

CUC Workshop Learning and the Internet

1. Introductions

- Guy Mollet made a presentation about the trends and predictions for the future of the e-world. He concluded by stressing that his own frightening prediction was that in the future we all would have less and less privacy and less and less personal freedom. See the PowerPoint charts in attachment.

- Peter Egger triggered the discussion by asking the participants to imagine what the world of a growing child would look like, if his or her school were a computer terminal.

2. Discussions

- The big majority of the participants were absolutely dead against a school structure without teachers in flesh and blood.

- Only one participant was convinced that the Internet is a real revolution that will change dramatically the educational world. Maybe not tomorrow but certainly 10 to 15 years down the road.

- Another participant was convinced that the role of the teachers would change profoundly. Because of the tremendous amount of data, information and knowledge available on the Internet, the teachers as individuals will not be able any more to distill their own knowledge to the children in the way that it is happening today. Their role will be to focus on research and to 'feed' the Internet with their knowledge. The pupils will look and find their knowledge in the own way and time.

- A third participant suggested that the pupils would have each his or her own custom made teacher, over the Internet.

3. Contradictions

- The theses described above were highly contested by the huge majority of the other participants. There was among them an agreement that the Internet is and would remain an additional, be it interesting tool. They compared it to the radio and television, where at the time, the predictions were also that these technical appliances would revolutionize the world of teaching and training. According to them, this has not happened and in the same way, the Internet is not and will not be a revolution either.

The view is that the traditional teachers will retain their importance in the way it is now.

Indeed nothing can replace the personal touch. Certainly until the pupils reach the age of 18 or even older.

Guy S. Mollet

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