

Action Research – Study Visit 1 report

The purpose of the study visit to Wales was to observe and exchange good working practices and exchange different visions and style of teaching. Another aim of our visit was to enrich our work and share experiences with other participants. Using modern technology during classes and new methodology in teaching processes is what interests me the most. The questions I have asked myself prior to the visit was:

1. What kind of modern technology is used by teachers?
2. Influence of modern technology on the teaching.
3. What are the ways of using interactive boards/tablets/interactive exercises during lessons?
4. How do teachers plan their lessons and deliver knowledge by using new technologies?
5. Do new technologies help or hinder the teaching process?
6. What are the key differences in teaching style when delivering classes in other countries?

Participating in such study visits gave me invaluable opportunity to learn and observe good teaching practices. The meetings and discussions held contributed to enriching my everyday work. During the visit we were watching an example of a lesson that was conducted in a formative assessment method. For the first time I had the opportunity to see this method of teaching being used. Watching that video, I learned about other styles and other ways of delivering lessons based on the formative assessment method. After discussion and summing up of that lesson it made me think about how I could utilise new ways of conducting classes. Experience gained while watching lessons delivered on the basis of formative assessment lead me to apply some parts of those methods to my every day work.

During the visits in schools we could see that most classrooms were very well equipped with projectors, interactive boards, computers etc. That shows that teachers are using technology during classes. I wish to observe normal everyday classes being delivered by teachers in order to see their modern technology being used as part of everyday teaching. Job shadowing for one day with a teacher from another country would be a great opportunity to see how my counterparts carry out their job.

Talking with other teachers during our visit enriched our knowledge. Iceland for example is a very developed country and what I found was modern technology is used a lot during classes and what sometimes can be helpful can also be very distracting to students and divert their attention from the learning process.

Meeting with teachers and participating in the workshops gave us many opportunities to find out about new ways of working and we gained new skills. During one exercise delivered at the university we came to the conclusion that clear and understandable criteria is very important in good assessment. Without clear instructions the grade may not represent the full intellect of a student. Building an emotional bond, cooperation and motivation provides the base to good teaching. Being confident and happy makes students feel safe, engaged and enthusiastic so that they open-up and ask questions and be more curious about a topic.

An inspiring exercise was thinking about the interpretation of an outstanding teacher. One of the groups created a definition to explain what they thought an outstanding teacher meant: *“An outstanding teacher is a human being who is open, flexible, creative, well – balanced, self-confident, goal-orientated, challenging, resilient (strong personality), loving, caring, knowledgeable, competent, trustworthy, trusting, developing, having a sense of humour, respectful, team worker, leader.”*

That made me think about my own qualities and how I can better myself as a teacher.

Using modern technology in classes interests me a lot and I would like to look in to this more. My research is still ongoing and I would like to find the answers for the following questions:

1. How students can use modern technology to improve their process of learning?
2. What is the best way of using modern technology?
3. How teachers should use modern technology to improve the teaching experience?
4. How to improve my workshop in this area?

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