**Study visit report (SV4) – Wales, March 2018**

Nowadays, the Internet is present in everyone’s life since the very beginning. It is an integral part of our life. No one can imagine work, learning or even free time without the Internet. Thanks to smartphones, ipads or computers we can stay connected with the rest of the world 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. So if the new technology is present in every area of our life, shouldn’t it be also present at school? On the one hand, the huge amount of resources that the Internet offers, can not only make lessons more attractive, but also help students understand the subject better. On the other hand however, there is a possibility of becoming bored by the electronic devices that are used all the time every day. That is why, during the study visit in Wales, which took place on 12th – 16th March 2018 I wanted to find an answer to the following question: How do teachers use new technologies in the process of teaching and how does it affect the effectiveness of students’ learning?

While in Wales I had an opportunity to observe lessons on different levels of education – from the youngest pupils (aged 4 – 5) to the older ones (aged 16). I actively took part in the younger pupils’ lessons. That helped me to get to know learning methods of welsh students. Moreover, I discussed the ways of using modern technologies during lessons both with students and teachers. After coming back to Poland I interviewed the 4th to 7th grade students about the subject of using modern technologies in class. I also held the geography classes in two grades of the same level, but modern technology tools and the Internet were used only in one of them.

While observing lessons in Wales I noticed, that ipads and interactive boards are mostly used with younger pupils. Children aged 4 to 6 use mainly ipads and they play educational games on them. Older students, aged 7 to 11, often used laptops for project work during the lesson. The oldest student on the other hand, did not use as much technology during the lesson, but they used computers very often for their individual work after classes. In the school, students are allowed to use the computer lab to study during breaks and when they finish lessons. They could individually search for things that were interesting to them. Moreover, the interactive boards and internet register were used by the teachers on every level of education. The teachers could also use the Internet and create their own materials for students while preparing for the lessons.

In my classes I noticed that students were more interested in the lesson while I used computers, interactive board or smartphone apps. The ones that were not usually paying attention started to be more active. Apart from the knowledge of the taught subject, the student also learned that apps can be practical and that there are more of them than only games. The comparison of the knowledge of the subject of two groups (one group after the lesson with modern technologies and the other one after the traditional lesson) showed that it is on the very similar level – it was a little higher in the first group. This result may not be adequate because for most students these tools were something completely new and they might have been more focused on the tool itself than on the knowledge that they were supposed to gain using this tool.

My next step was an interview with students about their feelings towards working with technology in the lessons. Vast majority of them were very positive and said that using the Internet is helpful to them in their process of learning. Internet makes them learn more effectively and with pleasure. They were also convinced that methods using modern technologies should be more often used, but not on every lesson and not by every teacher.

In conclusion, students in welsh schools learn to use modern technologies from the youngest age. Taking into consideration that those tools are very popular in our everyday life, it is important that people know how to use them wisely. The presence of devices such as ipads, laptops or interactive boards in schools is justified. The important thing is that the older the student are, the less they use technologies in classroom. Children who are taught to use modern technologies in the young age, can use them themselves when they are older. Older children spent so much time in the Internet that using it during lessons is not attractive for them anymore and the learning process is not that effective then. However, in polish schools, using new technologies during lessons is still not popular and usually limited to IT classes, presentations and educational films. That is why those solutions are always attractive for students. The question is, does the long term using of new technologies in classroom affect the learning process in a positive way? Which subjects on my science and geography lessons would be suitable for using modern technologies? How can I develop my own workshop in this subject?

Marta Świerczyńska, School no. 36, Cracow