

The Interactive Whiteboard for Language Learning

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Abstract

Within the field of language learning, we have seen many approaches and methodologies. These changes are due to influences dictated by new psychological theories of learning as well as innovative technologies. Nowadays, most linguists and language teachers consider the use of technology essential to improve the teaching and learning process of a new language.

The recent introduction of the Interactive Whiteboard in schools has faced teachers with a new problem: how to use this new tool to enhance teaching and students' learning?

The answer to this question lies at the heart of an experience conducted in a fifth class of a primary school in Trentino. Starting from a socio-constructivist approach, a technology-learning environment was designed, which was based also on Cooperative learning methodology with the aim of making students active and involved.

In order to test the significance of such technology-learning environment, an experimental research was conducted. The variables investigated were the level of learning, as well as motivation, concentration, autonomy and metacognition which can actively influence the acquisition process. Moreover, we wanted to make sure that the contents and skills learned remain over the time, in a Lifelong Learning view.

Data collected through quantitative and qualitative measurements showed that not only the level of learning was improved, but also a greater permanence in time of knowledge. In addition, students raised their level of motivation, concentration, autonomy and metacognition.

The results open new perspectives on the use of innovative technologies as integrated tools in the teaching-learning process. The technology-learning environment presented here is one example that, data in hand, proved to be very effective.