

LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

There are two stages of reading:

1. Learning to read (primary school)
2. Reading to learn (from primary to secondary school)

A characteristic of good students/readers is that they guess from the context and they are able to find what is necessary and what is not. They are students who know grammar categories.

The teacher who uses CLIL asks children to:

- underline the words they know in *green*
- compare with their partner (collaborative task)
- underline the words that they guess from context in *yellow* (this must/mustn't mean)
- underline the words that they don't know in *red* and divide them in "not necessary" / "necessary" giving a grade from 1 to 10.

Look at the example "Schmitt and Schmitt": Rembrandt – *Self portrait with Beret and Turned up collar*

<i>I know and use these words</i>	<i>I recognise the words but don't use them</i>	<i>I don't know these words</i>

Another strategy is PRE-TEACHING: in this case before students look at the text teacher explains the words that they don't know but it is a decontextualized method.

What is the role of language in CLIL?

CLIL teachers and learners need knowledge of the language in their curricular subject; learners need to know the **content-obligatory language** (vocabulary, grammatical structures and functional language for specific subject. Learners require this language to be able to understand the subject and communicate ideas (f.e.: in geography learners need to know map vocabulary and to interpret evidence shown on a map).

Learners also need to know the everyday language which is used in our subjects and they may already know how to use grammatical structures which they can produce when study curricular subjects. Learners have usually learned this language in English lessons (f.e.: in a map-reading lesson learners might use basic verbs such as “goes” and “travels” to describe the route of a river). This is an example of **content-compatible language**.

CLIL gives learners opportunities to develop linguistic abilities during lessons and this includes acquisition of vocabulary and grammar; however the focus of a CLIL lesson is on understanding subject content, not on grammatical structures.

In CLIL classrooms most teachers do not teach grammar during content teaching because content and language are integrated: as vocabulary and grammar are interdependent, it is useful to focus on the **chunks (pieces of language with meaning)** rather than separately.

<i>General chunks</i>	<i>Topic-specific chunks</i>
Glue which collects the text together	Ex: The treaty was signed /the battle was lost (history)

The successful reader reads in chunks. Chunks are phrasal verbs, idioms, collocations, fixed phrases, cliches, bi-trinomials.

Ex: “Why do some countries struggle to develop?”: what teacher wants to know is argument and counter argument; in order to find them it is useful to find argument chunks and counter argument markers. After it’s possible to search for argument and counter argument.

Structures and meaning

We need grammatical structures to communicate subject knowledge and we therefore need to support learners by:

- looking at structures and meaning
- helping them to notice relevant and problematic language structures and their meanings
- providing examples of relevant and problematic structures and explaining their meanings
- correcting use of relevant and problematic forms

In order to support learners, **we need to be aware of the forms learners will meet in the subject we teach and to be aware of those forms which might be problematic.**

How can we help learners improve their accuracy?

Teaching language is a part of CLIL. Although the main focus is on learners’ understanding of subject content. CLIL teacher can aid the teaching of language by:

- Highlighting vocabulary and chunks of vocabulary used in CLIL subjects to help learners build the wide range of vocabulary they will need

- Modelling sentences to help learners see examples of language they need to produce
- Correcting learners by recasting language immediately after they make mistakes
- Analysing errors to identify difficulties learners have when producing English. Often mistakes are because of L1 transfer. This is when words, phrases and structures are produced as they are used in the first language