



Women for Development NGO

“Creation of Healthy and Peaceful Community in Shirak Region”



Project No. 20070366G/2007.7577.5 / KED-EK 49/2007

Project number: 03-02-00-467 ICCO

Report for the period July 2008 – December 2008

March, 2009

Contact: Dr. Gohar Markosyan

President, Women for Development NGO
Shahinyan str.6a, apt.16
Gyumri 3118
Republic of Armenia

Tel: (+374312) 33007; (+37491) 43 01 61 (mobile)

Fax: (+374312) 33007

Email: goharmarkosyan@yahoo.com

My name is Gohar Markosyan and I am the president of “Women for Development” NGO in Armenia. The organization is a member of INCREPE and works closely with GPPAC since 2005.

Starting from 2002 “Women for Development” NGO is implementing “Peace Education and Conflict Resolution in Schools of Gyumri” project supported by Church Development Service Germany /EED/ and Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation /ICCO/, the Netherlands. The goal of the project is formation of the ideas of peace culture and conflict resolution among teachers and schoolchildren with an objective of integrating Peace Education as a separate subject in the school curriculum.

During the last seven years Peace Education Centers were established and have been actively operating in 10 schools and Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute.

Activities organized for beneficiary schools in frames of the project included peer-to-peer education, Peace Months, pen-pals between Armenian and foreign peers, publishing “Peace Bridges” newsletter, etc. Members of Peace Education Centers participated in numerous international contests, exchanged experience and skills as well as represented Armenian children’s views on peace building.



This year our organization participated in the Celebration of the UN International Day of Peace, which was a new invent for our students. Events were organized in 5 Peace Education Centers and they received publicity through the news program of a local TV channel. Conducted events received intense feedback from the population, therefore the TV Company asked us to shoot a separate TV program and to talk about the International Day of Peace and organized events in detail.

The abovementioned events were various in all schools. On September 10th “Women for Development” NGO organized a meeting with all the teachers responsible for the operations of Peace Education Centers in all 10 schools. At the meeting the goal of celebrating International Day of Peace was presented along with various events conducted in schools of different countries. GPPAC Awareness Raising Toolkit was also presented. Teachers responsible for the operations of Peace Education Centers and pupils were proposed to discuss and decide upon their preferred ways of conducting the event with a special accent on how the schoolchildren would like to celebrate it.

More that 90 8th grade pupils from Gyumri School #20 after Lord Byron organized a parade on September 21st, which began from the square named after Charles Aznavour. Pupils were carrying balloons and posters with “People Building Peace” slogan in both Armenian and English languages walked towards their school. They gifted people on the streets with balloons decorated with words characterizing the phenomenon of peace. Children were telling them about the International Day of Peace and the fact that it is being celebrated all over the world as well as about the importance of peace especially for the children, etc. The parade brought lots of joy both to its direct participants and citizens who were pleasantly surprised because they have never witnessed such an event before.



Another event – chalk drawing was conducted at school # 9. Pupils' drawings were dedicated to the topics of peace and they occupied a whole wall in school's hallway, which was named "Peace Wall". More than 80 pupils participated in this event.



Members of the Peace Education Center of school # 26 initiated a great undertaking. They prepared special leaflets with information about the International Day of Peace and a "People Building Peace" slogan. Center members attended all 20 classes of the school, talked about the International Day of Peace and congratulated everybody.



At school # 29 pupils organized a presentation, where pictures of various weapons were displayed. They talked about the huge amounts of money being spent on production of such weapons in different countries and about the important things which could have been accomplished with those sums. They showed how, for example, a tank may be used in agricultural works, how some spare parts of weapons may serve as tools for land cultivation, etc. Pupils even opened the edge of the rival and turned it into a tray filled up with chocolates, which was distributed to the guests.



That day became a real holiday for the pupils of school N30. The whole school was decorated with balloons, doves, pictures about peace and posters. And at the entrance to the school the members of the “Peace Education Centre” presented to the people the history of the International Peace Day and UN Peace Bell, presented the peace flag of their school. With the participation of the members of the Centre and people present a poster entitled “We are building peace” was prepared, in which everyone expressed his participation in the peace building by outlining his hand to the poster.

All the schoolchildren, teachers and parents of the school participated in the event. Teachers were also invited from neighboring schools (N 42 and N 11), who asked to involve their schools in the project as well.

The event was shot and broadcast through the local TV.



All the abovementioned events reached their goal, which is to raise awareness of schoolchildren and adults about the International Day of Peace, to once again emphasize the importance of the peace and stress out that it is being created and maintained by human beings. It is clear that what is being said by children is much more impressive and inspirational for adults.

P.S.

If you are not satisfied with the quality of these photos, please mention the ones you need, and we shall send you pictures with better quality.

***Working with National Governments and Parliaments
New Initiative of Armenian NGOs.***

The Armenian NGOs have come up with an initiative of developing cooperation with Armenian National Assembly and Government. In the result of that initiative in May 2008 “Public Network” of Civil Society Organizations was created in Armenia. The Network involves 80 NGOs, unions and foundations and aims at promoting the increase of public participation rate in legal activities by developing partnership with National Assembly and Government.

Within the Network there have been created 12 Expert Councils composed of the representatives from member NGOs. These Councils should work with the relevant permanent committees of the National Assembly. The managing body of the Network is the Coordinating Council composed of the Network 12 representatives from Expert Councils.

The Network operation main directions will be:

- Implementing examination of laws and legal initiatives, evaluating the impact of law application, analysis and their submission to authorities,
- Involving public experts in the permanent committees of National Assembly, groupings and ministries from “Public Network” relevant committees,
- Other various activities directed to enlarging and improving the legislative basis with the possible large participation of the voters in that process

The Network representatives already participate in the hearings and discussions of draft laws in the National Assembly.

Public Network is coordinated by “Araza” NGO
Address: 26 Aram Khachatryan, fl 50, Yerevan, Armenia
Tel: (+374 10) 227097 / 278906;
E-mail: araza@arminco.com



Peace through Understanding

December 19, 2008

Manushak Aslanyan
Yerevan, Armenia

Dear Manushak,

Congratulations on your acceptance to the 2009 Peace Camp in Jordan! It gives me a great pleasure to send you this letter and to personally congratulate you on your outstanding achievements.

This year, nearly four hundred students applied from around the world and only fifty positions were awarded to both American and International delegates. You are one of the twelve American awardees. I am confident that you will represent your community well during this once-in-a-lifetime event.

There are a few details that you will need to take care of in January. Mr. Viktor Zikas, Managing Director of Special Programs will be contacting you in January of 2009 with further instructions. During this extensive planning process over the next three months, if you have questions, please contact Viktor at 1.816.531.4701 or via e-mail at viktorzikas@ptpi.org.

I look forward to seeing you in Jordan!

Your Partner in Peace,

Mary Jean Eisenhower
President & Chief Executive Officer

Photo from the author's archive



today such youthful “creativity” is, unfortunately, a widespread phenomenon. **A.P.** So, acknowledging the downside of the newest media technologies: Do you think it's time to teach our students the basics of Internet safety?

A.F. As we know, one of the main objectives of media education today is to foster critical thinking that can be applied to any text in the mass media. If students are able to analyze and evaluate texts critically, they will be far less likely to “take the bait” of criminals, predators, or unscrupulous characters trolling the Internet. Of course the problems of safety on the Internet and mobile phone networks should be given high priority in media educational classrooms: Blind trust in any virtual conversation partners can be really dangerous...

It is difficult to address these problems unless students are familiar with the psychosocial mechanisms of the media. When students have learned to identify specific techniques used in media manipulation, they take a more critical view of information received via any channel, including the Internet. Achieving this goal may include:

- exposing and demonstrating the psychosocial machinery of media manipulation;
- demonstrating and analyzing typical media manipulation methods and techniques;
- “sifting” the information presented in media texts (careful categorizing of the true and false materials in the press, TV, radio, etc., differentiating the

- “spin” and “buzz words” by juxtaposing the information with actual facts);
- questioning the aura of convention, ingenuousness, or authority surrounding a given message;
- critical analysis of the objectives, interests, and motives of the source of the information.

In all these approaches, of course, we need to keep in mind the differences between informational and artistic texts. Different criteria will apply.

One of the most difficult questions regarding negative influences of the media is the issue of violence. Certainly in real life few teenagers set out to imitate the behavior of violent movie or videogame characters. But some of them become desensitized to media violence, which leads to indifference and an inability to experience normal human compassion. This finding has been confirmed repeatedly by U.S. researchers.

Therefore, an effective classroom assignment might be to critically dissect the true identity of the so-called “action hero”—and challenge the morality of a “hero” who murders dozens of people in cold blood. To this end we sometimes employ an activity called “criminal investigation”: Students investigate crimes depicted in a violent media text. Their task is to reveal illegal, cruel, or abusive actions committed by the characters. Then, having collected cogent evidence, the learners build up an indictment against the “agents” (i.e. the authors) who exploit violence—or encourage violence—for commercial purposes.

N.K. What would you like to wish the readers of *Thinking Classroom*?

A.F. That they should embrace the ideas of media literacy education, and continue always to raise their own media competence. Here I'd like to cite the words of the well-known Canadian educator, philosopher, and scholar, Marshall McLuhan: “You must be literate in umpteen media to be really *literate* nowadays.”

N.K., A.P. Thank you so much for answering our questions. We wish you continued success in all your endeavors!

Goharik Markosyan and Julieta Chaloyan

Engaging Children and Teenagers in Peace Culture Education and Peacebuilding

Photos from the authors' archives



Goharik Markosyan is President of the NGO “Women for Development” in Gyumri, Armenia.



Julieta Chaloyan is a senior staff member of the NGO “Women for Development” in Gyumri, Armenia.

For the past five years, the NGO *Women for Development*, established in 1997 in Gyumri, Armenia, has been implementing a project called *Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in the Schools of Gyumri*, which is aimed at promoting peace culture and conflict resolution skills. As part of the project, 10 Peace Education Centers (PECs), involving about 250 students, are now operating in the schools of the Shirak district. As a member of the International Peace Education and Conflict Resolution Network established in 2005 in New York, *Women for Development* cooperates with many non-profit and governmental organizations implementing similar projects, both in Armenia and abroad. In this article we share our experiences in teaching Peace Culture and peacebuilding.

Why teach Peace?

Today the need for peace is as crucial as it ever has been; threats to peace and security including wars, armed conflicts, and terrorism, seem to proliferate unchecked. However, peace and stability depend not only on the absence of war, but also on our ability to build relations with others. If we wish to have peace, then we need to explain to people what peace is, and what stands in the way of achieving it: what we need to change in ourselves, in our culture,

and in our society to be able to live in peace.

Peace education leads people to take an active part in creating a more humane, equitable, free, and prosperous world, a world without wars and violence.

With hard work, people of any age can make positive changes in their consciousness, feelings, and ideas, but the younger the person, the easier the process. That's why our centers work with children and teenagers.

The key principles of peace education are non-violence and social justice. Students acquire skills and knowledge needed for peacebuilding, and develop their own viewpoints on issues of peace and justice. It is important that they also learn to prevent conflict and acts of violence, and to resolve conflicts peacefully. Consequently, the skills and knowledge acquired in PECs promote changes in behavior that decrease personal and interpersonal conflicts, and lead to the creation of stronger class and school communities.

How Peace Education Centers work

Peace and Conflict Resolution Education is set up as a two-year course of study. Initially, in 2002, the Centers accepted students from all grade levels. Subsequently, however, we had to change our approach, because it was



RULES FOR AVOIDING ESCALATION OF CONFLICT¹:

- Be in control of your own behavior, thoughts and feelings (e.g. If in the middle of an argument you leave and slam the door behind you, the conflict won't be resolved anytime soon...).
- If your opponent engages in inappropriate behavior (e.g., raises his/her voice), don't follow suit.
- Remember that everyone has freedom of choice, and freedom to act according to his or her own views.
- Don't resort to threats (never say "You'll be sorry!" or "I'll show you!").
- Focus on the specific problem in question (e.g., if the conflict originated over a torn book, there is no need to bring up a CD that was lost a year ago).
- Don't insult your opponent or his/her relatives.
- Don't invoke the opinions of other people as "authorities" to bolster your argument (e.g., "Your classmates don't like you either.").
- Avoid using the words *always* and *never* (e.g., "You always do same thing! You're always like that!" or "I'll never agree to this!").
- Avoid name-calling.
- Don't make "hotheaded" decisions. Wait for your emotions to cool down.

difficult to make up a timetable that would accommodate all participants. Now every Center is built around a "nucleus" consisting of one class (recommended by the school staff), with students from other classes invited to join this nucleus. As a rule, a lot of students sign up at the beginning of the year, but after a month or so there are typically only 15–20 really interested students (mainly 6–8th graders) remaining in each Center.

To make our classes rich and meaningful, we use group work, interactive activities, and discussion. The discussions are lively and interesting; a warm and respectful atmosphere puts students at ease so they can speak their minds freely. We carefully choose the problems for discussion. Whereas many teachers try to avoid discussing controversial issues, we proceed from the conviction that the modern school needs to be connected to the real world, with all its conflicts and unexpected changes. For example, we discuss issues such as tolerance towards other ethnicities and religions; and we talk about the relationships between teachers and students, parents and children, trying to determine whether principles of freedom and equal rights can be applied to these relationships. We also address the sociopolitical problems of life in Armenia, and in our city in particular—especially during our elections, when these topics are being discussed everywhere, but students often receive biased information. Our students learn to speak freely about what is going on in class, in school, and in their family life. We encourage them to participate in school government and other community organizations, so that they can begin to influence social processes even during their student years. We teach our students to respect their peers, and to base their interactions on principles of positive and open collaboration.

In a word, we have ambitious goals, and our course content, teaching materials, and teaching methods are all designed to help us achieve them.

The Peace and Conflict Resolution Education course comprises the following topics:

- *What Is Peace?*
- *What Is Conflict?*
- *Causes of Conflict*
- *Conflict Escalation*
- *Conflict Analysis*
- *How to Behave in a Conflict Situation*
- *Conflict Management*
- *Principles of Conflict Resolution*
- *Mediation*
- *Negotiation*

Students not only acquire knowledge about these topics, but also develop practical skills that they can use in real-life settings.

As an example, below we describe our lessons in *Conflict Analysis*.

Conflict Analysis lessons

To begin with, we help students realize that conflict is an integral part of life. Conflict arises from differences in our views, needs, and desires. Conflict can occur anywhere: at home, at school, at a playground, on the street, at work, on the way to work, or during an athletic event.

Conflict often escalates because the opposing parties tend to exaggerate the facts, take extreme positions, or form hostile groups. Then the conflict becomes destructive and harmful to all parties involved.

Most people see conflict only as something negative or destructive, but this is not the whole story. Conflict can frequently be a stimulus to growth and development. The ability to manage conflict bolsters self-esteem and facilitates social interaction. Conflict management, however, must be based on understanding, which can be achieved through conflict analysis.

- Conflict analysis involves determining
- who is in conflict with whom
 - the positions and demands of the parties involved
 - the goals and intentions of each side
 - a possible course of action, i.e. what each side might do to achieve its goals

To demonstrate the importance of conflict analysis, we offer students a simple situation: Two friends are discussing how to divide an orange. Students always start by proposing the most straightforward solution: Divide it in half. But one of the boys in our scenario rejects this decision, and we try to determine



why. We discover that one boy is interested in the fruit itself, while the other needs only the peel, as his mother needs orange zest to make a cake for his sister's birthday. After this analysis it is easy to find a solution: one boy gets the flesh, and the other gets the peel. The conflict is settled, and everybody is happy.

As we move from discussing the necessity for conflict analysis to the analysis itself, our teachers try to select activities that will engage students' interest and encourage them to think and to develop their communication skills. Two such activities are *Scene & Discussion* and *Conflict Mapping*.

Scene & Discussion

One way to analyze a conflict is to perform it. For example, PEC teachers can ask students to stage a conflict situation from

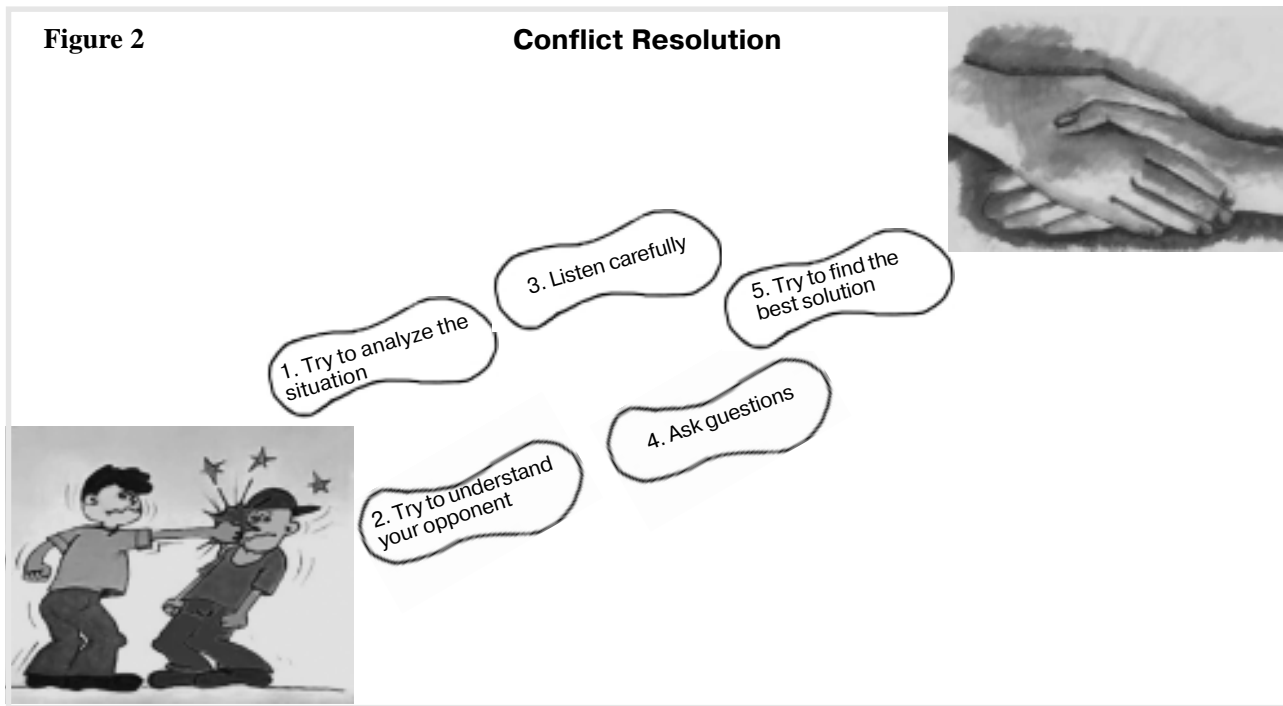


¹ When explaining the rules and principles we follow Crawford, D., Bodine, R. (1996). *Conflict resolution education: A guide to implementing programs in schools, youth-serving organizations, and community and juvenile justice settings. Program Report*. Washington, DC.: Department of Justice.



Figure 2

Conflict Resolution



In preparing the lessons, members of the groups agree in advance who will present which particular rules and principles. They prepare posters to illustrate their explanations. For example, five footprints might be used to demonstrate five principles of conflict resolution (Figure 2), or an expressive comic could present recommendations for behavior in conflict situations (Figure 3). Real-life examples are used to illustrate all the rules and principles, and students in the class are encouraged to provide additional examples. Class members also participate in short skits representing conflicts they encounter in

everyday life or at school. The participants portray the origin and development of the conflict, and then offer various solutions. To determine the best solution, they use the rules and principles they have just learned, with the posters displayed in the room serving as reminders. A variation on this activity is to have the actors presenting the conflict intentionally violate all the principles and rules discussed. The other students must then determine which principles and rules were violated, and explain what led to the escalation of the conflict.

In these peer-to-peer lessons, both the peer teachers and their students are active participants in the process. For the first few minutes the young teachers are usually shy, but they soon forget their stage fright and conduct their lesson with confidence, actively involving their schoolmates in the process. Students talk about their arguments with friends, parents, and teachers, and discuss how to resolve these conflicts. At the end of the lesson, the students receive a questionnaire for their parents (designed to find out what parents think of conflict resolution education), and handouts summarizing the rules and principles of conflict resolution. Parents' responses to the questionnaires are carefully analyzed, and the data will be applied in our future work.



After a peer-to-peer presentation, peer teachers, PEC teachers, and observers (other students from the Peace Education Center who were present at the lesson) analyze the lesson. The atmosphere of constructive criticism and self-reflection makes for unbiased judgment, and helps the young teachers improve their skills with each subsequent lesson. Peer-to-peer lessons are conducted for almost all the classes in the schools where PECs are active, and within a month most of the students have been introduced to the ideas of Peace Culture. Sometimes we conduct such lessons in other schools as well.

These lessons help our participants and their audiences realize that respect and collaboration can easily be achieved in any school community if one approaches one's classmates as friends, rather than enemies.

Response of participants

Figure 3. How to behave to avoid escalation of conflict

	Be in control of your own behavior, thoughts and feelings.
	Focus on the specific problem.
	Avoid name-calling!
	Don't make "hotheaded" decisions. Wait for emotions to cool down.
	If your opponent engages in inappropriate behavior, never follow suit.
	Don't invoke the opinions of other people as "authorities" to bolster your argument.
	Remember that everyone has freedom of choice, and freedom to act according to his or her own views.
	Don't resort to threats.



About 95% of students who attend peer-to-peer lessons consider them useful and important. In response to our questions, many note that they were able to express their thoughts freely in these lessons without fear that they would be misunderstood or criticized for a "wrong" opinion. The respondents like having the lessons conducted by peers—they are convinced that their peers understand them better than any adult could. Children often relate more easily to other children, and both tutors and tutees benefit from the interaction: The former improve their knowledge and skills and gain confidence, and the latter become familiar with the ideas of peace and peacebuilding. Students share the handouts from the lesson with their friends and relatives, thus engaging them in peace education as well.

According to the peer teachers themselves, their teaching experience helps them to manage conflicts that may occur between teachers and students. They are proud of their new role, their self-esteem increases, and as an added benefit, they really begin to value the work of teachers.

How the participants benefit from the project

From time to time we organize meetings, workshops, or round table sessions with parents of PEC students. The parents tell us how their children's behavior has changed: Many notice that their children have become more respectful, friendly, and tolerant. Similar ideas are expressed on our questionnaire



Photos from the authors' archives

for parents, in response to the question “How has the PEC course influenced your children?” as illustrated by the following answers:

- *My son has become more tolerant of younger children.*
- *He teaches his younger brothers and sisters to avoid conflict.*
- *My son can now manage a conflict; one day he even helped me and my husband to resolve a family conflict.*
- *After PEC studies my son comes home very peaceful. I feel he has changed.*
- *My daughter has become kinder. Now she ignores her brother's tricks, which she never did before.*
- *When my daughter tells me about the classes, I can see that your explanations are clear and easy to understand.*
- *I really see my son changing. He is much more levelheaded now. He doesn't argue with his sister about everything.*
- *He has changed a lot; he is no longer so quick-tempered.*

Teachers note that PEC studies improve students' interactions and broaden their outlook, which results in a better understanding of the people and the world around them. According to the students themselves, the Center provides them with a lot of new information, and helps them understand things that used to confuse them; their studies promote personal growth and help them to build healthy relations with others.

Peace education focuses students' attention on important current problems:

problems of war and peace, tolerance, and peacebuilding. After their two-year course, participants can no longer say that peace issues are beyond their concern. Rather, the students are convinced—and prepared to persuade any adult—that taking care of one's surroundings, helping people in crisis, educating oneself, and making progress in different areas of life are very important, not only for self-realization but also for world peace. As a result, our students have organized such initiatives as Good Deeds Week, during which they visit nursery schools, a children's home, an orphanage, and a home for the elderly. In addition, they take care of their school grounds and the yards around their homes. When they visit their little nursery school “buddies,” the PEC students bring them a toy or a hand-made gift; they give concerts for the residents of the home for the elderly, and help them solve minor everyday problems. PEC students realize that Peace Culture begins inside ourselves, and so they contribute to future global Peace Culture by gradually changing their own lives, the lives of their families, and their school communities.

Our colleagues

From the very start of the project, we have been actively cooperating with both municipal education boards and the National Institute of Education of Armenia. These organizations help us deliver teacher workshops and prepare handbooks for PEC studies. The goal of our cooperation is to introduce peace education into the school curriculum, either in the form of optional courses, or by integrating the elements of peace education into other courses. To achieve this, we study the experience of other successful projects, and provide school teachers of literature, mathematics, history, biology and other disciplines with specific learning strategies.

We hope that the knowledge and skills students acquire in the PECs will help them realize their own potential in life and contribute to their future success. Our future plans are to continue working to develop peace culture, and to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect within school communities.

Alexandra Bomphray

Teaching Spelling Through Word Study in the Elementary Classroom



Photo from the author's archive

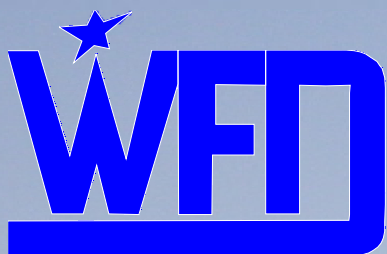
Alexandra Bomphray is a doctoral student at the University of Victoria, Canada. She is also a former elementary teacher and staff development instructor.

As an elementary teacher in a U.S. school with a high population of second language learners, I often struggled to ensure that all of my students were provided with meaningful learning opportunities. English spelling instruction was one area that presented me with unique challenges in meeting this goal. Being a new teacher, I quickly fell back on providing my students with teacher-generated weekly spelling lists that generally followed basic rhyme patterns. These were then followed by a standard group spelling test on Fridays. As one might anticipate, my success with this form of spelling instruction was extremely limited, if not non-existent. I witnessed what so many teachers have observed—that each week it was the same students who were successful on my Friday tests while others, including the majority of my English language learners, failed week after week.

While I made adjustments to my spelling program, including dividing the class into three different spelling groups based on ability, I quickly found that these surface-level changes accomplished little in the way of motivation, and students who had previously been unsuccessful on their tests continued to struggle and met with very little success. In fact, this division of my class also had the unwanted effect of stigmatizing students in the lower spelling groups, as the class quickly noticed which group was given the most difficult words. I also observed that my spelling program,

even with those students who were “successful” on the tests, was in the end a failure in the sense that there was little carryover from my tests to my students' writing in other contexts. Clearly, my spelling program contained little more than rote memorization with no deeper connection or meaning to, or for, my students and their learning.

It wasn't long before I was struggling with the question: “What was the purpose of my spelling program if it did little more than to ensure the success of some while at the same time ensuring the failure of others?” After coming to the conclusion that my spelling instruction was not only ineffective but also harmful to many students, I began to look for a solution. My students were already involved in Writer's Workshop, a daily 60–90 minute writing program designed to provide blocks of time for writing, sharing, and editing that writing with classmates. Instruction is provided primarily through models and mini-lessons. Students are frequently given their choice of topics and forms. The emphasis initially is placed on getting the ideas down; on organization, coherence, and flow; and on the descriptive power and impact of the language. Attention to spelling accuracy and punctuation, etc., comes once the content is in order, and younger children are encouraged to use invented spelling (approximations) as needed (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1994; Graves, 1991). While I cherished the time afforded by the workshop approach for my students to write without being overly concerned with proper spelling, I also felt it was essential for students, in the right time and place, to work on advancing their spelling ability. Therefore, completely doing away with my spelling program was not an option. Instead, I wanted to find a program that incorporated spelling instruction and learning in a more authentic, meaningful way. I found this in word study.



NGO “WOMEN FOR DEVELOPMENT”

A photograph of a rural village scene. In the foreground, a dirt road leads towards a cluster of simple houses with corrugated metal roofs. A wooden fence separates the road from the houses. Two women are standing on a wooden cart pulled by a donkey. The background shows rolling hills under a clear sky with some clouds.

Strategic Plan 2008-2012

REPORT

The members of Musayelyan community got acquainted with the NGO “Women for Development” in 2006. The organization conducted talks and discussions in our village on the topics “HIV/AIDS”, “Conflicts Peaceful Resolution”, “Human rights”.

Starting from 2008 the NGO “Women for Development” has been implementing a project “Creation of Healthy and Peaceful Communities in Shirak region”, in the frames of which a Community Center is established in the village of Musayelyan. The expenses on the renovation and purchase of the furniture are done by the organization, and the renovation work is done by the community. Musayelyan community center has 10 volunteers, who are young teachers and students; we also have an active auditorium, consisting of teachers, housewives and elderly women.

During summer holidays our volunteers helped the 1-3 grade schoolchildren to do their summer homework; they organized an event with the children aged 6-8, which was accepted with big pleasure and enthusiasm by the NGO “Women for Development” and community members.

During the 6 months (July - December) talks and discussions were held in the Community Center by the specialists of the NGO “Women for Development” on the issues “Principles of Healthy Lifestyle”, “Physical activeness and health”. The pupils of the 8-11 grades of the school participated in the meetings on the issue “Sexual health and maturity”, which were conducted by the project doctor Karine Haroyan.

Starting from September a “Peace lesson” subject is introduced to the school curriculum. The children participate in it with great pleasure, they prepared a poster “Peace and War” with their own hands.

In September - November the NGO “Women for Development” organized trainings on the issues “Civil Society”, “Gender Equality and Enlargement of Women’s possibilities” for the village teachers. 10 teachers - active participants of the training - were awarded with certificates.

On behalf of our community I would like to express our deep gratitude to the President of the NGO “Women for Development” G. Markosyan, coordinators A. Shiroyan, S. Ghazaryan, specialists K. Haroyan, J. Chaloyan for the trust and assistance towards us.

Responsible for Musayelyan Community Center
Natasha Yervandyan

09.12.2008.

Trainings, seminars and round table meetings conducted for 10 teachers responsible for Peace Education Centers as well as 15 principals and vice-principals of the target schools based on the “Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in Schools” handbook



School #4



School #9



School #20

Peace Education Centers' activities



School #29



School #2



School #9

Peace Education Centers' activities



School #20



School #26



School #30

Village Community Centers' activities



Bayandur village



Goghovit village



Krashen village



Lanjik village

Musayelyan village



On November 26-27, in the frames of the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence” campaign, WFD NGO organized seminars entitled “Gender Equality and Expansion of Women’s Opportunities” for 17 women of Lanjik and Musayelyan communities



All the participants received certificates of participation



Meetings with the teenagers in the beneficiary villages on the topic
“Sexual maturity”



Goghovit village



Bayandur village



Musayelyan village



Krashen village



Lanjik village

Monitoring of the organization and its ongoing activities by ICCO October 17-18



Activities of Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute



Meeting of Nele de Meyer (*Coordinator EED Dialogue and Support Office – South Caucasus*) and Eka Mrulishvili (*Office Manager - EED Dialogue and Support Office South Caucasus*) with the WFD team and the representatives of Musayelyan village community



Meeting of Nele de Meyer and Eka Mrulishvili with the WFD team and the representatives of Musayelyan village community



During the meeting WFD President introduced the new project, its goals and objectives as well as future activities of the community volunteers and the assistance they can anticipate from the organization

Participation in conferences, workshops, networks, campaigns and events
announced by international organizations



*WFD president Gohar Markosyan participated in the
International Peace Research Association (IPRA) conference, “Building
Sustainable Futures – Enacting Peace and Development”
Leuven, Belgium, 15-19 July 2008*

Participation in conferences, workshops, networks, campaigns and events
announced by international organizations



*WFD Education Department officer Susanna Ghazaryan participated in the
International Network for Peace Education OMNIBUS 1325
October 9-21, Berlin, Germany*