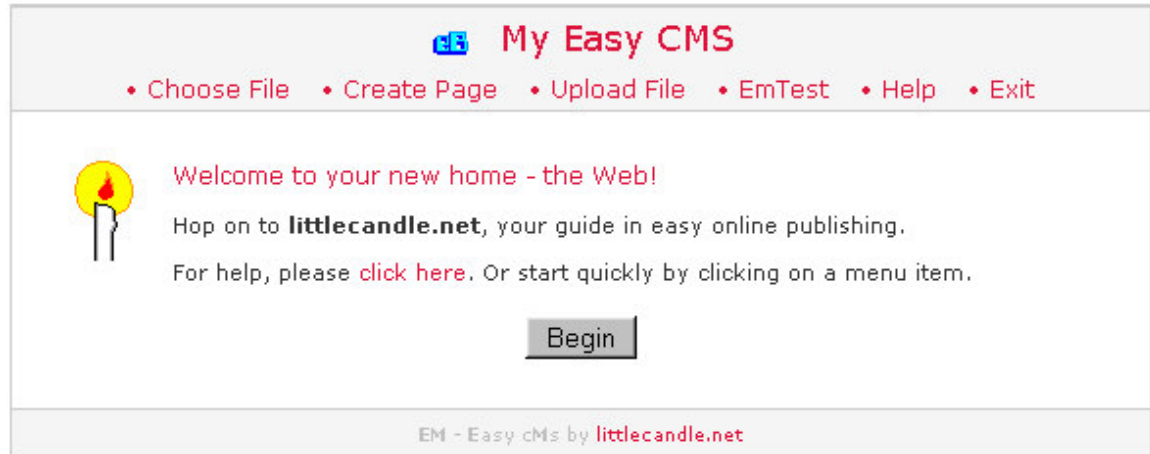
- 1. Isipin (Think).**
- 2. Feel (Damhin)**
- 3. Accept (Tanggapin)**

II Adaptation (Paghahalaw)

Remember (Tandaan)

Project (Proyekto)

- a. 2. Using CutePDFwriter (a software that is retrievable from the open resources) in publishing the developed modules as PDF;
- a. 3. Using the annex.ph-islands.net's administrator page (shown below) in developing and deploying the elearning modules.



- b. Using the "test creation webpage" that Eminima author Dr. Mananghaya set unto our website in constructing and deploying tests for online quiz taking.
- c. Monitoring and evaluation of the students' rate of participation in the elearning.

Results and Discussions

Below are the results of the actions taken before realizing the specific objectives:

- o The help of Eminima proponents was sought for in identifying the elearning methodology fitted for a school without ICT resource. The author learned from them that elearning may be done either in CD or Internet-based method.

In CD-based methodology, modules (supplementary or substitute for regular classroom instruction) are created using high version softwares which usually require anyone of high technical knowledge in using them. This now becomes a problem in the sustainability of any elearning project.

There are commercial CD-based teaching materials but to find one which has the exact content and quality needed by the teacher is difficult. Most CD materials available in bulk are not educational but commercial.

In the Internet-based methodology, a teacher must have a website to administer. This website must have the template suited to the concept of his elearning project. That is if he needs to create modules and test for online quiz taking and deploy them through the website, the website (as well as its administrator page) must have a template fitted to this purpose.

Regarding how to own a website without cost, one must just take the initiative to use the free online sources. Looking for movements which give away free websites is another option (Eminima Movement is highly recommended).

To make conceptualizing her elearning project easy, the author decided using the template of the website she already administers (<http://www.annex.ph-islands.net>). She anyway has enough hands-on exercises in administering this website.

The administrator page of the website that the author used in creating and deploying her Values Education IV modules and the tests for online quiz taking has the following webpages together with their uses:

1. **Choosefile.** It is used in opening the files or webpages that the web administrator wants to edit or to fill with contents. If he wants to open or edit one file, he just have to click it, click edit, click go, erase whatever he wants to erase or type whatever he want to type in the editing box, then submit changes.
 2. **Create Page.** As what its name says, it is used in creating a webpage. For example, you want to create a webpage exclusive for your modules in your respective subject area, you just click the webpage, enter name of page to be created, click create page, click ok.
 3. **Upload File.** This is used in uploading pictures saved as jpeg. Just click the following one at a time: select file, right click, copy, upload file, browse, upload, ok, location of your jpeg picture, file where you want to paste the picture, edit, go, specific place to paste the picture, insert/edit image, copy the name of the file, insert, then submit changes.
 4. **Em Test.** This is used in constructing the online test. To use it, click Em Test, make or edit test, type the title of test, the instruction, the number of items you wish to construct, number of answers per question, password for modifying the test, filename for saving the test, start entering questions, give choices, click the button of the correct answer, explanation, then submit changes.
 5. **Help.** This shows instructions on how to administer an eminima website.
 6. **Exit.** Clicking it means closing the session.
- Regarding the informal interviews the author conducted to some of her co-teachers, most of them advised her to wait for the computers that were promised unto them by many groups before implementing her proposed project. She respected their opinions but still followed herself and the result was good!
 - Below is the summary of the diagnosis the author did regarding her students' knowledge and access to computers:

Table 1. Summary of results of the diagnosis on the students' knowledge and access to computers.

Points of Diagnosis		Antipolo		Avocado		Bamboo		Eucalyptus		Talisay		Tindalo		total
		Section 1		Section 3		Section 4		Section 9		Section 18		Section 19		
		M	F	M	F	M	F	F	M	F	M	F	M	
		23	25	23	29	26	27	28	26	28	25	26	24	300
With knowledge on	1) Four basic parts of a computer (CPU, monitor screen, keyboard, mouse)	23	22	20	27	19	21	9	15	17	13	11	8	206
	2) Opening and shutting down the computer	18	20	18	20	15	14	7	16	14	12	8	9	171
	3) Uses of the basic parts of the computer	20	21	18	21	15	17	4	10	9	8	8	6	178
	4) Opening a website	8	10	10	8	5	6	2	7	2	1	1	0	60
	5) Researching any topic from the internet	3	2	4	6	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	22
	6) Using Microsoft Word	20	18	17	14	15	14	1	14	10	1	3	2	129
	7) Using Microsoft PowerPoint	1	2	2	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
	8) Using Microsoft Excel	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Has	9) email ad	5	9	6	8	3	9	2	1	4	0	1	1	49
	10) computer at home	5	3	8	4	2	5	1	2	1	2	1	1	35

This table shows that the higher sections have more knowledge on basic things about computers than the lower ones. It also shows that all the sections, both high and low, have very minimal knowledge on items 3, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

On the basis of the diagnosis' result, the author decided to take the first and second days of classes in teaching her students about computer basics. Since no computers are present in the school, she did it through chalk-board lecture discussion type. To test whether her students understood or not the lesson, she gave them a practice elearning assignment and that was to take one among the available online quizzes – the spelling quiz. To her surprise, more than half of her students (mostly from the higher sections) had done the assignment. This greatly encouraged her to pursue the project.

- Informing the parents about the project and the advantages it would entail unto their sons/daughters took place last July 8, 2005 during the PTA meeting held in the school. Questions and worries were answered during the meeting. One of the worries presented was what if their sons/daughters would use the elearning project as alibi in going home late during weekdays or on going out during weekends. The author told them that that doing the elearning activity will take place just once a week and reading one module in the net and answering the online test last for only 20 to 30 minutes. To avoid this problem, she requested the parents to be the one to decide for their sons/daughters' elearning day.
- The comments and suggestions given by the OIC regarding the letter forwarded unto her were used in modifying the project.

Below are the results of the author's endeavors in trying to attain the specific objectives:

a. Five colorful and illustrative modules (about lessons 6-10 of Unit I) had already been developed and published online. Creating them and publishing them online became easy with the author because of the following:

1. reference materials and document template presented earlier;
2. free online resources; and
3. hands-on practices she had during summer 2005 and with Eminima proponents providing her with technical know-how when requested.

Deploying the modules was realized through the use of the school's website (<http://www.annex.ph-islands.net>) which the students accessed through renting computers in the net cafés in the community.

Reading the modules by group is encouraged to foster collaborative learning and to minimize the rental fee each student has to pay.

One elearning session was done per week. While lesson 1 was being discussed under regular classroom instruction, lesson 6 was being studied by students under elearning condition.

Same technique was used in the succeeding lessons.

(Note: More modules, about lessons 6-10 of unit II and III, are still to be developed.)

b. The following tests were created and were already used for online quiz taking:

1. Five-item test for module 1 (lesson 6 of unit I)
2. Fifteen-item test for module 2 (lesson 7 of unit I)
3. Ten-item test for module 3 (lesson 8 of unit I)
4. Five-item test for module 4 (lesson 9 of unit I)
5. No test was done for module 5 (lesson 10 of unit I). Instead, the final project for the whole grading period was required since the PSSLC of this lesson is more of psychomotor in nature.

c. The elearning project was well-participated by the author's students as proven by the following summary and interpretation of the website's report on the students' rate of participation in the online quiz taking as of August 14, 2005.

IV Conclusions and Recommendations

Students found the elearning project in Values Education very enjoyable as proven by their great participation in posting comments, exercises, and online quiz taking. The project is still continuing but the following statements may be made at this point:

1. Making elearning possible in a resource-poor school can be very easy with teachers who have the heart for innovation;
2. Elearning is possible even in schools with minimal ICT resources especially if the school is located in a community with many internet cafes;
3. Innovation in teaching does not come with overflowing resources – what is important is how we are able to raise and use resources;
4. With open resources available in the internet, being creative and productive is now simply a product of choice;
5. If students visit internet cafes for games, then why not give them elearning as a much better reason for going there? They love it anyway!

Literature Cited

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2. ARCA, LAURITA P., Development and Assessment of Values Education II Modules for Pedro Guevara Memorial National High School. UPLB, 2003.

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For queries regarding the modules and tests, visit <http://www.annex.ph-islands.net>. The webpage is **ValuesIV**.