

Socrates said writing would destroy human thinking processes: are the Internet and Web 2.0 having a more profound effect on cognition?

Cristina Preston^{1,2}, T. Kuechel², L. Cych², A. Jimoyiannis³
christina@mirandanet.ac.uk, theo.kuechel@gmail.com, leoncych@gmail.com,
ajimoyia@uop.gr

¹ Department of Learning, Curriculum and Communication, Institute of Education,
University of London

² MirandaNet

³ Department of Social and Educational Policy, University of Peloponnese

Abstract

The MirandaMod is an adaptation of the 'unconference' model: a workshop when like-minded educators aim to explore an emerging professional issue and create new knowledge collaboratively. This knowledge is then disseminated through the website in order to inspire new grassroots practice. MirandaNet members define the MirandaMod on their website as an informal, loosely structured unconference of educators sharing ideas about the use of technology to inspire others (www.mirandanet.ac.uk/mirandamods).

A MirandaMod is less formal than a conference, a keynote, or a paper because the audience becomes participants who are invited to contribute and interact. Anyone is welcome to give presentations. The lead speaker shapes the topic on the MirandaMod theme for around 15 minutes (by just speaking engagingly, rather than using presentation software). Then each professional who has registered gives no more than a five minute perspective on the topic in random order. Interaction takes place between the participants after each talk which is easier than in the conventional lecture hall because are facing each other in a circle as in an amphitheatre.

MirandaMods are broadcast live across the Internet, the event is available worldwide on the internet and international participants can be called in on Flash meeting to speak as well. As a result the wiki-based format, together with streamed webcasts, chat facilities and linked Twitter streams and collaborative knowledge maps means that there is an international dimension to these events. This combination of technologies for online multimodal communication is unlike previous modes of knowledge construction and also more democratic because remote participation reduces time and cost commitments. Professionals can become involved wherever they are.

The organizers welcome contributions on this theme and offer the suggestion below

- Can Web 2.0 really change the way we think and learn?
- Should textbooks still have value in a 21st Century educational system?
- Is the school day on the way out?
- Should there be a place for social media in class?
- Is the Internet increasing our capacity to think collaboratively?

Participants are welcome to register at the wiki

<http://mirandamod.wikispaces.com/Korinthos>