CCL CASE STUDY COLLABORATION & ASSESSMENT

V.2 – MAY 2015

Within the CCL project, the CCL teachers in Austria, Italy and Slovenia implemented the CCL Learning Scenario „Collaboration & Assessment" from October 2014 – January 2015. This case study focuses on the following questions:

1) Why collaborative work with students and how to form groups?
2) How to assess group work?
3) How can tablets support group work and their assessment?

The Case Study is based on results from interviews with the 5 CCL teachers from Austria carried out by Katja Engelhardt (European Schoolnet) during the CCL national meeting in January 2015 in Bad Hofgastein, Austria. Prior to the interviews, the teachers were asked to fill in a short template (see Annex I).

From left to right:

- Hannes Thomas – NMS Jennersdorf
- Wolfgang Ölzant – Ski Akademie Schladming
- Gabi Jauck – BG Zell am See
- Peter Stöckelmaier - Neue NÖ Informatik-Mittelschule Stockerau
- Michael Atzwanger - Private Pädagogische Hochschule Linz

WHY COLLABORATIVE WORK

Collaborative work teaches students important 21st century skills. They learn to work together and to meet project deadlines. They also learn to cooperate with different class mates and to deal with difficulties that can arise when working with others. Students generally enjoy group work, as producing their own product together can be a very engaging learning experience. The students can be creative and create different products on the same task. CCL teacher Wolfgang Ölzant for example asked his students to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city and was impressed by the variety of outputs that students produced. Hannes Thomas set up a competition between two classes using the app 'Socrative' and 'Facetime'. Students from one class came up with questions for which students from the other class had to find the correct answers within one minute in order to gain points.

HOW TO FORM GROUPS

CCL teachers had very different approaches to how to set up their groups. Wolfgang Ölzant selected two very strong students who selected two other team mates they wanted to work with themselves. Peter Stöckelmaier used drawing lots for a random group selection or let his students decide whom to work with. In general, it can be an advantage to keep the same groups over a longer period of time, as team members learn to work more efficiently together and to divide their tasks according to their interests and strengths. In her CCL project, Gabriela Jauck put students together that would not usually work together in one group – as a preparation for their working career. For example, she put 'team leaders' all in one group and those who usually did not lead the work in another group. A lot of time was lost because it took students a long time to decide who does what and to find a way of working together, so that the group selection even came up as an issue during a parents' information evening.

HOW TO ASSESS GROUP WORK

One general concern that CCL teachers had with group work and it's assessment was that both tasks are very time consuming. In particular with a big class, it can be challenging for the teacher to guide each group in their work. Equally, the assessment of the work can be time consuming, as the teacher might have to assess very different outcomes of the group work. Ideally, the teacher should take the time to discuss the grades with the students but that is often not feasible.

WEIGHTING OF ASSESSMENT

In the beginning, the teacher needs to decide if the focus of the assessment of the given group task is on the outcome of the group work (e.g. a presentation) or the process (e.g. on how well did the group work together). If all teams produce the same product, the process is more important than the product itself. For the treasure hunt project using the app 'Actionbound', the CCL teacher Peter Stöckelmaier put his focus on the product produced which counted for 50 % of the grade. CCL teacher Wolfgang Ölzant experimented with two different possibilities: For his first group work, the content produced counted for 75% of the final grade, the observation of the group work by the teacher counted for 15% and the students' self-assessment for 10%. For the second group task, the content produced counted for 40% of the final grade, the teacher's observation counted for 30% and the students' self-assessment for 30%. He also included his students in setting the criteria for the assessment. In the beginning, students found it very difficult to understand the task and to come up with criteria

themselves. However, learning to agree on assessment criteria and to give feedback are important new skills for students. Criteria set up were, for example, the subject content covered, the product and design and it's timely delivery.

TEACHER OBSERVATION

In general, it is not always easy for the teacher to have a good overview of who contributed what to a group work. One possibility for the teacher is to observe the group work himself. As this can be a very time consuming task, Peter Stöckelmaier experimented with the app 'Timelapse'. He started the app on the tablet and placed it so it could film the work of one group. A picture was taken every 15 to 30 seconds. These pictures can then be shown as a video. Watching this video helped to see which group member stayed engaged in the work and which turned away from the group. The students knew in advance that they would be filmed. The 'Timelapse' video helped the students to reflect on their own participation. Those who were less engaged accepted it as a proof of their lower level of engagement and as a motivation to be more engaged in the next group work.

SELF - ASSESSEMENT

One possible way to organise a self-assessment is to ask each member of a group to write a learning diary. One challenge is that students first need to learn how to write a learning diary, as this is often not part of the school culture yet. The only way for students to learn how to assess themselves is to do it on a regular basis. Another challenge is that writing a learning diary might be difficult to fit in a standard 50 minutes lesson. The students of CCL teacher Peter Stöckelmaier had to fill in a work protocol on their tablet using the app 'OneNote'. In this protocol, the student had to write down what the goal of the lesson was, in how far the group reached this goal and what their own contribution was. He was also able to compare the protocols of several team members of one group to check if the information was correct. CCL teachers also gathered information on how the students felt during the group work via questionnaires or as part of the final presentation.

On the question whether what the teacher observed corresponds to the students' self-assessment, CCL teachers felt that this generally was the case. Students tend to be very honest in the assessment of their own work and sometimes are even more critical than the teacher. Even when students had a better impression of their own work than the teacher, they generally also accepted critical feedback.

HOW TABLETS SUPPORT GROUP WORK AND ASSESSMENT

CCL teachers found tablets to be useful for students to use during the group work. For example, with apps like 'OneNote' it is very easy for the students to take notes. The app is very easy to use for the students, as it opens automatically and new content gets saved automatically. The student can also choose to share the content with the teacher. Before using tablets for this task, students sometimes lost their protocols written on paper. Tablets can also be useful to access self-asssessment questionnaires online. Such online questionaires allow for immediate evaluation. Otherwise, evaluating a higher number of questionnaires filled in on paper can be quite time consuming for the teacher. Another possibility is to use the tablet to take photos of the several steps of the group work to document the process. Finally, mobile devices can also support online collaboration between students from different classes, as the example of a student competition with quizzes using 'Socrative' and 'Facetime' showed.

SPECIFICITIES OF TABLETS (IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER DEVICES)

Tablets offer a variety of apps and the possibility to personalize the mobile device. Their biggest advantage are their mobility and the fact that they start very quickly. With their small size and camera, they are better suited for taking pictures for example of interim results of group work than netbooks. Their in-built GPS makes them suitable for outdoor group activities like treasure hunts. While smaller children find tablets very attractive, some older students prefer devices with a keyboard, as those are better suited for writing essays and longer papers. Tablets also have the potential to support students with special needs in schools, as they have several built-in accessibility features and the advantage of being 'cooler' than traditional assistive technologies.

Further, tablets support collaborative work among students even beyond the classroom, as they offer easy possibilities to share documents among students, so that a team/ group can work on the same task. Apps like 'Socrative' and 'Kahoot' can allow for new collaborative activities like a quiz competition between two different classrooms (One group sets a question and the other group has one minute to answer it). Tablets are quite useful devices for research-work during lessons, for exercise-sequences, for producing presentations that can be shown to the others by "Apple TV". Some students are becoming experts on using special apps on the tablet. Tasks are distributed among teachers and students. Students really like to take responsibility for tasks.

FOR FURTHER READING

Presentation iNMS Jennersdorf CCL Collaboration & Assessment (video, in German)

Presentation Ski-Akademing Schladming CCL Collaboration & Assessment (video)

CCL Learning Scenario 'Collaboration & Assessment'

CCL Guide 'Collaboration and Assessment' & Checklist

CCL Learning Scenario 'Collaboration'

CCL Guide 'Collaboration' & Checklist

ANNEX I: CASE STUDY TEMPLATE

CCL SCENARIO COLLABORATION & ASSESSMENT (2014/2015)

1. NAME AND ADDRESS OF YOUR SCHOOL:

2. FOR HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN USING TABLETS IN TEACHING AND IN WHICH SUBJECTS?

1: YOUR "CCL CLASS"

3. How many students does the class have? How old are the students?

4. FOR HOW LONG HAS THE CLASS BEEN USING TABLETS?

5. WHAT TYPES OF TABLETS DOES THE CLASS USE?

□ *iOS* □ *Android* □ *Windows* □ *Other_____*

7. PLEASE SPECIFY NUMBERS OF SPECIFIC DEVICES *(E.G. 10 APPLE IPADS, 30 SAMSUNG GALAXY NOTE 10.1)*

8. WHO OWNS THE TABLET? (*MORE THAN ONE CAN BE SELECTED*)

□ parent   □ school   □ student   □ school-student   □ leased, rented

9. CAN THE STUDENTS TAKE THE TABLET HOME?

□ Yes always   □ Yes with permission   □ Yes but only in rare occasions   □ No

3: YOUR OWN CCL LEARNING ACTIVITIES/ PROJECT

10. IN WHICH SUBJECT(S) DO YOU WORK ON THE CCL SCENARIO?

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11. WHAT IS THE MAIN GOAL OF YOUR OWN CCL PROJECT?

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12. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR CCL PROJECT BRIEFLY. *(STARTER ACTIVITIES, MAIN ACTIVITIES, NUMBER OF LESSONS/ AMOUNT OF TIME, LINK TO THE CURRICULUM)*

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13. Collaboration: Who cooperates when, how, using which tools?

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14. Assessment: How do you assess collaboration, when, using which tools?

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15. What is the most successful aspect for you so far?

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16. What is the biggest challenge/ does not work well (yet)?

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17. How often do your students use tablets for this work?

□ *every lesson/ almost every lesson*   □ *often*   □ *sometimes*   □ *rarely*   □ *never*

18. What support do you have? Which support were you missing? *e.g. colleagues*

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4: YOUR CONCLUSIONS

19. **Did anything change in the classroom? If so, why?**
e.g. *Changing role of the teacher/ students*

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20. For which activities do you find tablets particularly useful and for which ones not? Please explain briefly.

21. What did you learn about collaboration & assessment with tablets? What was the most interesting?

22. Do you have any videos, pictures, articles, outcomes, etc. you would like to share?

MANY THANKS FOR FILLING IN THIS TEMPLATE!