

The Application of Students' Fantasy during their writing Approach Process on Multi - thematical Electronic Assignments of the Religion discipline in a Secondary Education School Unit in Greece. A Focusing Current Approach

Konstantinos A. Diamantopoulos¹

Matej Bel University – Slovakia

Recenzent/Review: doc. PaedDr. ThDr. Monika Zaviš, PhD.

Comenius University Bratislava

Submitted/Odoslané: 10. 06. 2022

Accepted/Prijaté: 29. 08. 2022

INTRODUCTION

Greek students of Secondary Education typically are threaded to the generic cultural level of each community, which develops a cultural and educational as well as social peculiarity model based on the financial development, the academic strand and the broader cultural cultivation of each district concerned (Casto et al., 2016, p.3). As Casto et al. (2016) refer, the linkage between the community and educational status is not new. In the case of the current account, a Secondary School Unit in the district of *Agioi Anangiri* (Athens-Greece) is being used for research purposes regarding the qualitative assessment of the content of their electronically submitted

assignments in different thematical sections of the *Religion Discipline Curriculum*. From a general point of view and despite the limited number of projects under research focus (approximately sixteen assignments), students signify a homogeneous method pattern in their approaches, which are linked similarly with the exact textbook and Religion Education (RE) Teachers' references in class.

Even in such cases, memory test questions are considered not sufficient enough to serve the above clarification since students have based their learning attention and focus on the teaching presentation process without spending time reviewing. Regarding the

¹ Konstantinos A. Diamantopoulos (Th.B., M. Phil., PhD. Can.) is a current working Theology Teacher at Greece – Athens in the Upper Secondary Education. Agioi Anangiri 3d Secondary School is his current position. For the past two years (2020-1, 2021-22) serves simultaneously as a Schooling Life Counsellor at the aforementioned School Unit. He holds a Theology Bachelor from University of Athens and a Master in Communication and Mass Media from the Open University of Cyprus. He also conducts his Ph.D in Theology (New Testament and Pedagogy Major) in Matej Bel University – Slovakia.

critical questioning and utility of the knowledge provided, several notable cases of students' assignments promise a lot about their future educational development. Still, those cases, unfortunately, consist of the area of an exception among the more significant number of students of the particular Secondary Unit who seem to need improvement. The above spherical assessment is based on their vocabulary, grammatical usage, and their language syntactical form lackings. The Theological knowledge system should be derived or deepened and even serve the final content reply, the closing philological shaping of their written response.

Despite the requested submission form (not accurately followed) in the written working assignments, many prompts and minors naturally came forth. Assignments mean to serve an extensive pedagogical scope, which incorporates the need for a knowledge-building structure and the simultaneous development of religious culture and experience throughout realizing the Theological curriculum. Hilton et al. (2010) argue that students with positive reading attitudes are more motivated to study, read more often, and achieve tremendous reading success. Profoundly, homework and home reading are very much interconnected. This twofold perspective embraces the Theological expectation of structuring modern students with a crystal clear world overview and critical view of their social existence and progress in their everyday school and social challenge. The present analysis has a two-fold aim: a. to introduce an element tool of Fantasy in the Religion writing assignment process in a Greek Secondary School during the Covid-

19 pandemic throughout Virtual classes and b. to provide an overview of the distant written assignment status of its students regarding the fantastic utility.

Those previous scopes are divided into a group of specific aims on which the present analysis focuses: a. to identify the primary writing assignment principles and directions of several Greek Students in the context of the Religion discipline b. to search more profound on the quality of questioning assigned content c. to re-state the notion of Fantasy in the frame of RE assignments and d. to link the fantastic element with a successful assignment conducting. Vygotsky's view about Fantasy and Fantastic play is encouraging: "*Furthermore, why not call play the work of teachers as well? If, as Lev Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist, in-forms us, children rise above their average behavior in play, let us pursue the ways in which their teachers might follow them up the ladder, starting at the first rung, which, as every child knows, is fantasy play.*" (Paley, 2009, p.3).

WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

The central core of this project is the utility of Fantasy tools throughout the Theology assignment project by Secondary Education students in the frame of their Religion class (Hoff et al., 2017, pp. 250-67). In this context, the explication of the "*fantastic*" term is considered necessary to clarify the centre of this account. *Fantastic* or *Fantasy* alternatively is regarded the part of the human brain function, which allows the individuals to override the usual rationalistic

path of processing the world matter's issues whether that has been considered necessary, and make their overview more open spaced and acceptable towards possibilities that could take place beyond their own's usual coping methodology.

The *Fantasy Part* is not a wild fiction or science fiction version since Isaac Asimov, Arthur Clark, George Orwell, or Aldous Huxley present this kind of literature. Instead, it is a method of coping with mental and spiritual issues through diversions and metaphors. The philosopher Mark Johnson and the linguist George Lakoff (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Johnson 1987, Lakoff 1987, Lakoff and Johnson 1999) have shown that metaphor is not simply a figure of speech but is primarily a form of thought and a form of cognition (Modell, 2003, pp 25-26) not being implemented yet.

In the context of the above terminology, it is considered essential to move to the definition of the specific working assumptions of this paper so that the pedagogical focus can be directed to particular areas of *Educational and Theological Practice*. These are the following: a. Students in K12-16 base their written homework on rationalistic and logical frameworks rather than intuition and imagination since their physical-mental development is primarily grounded on cause and effect schemas. This issue could generate

a lot of debate (as the whole research case does, of course), as children usually develop play scenarios and, later, different forms of play up to a certain age of their physical-mental development. b. Written tasks formulate a study focus that deviates from the starting game logic and introduces a varied scenario. c. Fantasy is considered a tool of abstraction of the mind without distracting the direction of the mind. Still, it gradually leads it to other degrees of discernment and contemplation to find solutions. d. The theological knowledge of students in grades 12-16 needs to be enhanced and embedded in various areas of the broad theological platform. The RE curriculum introduces students to multiple areas of the Old Testament, New Testament, Comparative Religion, Dogmatics, Church History etc. e. Finally, Fantasy, with its intellectual abstractions, does not combat the creed of the Christian Church or any other religious or spiritual pattern but rather complies with the learning process.

The research was conducted based on the topic assignment's content, which was assigned during the first and the second Lockdown cause of the Covid-19 Pandemic². They are affiliated with the three grades of the Greek Secondary School (4 A grade Electronical Classes (E.C.), 3 B grade E.C. and 4 C grade E.C. (7th, 8th, 9th grade according to the U.S. systemic grading definition) and it's

² Collection and research of different thematic assignments of different authors could be very interesting to be conducted and researched. There were a various obstacles though concerning the present paper in order such a working methodology condition to take place as many colleagues were not

in position to adjust their thematic assignments so quickly towards the urgent circumstance of the distant learning occurrence in a way that they were hindered to provide simultaneously any current information for their own work.

the first time that related assignment data is disposed of for research purposes.

The author widely recognized the *Subjectivity Issue* (Drapeau, 2002) as the leading assignment. Nevertheless, the fact of the student's project's first-time disposition as research items, the structure of the novice criteria (concerning a wide range if not the sum of them), the systematic and understandable overview of their content as well as the linkage with the application of the *Fantastic Tool* as a methodology guide, synthesize a well-established base-line according to which other research endeavours could take place as well on a similar thematic.

The criteria used are based on the content of the assignment's questioning, most of which, shall be noticed, are combined. In the Tables following, the assignment content is shown correlated with the school grade, the assignment topics, and the Thematical Units as well:

Table (1)

GRADE A - SECONDARY SCHOOL		
Assignment Genre ⁴	Topics of Assignments ⁵	Thematical Units ⁶
Hard-core closed type and on-the-point short text questions	<i>reiteration exercises</i>	Organization of the Church and the Seven deacon election process
Soft-core Synthetic and judgmental question	<i>Why was Paul characterized as the Apostle of the Nations? What about his feelings when he met Jesus in vision?</i>	The Conversion of Apostle Paul
Softcore Analyzing question	<i>In your opinion, what does the "Poor in Spirit" phrase mean? What about the central meaning of the Sermon of the Mount?</i>	Introduction to Christ's Beatitudes (The Sermon of the Mount)
Hardcore definition and Soft-core judgmental question	<i>What does Spermatic Word Teaching of his mean? Is it plausible nowadays?</i>	The Teaching of Justin the Martyr and Philosopher
Soft-core Hermeneutical /Hard-core cognitive question	<i>What is the meaning of the magi presented?</i>	The "Proto-Evangelion" and the Birth of Christ

Table (2)

GRADE B - SECONDARY SCHOOL		
Assignment Genre	Topics of Assignments	Thematical Units
Hardcore cognitive question	<i>Which was the difference between Jewish-Christian and Greek- Christian populations in the first ancient Christian Church?</i>	Synthesis and Problems of the first Christian Church
Softcore synthetical or judgmental question	<i>What about the central meaning of the meeting account?</i>	The meeting with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well

As can be noticed in the above tables (2a,b,c), three columns below are categorized: a. *The Assignment genre includes the qualitative characterization of the assignment's topic* b. *The Topics of the Assignments referred to* and c. *The Thematical Units are taught according to Religion Textbook and Theology Teacher's Preferences*. It is also mandatory to provide the hermeneutical key of the categories-characterizations of the assignments used, which are structured, and consider the quality of the phrasing content of the projects. The methodology strategy and concept followed on this matter are based chiefly on the qualitative categorization methodology of the Social Sciences (C. Runehov & Oviedo, 2013).

Table (3)

GRADE C - SECONDARY SCHOOL		
Assignment Genre	Topics of Assignments	Thematical Units
Softcore Analytical and synthetical question	<i>In your opinion, what are the essential presuppositions for a successful mission conducting?</i>	The Modern Mission
Hardcore interpretation question	<i>How has the phrase "So God created man in his image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" been interpreted?</i>	Introduction to the Original Sin
Softcore Judgmental question	<i>The Paradise Exodus: what kind of situations are being described in the text icon?</i>	Lost Paradise
Softcore synthetical question	<i>What could happen if all people followed the paradigm of the Good Samaritan in their everyday living?</i>	The Parable of the Good Samaritan
Hardcore question	<i>What were the main historical facts driving the Schism of the Churches?</i>	Roman Catholic and Orthodox Schism (1054 ACE)

Categories-Characterization

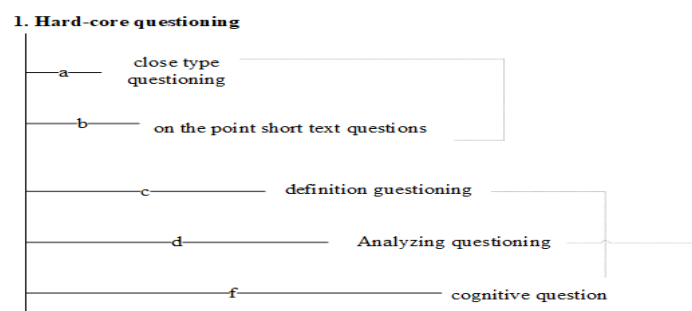
1. Hard-core questioning is affiliated with definitions questioning, (Historical) facts accounting, given (and asked afterwards) hermeneutical processes or their outcomes, analytical and reasoning frames, closed type inquiries, and "Yes/No-True/False" frame questioning.
2. Soft-core questioning concerns critical, synthetical inquiry, project activities, combination questioning, and open-text type questioning.

Subcategories

1. Closed-type questioning is affiliated with multiple choice, true-false, yes-no, and short-answer exploration.
2. Definition questioning regards questioning about content clarification, explication, or description.
3. Interpretation questioning regards exegetic analysis on behalf of the students.
4. On the point, questioning seems to mandate short answering replies and seems to be definitive questioning alike. However, it also presupposes exact and detailed descriptive answers, which may resemble short or long answering reply types.
5. Cognitive questioning includes general, comprehensive, scientific, or social inquiries of a broader spectrum.
6. Descriptive questioning includes an analytical account of the form and structure of the asked phenomenon.
7. Judgmental questioning regards the justified personal opinion phrasing.
8. Synthetical (or synthetic) questioning presupposes multi-centred combination replies.
9. Analytical questioning concerns inquiries presupposing causality effect utility and might be used on Hard or Soft-core exploration.

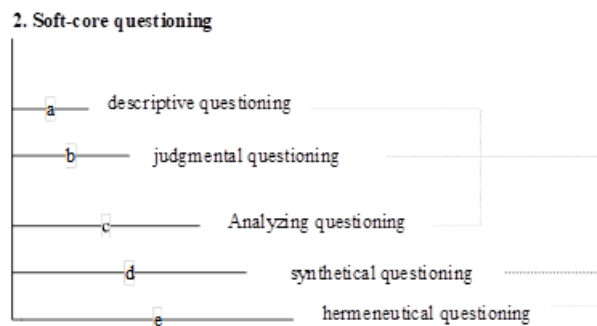
The next step is to structure a visual map of the Main Categories and the Hard-Core inquiries, as can be seen in fig. (4) below:

fig. (4)



Similarly, a visual Map-structure on the Soft-Core Questioning follows right below:

fig.(2)



The critical point that emerged on the fantasy development during the conducting assignments seems to occur when a critical inquiry occurs. The students should formulate a more profound account for extracting novice conclusions. (Covenant Theological Seminary, 2018). In that context, the individuals must re-approach their analysis and step forward to the next stage of finding intellectually sources they had not previously had a clue about. That is a pretty challenging task, although *Synthetical and Hermeneutical Models* provide the field of diversified critical development. Of course, a complete academic approach on behalf of Secondary Educational Students is not expected to be the final result. Still, it is aimed at their familiarization with the basic principles of the *Theological Methodology and Thinking Mode* during the application of which most of the Soft-Core and Hard-Core Inquiries could be reconstructed according to the implication of the Fantasy Diversion facilitating knowledge conveyance and student's creativity.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

This general overview imported is based on the following conclusions of the whole previous analysis:

1. Students seem to take advantage of the internet capabilities and make extensive use of the information provided (several times mandated by their assignment's inquiries) and being managed in a copy-paste style in their submitted papers without the research items being worked systematically. In many students' papers submitted online, many web links are given aloud into the text without any editing.
2. In the context of hard-core questions, most of the replies are based on a rational trail and have been characterized by their specification and accuracy.
3. Technically, many students do not fully dispose of the capability to attend virtual classes since they try to connect via self-phone devices or cope with several connection problems hindering the creation of a virtual comfort zone³.
4. By indirect acoustical observation during virtual classes and adjusting some students' microphone process, several background sounds and commotion is taken place, reducing students' capacity to concentrate and listen carefully to the moderator's instructions or

lecture.

5. Elementary School theological contribution seems to be minimum regarding the preliminary theological assessment of the Students of the first grade of Secondary School of Agioi Amangiri overburdening as such the secondary religion classes unfortunately in a Covid-19 pandemic era, cause of the material increasing.

6. Critical and Analytical assignment's inquiries provide some problematic issues, mainly concerning the lack of religious and intellectual methodology and are related either to the lack of family pluralistic religious background either with the absence of the necessary time for personal study on behalf of the students or with the Elementary School religion subject incomplete teaching and cognitive provision. However, an essential sum of written (typed) assignments could be criticized quite positively as promising, revealing a hard-working cultivated student's status, good Greek language usage, and an overwhelmed hidden mood of theologizing even more than expected.

7. Hermeneutical questioning is not expected to play the most significant issue since much more time is needed for students to be introduced to the study's logic of Scripture (Old Testament and New Testament).

³ Government's provision on that mater is limited.

8. Fantasy utility is considered pluralistic. Part of the students disposes of rich Fantasy and intellectual world, many winged ideas and conceptions, and a tremendous good intention to put them forward. However, they lack the proper language formalities and background to ground them. So, in those cases, a RE teacher has to penetrate the philology issues and provide the class with the necessary required language tools and literature to smoothen the theology field of their study most of the time, beating those impediments.

9. Lastly, the Theological systematization of the faith and creed formulation seems not to be threatened at all regarding the use of Fantasy in the writing assignment process. Based on the online submitted papers of the students and whether a rich harvest could take place, fresh approaches are made in such a way that Dogmatics is enhanced and become fruitful more than ever, verifying that questioning is not always a matter of doubting but a value of learning (Nappi, 2017, p. 30).

The Fantasy world is essential, and as Le Guin (2017), who paraphrased Tolkien's quote, quoted herself: *"Fantasy is escapist, and that is its glory. If a soldier is imprisoned by the enemy, don't we consider its his duty to escape? . . . If we value the freedom of mind and soul, if we are partisans of liberty, then it's our plain duty to escape, and to take as many people with us as we can!"*.

BASIC REFERENCES

Casto, H., McGrath, B., Sipple, J. W., & Todd, L. (2016). "Community aware" education policy: Enhancing individual and community vitality. *education policy analysis archives*, 24, 50. <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.24.2148>

Hilton, J. L., Wilcox, B., Morrison, T. G., & Wiley, D. A. (2010). Effects of various methods of assigning and evaluating required reading in one general education course. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 41(1), 7-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2010.10850333>

Paley, V. G. (2009). *A child's work: The importance of fantasy play*. University of Chicago Press.

Hoff, E. V., Ekman, A., & Kemdall Pho, A. (2017). Fantasy as a driving force: Relations between Fantasy and motivation in children. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 38(3), 250-267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276236617734787>

Modell, A. H. (2003). *Imagination and the meaningful brain*. MIT Press.

Drapeau, M. (2002). Subjectivity in Research: Why not ? But.... *Masthead Logo*, 7(3), 1-15.

C. Runehov, A. L., & Oviedo, L. (2013). *Encyclopedia of sciences and religions* | SpringerLink. Springer. <https://link.springer.com/reference-work/10.1007%2F978-1-4020-8265-8>

Covenant Theological Seminary. (2018, April 27). Writing exegetical papers / Resource guides / The J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Library // Covenant theological seminary. The J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Library. <https://www.covenantseminary.edu/library/guide/exegetical-paper/>

Nappi, J. S. (2017). The Importance of Questioning in Developing Critical Thinking Skills. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin: International Journal for Professional Educators*, 84(1), 4-64.

Le Guin, U. K. (2017). Ursula K. Le Guin 1929–2018 American writer. Oxford Reference. <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780191843730.001.0001/q-oro-ed5-00006600>

Contact of author:

Konstantinos A. Diamantopoulos

e-mail: diamadkon@outlook.com.gr