

BELGIUM: SMARTBOARD

The meeting in Belgium was focused on an effective use of smartboard in language classes. Smartboard as such is not a recent innovation but it seems that many times its use is not very common. The idea in Belgium was to promote the use of smartboard in language classes. Before the meeting the students prepared a few presentations which they shared with other participants using smartboard. During the meeting, we had two sessions with an expert of smartboard, the first with students, the second just among teachers.

About 60% of the students were familiar with the concept of smartboard before the meeting and about 50% had already used it. Thus there were many students who were not very familiar with smartboard. Nevertheless, about 80% found the concept of smartboard interesting or very interesting. As for the pedagogical material used during the meeting, about 80% of the students thought that it favoured their language skills whereas a little less their digital skills, 70% agreed or totally agreed on this matter.

After the meeting, most students were in favour of this method being introduced and used in their schools. They would like their teachers to use the smartboard more because it motivates to learn. When being asked about the advantages of the smartboard, the students came up with following:

- Easy, modern, innovative, different, practical
- It's more fun for the students, clearer
- Offers a variety of possibilities
- Lessons are more interesting
- Students are more enthusiastic and motivated
- Students are more active and thus remember better
- Favours teamwork which is an asset for future working skills

Most teachers were also familiar with the concept of smartboard. The Italian, German and Belgian partner schools have smartboards, the Portuguese school has some and the Finnish school doesn't have any. However, the Finnish accompanying teacher teaches in another school that has some smartboards. Half of the teachers had used smartboard before the meeting, almost all the teachers found the concept interesting.

The teachers found that the training session on the use of smartboard was adequate. Most of them felt comfortable during the session, only the Finnish teachers slightly disagreed on this matter. The presented documents were relevant for everybody as well as the formation itself was motivating and efficient. This method contributes to developing the students' language and IT skills. The teachers affirmed having learned new things and feel more motivated to profit of the smartboard in their own schools.

Back in their own schools the partner teachers won't have difficulties explaining this method to their colleagues and its application is not complicated in Germany and Italy. In the Portuguese and Finnish schools, on the other, hand it is more complicated for the lack of smartboards.

Having observed the activities carried out the teachers found that the activities were in harmony with the training session. The students had prepared the tasks thoroughly before the meeting and it was apparent that the motivation to learn foreign languages got higher during the meeting. According to the teachers, the pedagogical material used was favourable to the students' language skills and digital skills but a little less for the latter.

In conclusion, the teachers found that smartboard can be considered as an interesting tool in foreign language learning. It offers a lot of possibilities. The teachers would like to have more knowledge of the method in order to use it more in classes. The Italian teachers would have liked to discover newer applications. The Portuguese teachers thought that the use of smartboard is valuable in teaching foreign languages.

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