Interactive Whiteboards in the EFL Classroom: Findings of the European Project iTILT

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Overview

The Current Situation
- IWBs in education
- IWBs in language teaching

iTILT – Interactive Technologies in Language Teaching
- Aim of the project, Partners, Duration

Development of the Project
- IWB training, Data collection, Website

Analyzing Classroom Interaction
- Theoretical introduction
- The analytical framework
- Analysis of four video clips

Conclusions
The Current Situation
IWBs in Education

- General trend towards more ICT in schools across Europe

Classroom Interactive Display Penetration

- 2012: 105,000
- 2016: 180,000

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IWBs in Language Teaching

Rapid increase of IWBs in Germany

Limited teacher training materials and support for the design, evaluation and implementation of IWB-based materials for the FL classroom
IWBs in Language Teaching

Need

- Development of training models
- Examples of good practice

Aim

- Train language teachers to become confident users of the IWB technology and remain consistent with current models of language teaching methodology

Gray et al., 2007; Cutrim Schmid, 2010
Benefits and Challenges of Using the IWB in Language Teaching
Main Pedagogical Benefits

- Facilitating the integration of new media in language classroom (Gray et al., 2007)
- Enhancing the scope of interactivity and learner engagement (Miller & Glover, 2009)
- Supporting the development of “electronic literacies” (Cutrim Schmid, 2009)
- Meeting the needs of learners with diverse learning styles (aural, visual and kinesthetic) through the use of multiple media (Wall et al., 2004)
Challenges of Using the IWB

For the teacher:

- Insecurity and additional challenges lead to return to a teacher-centered whole-class teaching instead of a communicative task-based or project-based teaching approach (Cutrim Schmid 2009, Gray et al. 2007)

For the students:

- Cognitive overload (Cutrim Schmid, 2008)
- “Spoon-feeding” with pre-designed presentation materials (Cutrim Schmid, 2008)
Clear need for professional training and pedagogical resources to assist teachers in exploiting IWBs in the foreign language classroom
The Project

iTILT – Interactive Technologies in Language Teaching

www.itilt.eu
Aim of the iTILT Project

Helping language teachers make the most of interactive whiteboards

• produce effective IWB training materials for language teachers
• inform teachers of IWB best practice based on research
• provide a support network for teachers and schools
• bring together teachers from all sectors of education (primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational)
• encourage the sharing of example lesson plans
• promote reflective practice with IWBs
# Development of the Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IWB Training</th>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Website</th>
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IWB Training

Aimed for Language Teachers

• emphasis on communicative language teaching
• explanation of strategies and procedures for designing effective IWB materials
• opportunity to reflect on their own practice

Training Materials

• various educational contexts (primary, secondary, vocational and higher education)
• organized around the four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as vocabulary and grammar teaching
Training Materials

Activity
• description of the activity and steps to be taken by teachers and students

Aim
• aim of the activity
• learning goals

Design
• explains how the flipchart was designed

Potential
• potential of the activity in comparison to former methods
Data Collection

class filming

2 visits to 6 teachers in 6 partner countries

learner reflections

group interviews with 4-5 students

teacher interviews

video stimulated reflection
Website – Learning Objects

- Video clip
- Audio- or video excerpt showing the teacher or students’ reactions
- Teaching resources (e.g. lesson plan)

Learning object
Interactive Technologies in Language Teaching

Food: using drag and drop to move vocabulary for memory game

Uploaded by: Emily Harker, Canakkale Metropolitan University (TR)

Description

This activity took place in the context of a lesson on learning the vocabulary for different names of food. Prior to this step the SWB was used to show four characters' shopping lists in English, using the vocabulary the learners practiced throughout the lesson. A stopwatch was used which only gave the class one minute to try and remember the contents of the four shopping lists. After the minute the lists automatically disappeared and the foods were randomly placed at the bottom of the SWB. In this way the learners are also trying to remember which item of food goes into which list by dragging and dropping the words at the bottom of the SWB into the correct list.

Target language: English
Resource type: Interactive objects
native language of learners: Turkish
108 features: Drag & drop, game, interactive objects
Teaching methods: Repetition
Language area: Reading, vocabulary
SWB board used: SMART Board

Teacher comment: I used this tool because it was quite a fun activity at the end of the lesson. Sometimes at the end of the lesson it’s hard to motivate the children and...
Website

Resources

- 108 – 144 learning objects
- 5 languages
- Different educational sectors
Analyzing IWB-mediated Interaction:
Can the use of an interactive whiteboard support interaction and negotiation of meaning in the foreign language classroom?
Why should we focus on interaction?

- Second language acquisition research has shown that:
  - language learning development depends crucially on **input** (Krashen, 1985) and **output** (Swain, 1995)
  - **input** is the term used for samples of the target language which learners see and hear, while **output** refers to the language they produce themselves
  - **interaction** involves both input and output, and when interaction involves learners in the **negotiation of meaning**, learning occurs and language proficiency develops (Long, 1996)

- Current foreign language teaching methodologies emphasize the need for:
  - focusing on **real-world**, **meaningful** and **authentic** language use
  - leaving space for **unplanned** and even **unpredictable** learner contribution
  - designing pedagogical materials and classroom activities that create opportunities for enhanced **interaction**, **collaboration** and **negotiation of meaning**
## Levels of IWB-mediated Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Planning (task-as-plan)</th>
<th>Control (task-as-process)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drill</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Level 1: Drill

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Language</th>
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</table>
| Drill   | • pre-planned language  
          • closed questions  
          • repetition, choral repetition  
          • teacher feedback on form  
          • limited attempt to contextualize language  
          • focus on linguistic form  
          • opportunities for language production are entirely pre-planned by teacher  
          • entirely controlled by teacher  
          • language pre-selected for presentation and practice  
          • teacher controls access to board and turn-taking |
Video Clip 1
# Level 2: Display

<table>
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<th>Planning</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td>• pre-planned language elements but some learner choice in language to be produced&lt;br&gt;• input/output goes beyond minimum target items&lt;br&gt;• closed questions but also some open questions&lt;br&gt;• teacher feedback mainly on language form</td>
<td>• limited attempt to contextualize language&lt;br&gt;• effort to extend input and output&lt;br&gt;• no simulation of real-world activity</td>
<td>• opportunities for language production are mainly pre-planned by teacher&lt;br&gt;• board elements support some unplanned production from teacher and/or learners</td>
</tr>
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Video Clip 2
### Level 3: Simulation

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Language</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Control</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Simulation | • some focus on meaning  
• teacher feedback on form but also on content  
• interaction based on communication rather than language form | • meaningful context  
• role-play: pretending to be someone in a real-life activity | • activity includes some space for learner choice  
• teacher expands on minimal requirements of activity to allow more communication | • learner-oriented activity  
• voluntary participation  
• learner choice in how to participate |
Video Clip 3
## Level 4: Communication

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<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>• focus on meaning teacher feedback on content • interaction based on genuine communication rather than language form • learner choice of language forms and shaping of communicative event</td>
<td>• authentic context activity worth doing in L1 interaction represents real-life activity • exchange of participants' own opinions or reactions</td>
<td>• open activity with space for learner choice • advance planning/preparation by learners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Video Clip 4
Conclusions

- Our data reveal considerable variety, both in the ways in which the IWB was exploited pedagogically by the teachers, and in the degree to which they changed their classroom teaching practices.
- The data analysed so far indicate that most of the participating teachers used the IWB in ways that did not reflect clear pedagogical transformation towards communicative language teaching.
- Language teachers need ongoing professional training and pedagogical resources that can assist them in exploiting the IWB in ways that are consistent with current theories of foreign language teaching methodology.
References


