



CLIL - The 4Cs

Adapted from Coyle, DO. Planning Tools for Teachers

There are four guiding principles upon which a CLIL programme can be built

[Original Source](#)

What is CLIL?

CLIL stands for Content and Language Integrated Learning. It is an educational approach in which the teaching of subject content is combined with the teaching of an additional language. In a CLIL classroom, students learn the target language while studying a subject such as science, history, or mathematics, enabling them to develop both language skills and knowledge in the content area simultaneously.

Content
The starting point



At the heart of the learning process lie successful content or thematic learning and the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. Content is the subject or the project theme. Content determines the learning route, not language. Imagine the limitation if learners hadn't been introduced to the past tense. Conversations using only the present tense are nearly impossible. CLIL lessons help learners access necessary language in context, using key phrases without full tense study initially, ensuring language accessibility for learning.

Cognition
Thinking & Understanding



For CLIL to be effective, it must engage learners in critical thinking and higher order thinking skills, rather than simply transferring knowledge from teacher to student. CLIL promotes individual understanding and challenges learners of all ages and abilities. Bloom's taxonomy, with its categories of lower order and higher order thinking skills, provides a useful framework and checklist for guiding these cognitive processes.

Culture
Self and Other Awareness



To celebrate and realize the potential of our pluricultural and plurilingual world, tolerance and understanding are essential. Learning through an additional language is crucial for promoting international comprehension. Embracing 'otherness' is key to self-discovery. Culture can be broadly interpreted, such as through the lens of pluricultural citizenship.

Communication

1 Language of Learning

The content focus for a teaching period, whether a single lesson or a short series, must be clearly defined. It should then be analyzed to determine the necessary language for conceptual learning, identifying key terms, specialized vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical functions. This process, which is about identifying the **language of learning**, is the first stage.

2 Language for Learning

Stage 2 focuses on the learner, adding language experiences like classroom discussion and task demands, and metacognitive strategies to the lesson plan for effective CLIL operation, including scaffolding methods like language frames. This is crucial for integrating content and language, realizing CLIL's full potential. This is **language for learning**.

3 Language Through Learning

Stage 3 builds on the **language emerging** from the learning context to enhance cognitive and cultural capital, making tasks and opportunities for extending cognitive skills and cultural awareness clear to learners. This stage focuses on applying thinking skills and high-level questioning through emergent knowledge, ensuring language and thinking are explicitly connected, which is crucial for learner progression.