

EU-Projekt “VisuaLearning”

Workshop “visuaLearning” for Trainers

SUMMARY – EVALUATION – FEEDBACK

1. What did you change in comparison to the qualification workshop in Bonn? Why?

The concept of the workshop for teachers was changed and completed. To relate the respective contents to the target group and the everyday life of the course was the goal here.

Fragments of theory which were part of the original concept were presented in a very shortened format. Emphasis was on the presentation of psychological learning and understanding to show the meaning of visual learning for an integrative way of thinking, multiple representation and linking of knowledge in complex subject areas.

The order of the individual subjects was reordered. In order to suggest as many practical applications as possible, a so-called “circle of methods” was carried out. In the course room, workplaces for the methods “clustering“, “brainwriting“, “mindmap“, “cognitive map“, “morphological box“ “coaching of ideas“ and ”storytelling“ were established. Each of them was fitted with a brief description of the methods and with the respective material. In addition, the programs “MindManager“ and “Freemind“ could be tried on two notebooks. The individual positions were well signposted to provide the teachers a good overview of the offered methods.

The aim was to encourage the course directors to join other colleagues in order to apply certain methods together. The almost constant high score of points by the teachers confirm the modified concept, especially the methods’ high relevance in the everyday life of the course. To stimulate the work especially with the programme “Freemind” even after the workshop each participant got a CD with the software.

To evaluate the individual methods in a time-saving way, suggestions and advice of the teachers were visualized by the use of mindmaps via beamer instead of using metaplan. This method should demonstrate the easy use of the programmes as well.

For the first workshop the original programme was expanded with the chapter “Creative Commons Licenses and Picture Libraries“ (Session I). Here the aim was to explain the principle of picture investigation and the basic terms of licences to the teachers.



2. Did you change your concept after the first national workshop?

After the experiences of the first workshop, its methodical part was extended. Therefore the chapters "Learner Types"(Session H) and "Creative Commons Licenses and Picture Libraries" (Session I) were omitted. In the workshop it was merely pointed to these two chapters. This decision proved itself in the second workshop. The individual participants could apply several methods. The teachers did not know each other. The need for an exchange of experiences was accordingly higher than in the first workshop.

3. What are your impressions / results regarding the workshop?

The experiences and indications of the teachers especially regarding the visual competence of learners and the application of visual methods are concurrent and partly complement one another. Thus the concept and the procedure will be maintained in further workshops in the Netherlands. In both workshops the course directors are talking about visual methods which they use successfully in the everyday life of the courses. These examples of application should be processed and published.

Generally both workshops are regarded as relevant to practice and very well adapted for the target group. However, some teachers remarked that the workshop showed them the meaning of methods anew. This met with general improvement from the participants.

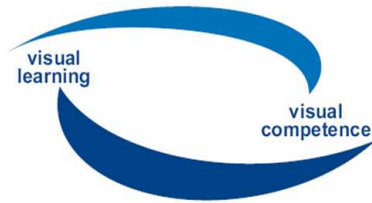
4. Did you get information from the teachers about their learners and their learning biographies?

The learning biographies brought out more clearly in the group discussions were confirmed by the course directors – as well the differences which are specifically related to the target groups. Migrants are apparently more isolated in their surrounding. Especially muslim women are sometimes really isolated by their families. One teacher reports that some female participants are not allowed to go out with other learners after course.

In the group discussions emerged that the learning biographies are characterized by strong interruptions. Most learners do not have a degree. The vast majority depend on government support to cover their basic needs.

5. What are your recommendations and results regarding the final concept of workshops?

The evaluation of the individual methods by the course directors are definitely to be included in the final publication. A chapter "from pratis to pratis" would be possible. Recommendations should be illustrated with pictures produced in the workshop. In



order to receive further practical examples for the final concept the course directors should again be encouraged by a letter regarding this matter. In many courses, especially in the alpha field, visual methods are permanently used and improved. Products, such as all kinds of pictures are often hung up in class rooms. The visual methods introduced by the teachers in the workshop should be taken into consideration in the final concept too.

6. What kind of support do the teachers need to integrate visual learning into their teaching?

Already in the conception of the circle of methods, those methods were avoided which could be a financial burden for the institutions. Especially the small demand of material and the uncomplicated application of the methods presented in the workshop was welcomed by the teachers.

In the representation and application of the two programmes “mindmanager“ and “freemind“ it became clear that some teachers were reserved when it came to application. Perhaps – with the help of screenshots - the production of a mindmap could be explained step by step in the final publication.

Some teachers asked for patterns to introduce; for example, clusterings or mindmaps in class. Perhaps these patterns could be provided for download on the project website in order to encourage its use.

The need for exchange of experiences was very high in both workshops. As already demanded practical experience should be documented and be recognizable.