

Introduction to CLIL teaching

Content

Language

Integrated

Learning

is an approach or method which integrates the teaching of content from curriculum with the teaching of a non-native language.

It is increasingly important in our global, technological society, where knowledge of another language helps learners to develop skills in their first language and also helps them develop skills to communicate ideas about science, arts and technology to people around the world. CLIL was seen by many governments, educational advisors and teachers as the means to make the changes necessary to meet our 21st century students' needs.

CLIL presents new challenges for teachers and learners because thinking and learning skills are integrated too. CLIL teachers can be subject teachers, language teachers, primary classroom teachers; different teachers have different challenges: subject teachers need to learn about the language needed for their subjects, language teachers need to learn more subject content. In some programmes there is cooperation between subject and language teachers.

* Immersion or integration?

If the terms CLIL and immersion are used interchangeably, teachers, researchers and learners will become confused...

- Immersion classes often discourage use of L1 in the classroom. CLIL should actively encourage it
- In immersion at least 50% should be in L2 (it is often 100%). In CLIL it should be 25% (according to EU)
- In immersion classes the teacher may not share the pupils' L1, in CLIL she does

* *What it is? What isn't it?*

CLIL is NOT about...

- Immersion education
- Being elitist and therefore only for more able students
- Backdoor language teaching or additional subject teaching
- "Dumbing down" of subject content

- Favouring languages at the expense of the non -language subject
- Threatening subject specialism
- Trendy or new - it's been around a long time
- Aiming at making students bilingual
- Buying in foreign national teachers or native speaker language assistants
- Teaching what students already know but in another language

CLIL TEACHING AND LEARNING REQUIRES THAT WE LOOK NOT JUST AT WHAT THE STUDENTS HAVE LEARNT/UNDERSTOOD BUT, EQUALLY IMPORTANTLY, AT HOW THEY HAVE UNDERSTOOD IT.

CLIL focusses our attention on the *process of learning* not on the act of instruction.

Teachers spend most of their time thinking about what they will do, what materials they will use and what they will ask students to do, instead of considering what the learner will need in order to accomplish their learning goals.

What are the 4 Cs of CLIL?

CLIL is sometimes referred to as having "4 Cs" as components: CONTENT, COMMUNICATION, COGNITION and CULTURE (is also referred to as citizenship or community). The 4 Cs are connected.

- **CONTENT:** the curricular subjects taught in CLIL include art, citizenship, classics, design and technology, economics, geography, history, literacy, mathematics, music, physical education, politics, science..in all CLIL contexts we need to present CONTENT in an understandable way.
- **COMMUNICATION:** learners have to produce subject language in both oral and written forms so we need to encourage learners to participate in meaningful interaction in the classroom. CLIL aims to increase STT (student talking time) and reduce TTT (teacher talking time). When learners produce the target language while studying curricular subjects, they show that subject knowledge and language skills are integrated; by using the language for learning content, communication becomes meaningful because language is a tool for communication, not an end in itself.
- **COGNITION:** CLIL promotes cognitive or thinking skills which challenge learners. These skills are reasoning, creative thinking and evaluating
- **CULTURE:** CLIL gives us opportunities to introduce a wide range of cultural contexts: learners could develop positive attitudes and become aware of the responsibilities of global as well as local citizenship; inside the classroom we should value different home languages and beyond the classroom we make links with partnership schools.

A researcher in bilingual education, Jim Cummins, described **BICS** and **CALP**.

Basic

Interpersonal

Communicative

Skills

These are skills needed for social, conversational situations; tasks associated with BICS are less cognitively demanding and focused on fluency (get it out/ spoken language/ descriptive grammar). Examples of less demanding tasks are: matching cards with words and pictures, playground language, emails, Twitter, groupwork)

Cognitive

Academic

Language

Proficiency

CALP is a level required for academic school study. Language used in subject teaching is often abstract and formal and therefore it is cognitively demanding. Examples of the use of cognitively demanding language are: justifying opinions, making hypotheses and interpreting evidence, essays, exam questions, formal presentations, classroom discussions. It focused on accuracy (get it right/ prescriptive grammar). In respect to both English and English language teaching what is proper is what is appropriate, not what is appropriated,

JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CLIL TEACHING AND LEARNING

The introduction of CLIL teaching gives teachers, students, exam boards an opportunity to see the practice and the purpose of education with new eyes appropriate to the XXI century. Changes to pedagogy need to be made as important to the vision as changes to policy.

With CLIL lessons's structure changes: teachers move from a "top down"/ teacher centred lesson planning to a "bottom up" lesson structure.

Top down lesson structure is divided into 3 steps: Presentation - Practice closed (one right answer) - Production (old+new - homework). The typical exercises that characterize this type of lesson are: filling gaps, matching, comprehension, true/false; they are closed and focus on product, pupils are mentally passive with top-down approach.

Bottom up lesson structure is divided into 4 steps: starts from the students who give a cognitive/creative contribution (they have to produce something, to make assumptions not only to respond) - finding out (L1/L2 + content; teacher builds starting f.e. with a power point) - sorting out - reflections (all skills must be included: speaking, reading...). Intention of task must be clear to students: Why am I doing this? How can I do it?

How is a CLIL lesson different from a "normal" subject lesson?

- legitimate and deliberate use of two or more languages by teacher, students, materials-

- there are more micro stages to encourage scaffolding
- it is focused on evidence of learning
- work in class is done by students not by teacher