

CLIL-ING IN VILNIUS

Co-operation in Teaching Associations (CITA) organised a 4-day workshop on CLIL teaching in the Lithuania University of Educational Sciences in Vilnius on June 29 to July 3, 2015. Lithuania (LAKMA) was organising and leading the course, but members of the other two associations, APABAL from Mallorca and IATEFL-Hungary, were also involved in the teaching of the course. The course was designed to give members of our associations – 10 CLIL teachers from all levels of education selected from each country – an overview of up-to-date CLIL methodology with an emphasis on practical techniques delivered by experts in the field. Another important aim was for the participants to learn from each other by working together, and the outcome of the course was a CLIL lesson created and given by groups made up of teachers from each country while the other teachers became the ‘pupils’ for each lesson. The lessons were extremely enjoyable and the whole course was a huge success both socially and professionally, a fact reflected in the very positive feedback given by the participants. Below you can read some of the feedback given by the 10 Hungarian participants after the course.

This course concentrated upon the practical aspect of teaching CLIL. It reflected on the CLIL teacher competencies and the use of materials, using the four skills as complementary to the content of the particular subject taught, the language needed and the different graduations of it. And, what is very essential, guidance was given on current theoretical knowledge without being lecture orientated. Activities were presented through action and

reflection and we also got the chance to discuss and develop our own examples of CLIL lessons and these lessons were reflected upon in a joint discussion.

This international make-up of the group guaranteed a rich cultural and multicultural experience and the sharing of ideas and practices from different countries as well as the possibility to develop new international cooperation. ***(Judit Vincze, secondary and vocational school teacher, Salgótarján)***

I am really grateful for the pre-course reading material which was compiled for the participants by the organizers. It gave a very thorough insight into the current theoretical background of CLIL. The two chapters I found really intriguing and useful for my own teaching situation were ‘The Types of Language in CLIL Lessons’ and the ‘Thinking Skills’. The language dimension of CLIL has always been a main concern for me while teaching subject content through English. Keith Kelly’s ‘three dimensions of learning’ cube model highlights the different possible levels of students’ foreign language ability in CLIL classes, therefore he argues for language teaching as an important part of CLIL methodology. As I do CLIL with upper primary students, I personally feel the need to integrate language teaching into my subject teaching. In my case language teaching does not only mean the content vocabulary but in certain cases grammatical elements as well. Kathy Kelly’s and Phil Ball’s arguments confirmed my ideas about the correctness of my own CLIL methodology. ***(Ágnes Dunai, secondary school teacher, Szeged)***





Hungary before the course already brought the members of the Hungarian team together. Although there was mostly online communication among us (as not everybody could attend the two meetings), it was clear from the beginning that Hungarian teachers were very enthusiastic and thorough in preparation for the course. Prezi was the chosen platform for our presentation because it could be edited online simultaneously by several participants. It was fantastic to experience that without knowing each other, we were able to work together, share tasks and create a high quality presentation with equal participation in both making and presenting it.

Our final product (the prezi illustrating our presentation) is available at <https://prezi.com/exgrzxxrbihn/clil-in-hungary-2015/#>. I was also very happy to see the Hungarian team as a representation of CLIL in Hungary because all school types (from primary to higher education and from state to alternative schools), all subject fields (from arts to sciences), and different cities (from Budapest to the countryside) were represented. (**Márta Barbarics, bilingual vocational school teacher, Budapest**)

As far as socializing opportunities were concerned, I really liked the idea of including an ice-breaker which proved to be very engaging and much more than an ordinary introduction as it was personalized thanks to the personal objects we were asked to bring along. It was also a great idea to reward participant for using the common language, English, all the time and limiting the use of mother tongue in situations when participants from the other countries were around.

The international supper was also an experience which fostered participants' understanding of each other's

culture through the lens of gastronomy. (**László Zságer, bilingual vocational school teacher, Vác**)

One of the most frequently used technical words during the course was scaffolding – later we selected it as the motto of the course. Montserrat Garcia Comino's workshop on the role of scaffolding to improve our task was another good example of mixing theory with practice. She gave a highly motivating workshop offering various techniques to prove the overall practical use of it in optimizing the working process. She gave a clear outline for helping the planning process and urged us to be reflective on our own teaching. Her examples were clear and meaningful. Also, the different ways of using the graphic/visualizing organizers and the idea of anchoring are all acceptable with the planning process of the teaching routine. Just as an example, the 'Adopt an Animal' part of the workshop was a witty and stimulating way of group organization. I will definitely use it among many other things. I found her workshop inspiring and thought provoking. (**Eszter Harangozó, primary school teacher, Budapest**)

I aim to make students work together; forming groups that will help individual growth and initiate mutual understanding and co-operation and enhance communication through vocabulary growth. By applying the scaffolding method, it is possible to give differentiated help to each group, each individual. Proper guidance will make my students acquire the given material in the best order and the wisest steps within a flexible time frame.

Anchoring could also be extremely useful, especially for those who struggle with memory deficiency as a result of an insufficient prior education and lack of interest. Most students simply love to draw or get engaged in

various artistic activities, searching the Internet for pictures at a minimum, therefore giving a picture making task that will remind them of basic parts of a story, method or text will certainly be beneficial. *(Valéria Sarlós, school teacher, Eger)*

On the third day we had the opportunity to learn more about designing, presenting and evaluating CLIL lessons in teams. Andrejus Rackovskis gave us a really versatile picture of the planning process and as a result we had an opportunity to develop lesson plans in our mixed groups. I found this part of the course the most fruitful experience. My Lithuanian and Spanish team-workers and I worked well together. As we came from different subject fields we could really experience a cross-curricular approach and in our final product we managed to introduce our content from different angles. I really enjoyed the co-operative atmosphere of the whole course.

(Ildikó Mester, Waldorf teacher, Nemesvámos)

What I gained from the training was to experience how difficult joint teaching can be when you work with teachers from different countries and cultures. I found working with our Lithuanian and Hungarian colleagues very promising and fruitful, however at times we had difficulties (linguistic and professional) with our Spanish colleagues, as they seemed to be very rigid about the project and they did not really make it possible to actually bring forward anything but what they wanted to have throughout the lesson. But finally we managed to carry out the project so that everybody's ideas were incorporated. Although this seems to be a negative reflection it is not at all (I would not have included it here otherwise), it had a huge impact on my future career. I have taken part in many international teaching projects as a primary, secondary and tertiary teacher and I somehow never experienced a situation in which I had difficulties with co-operation in an international setting. I think this project work was really useful and gave me an insight on how I handle difficult situations. This means that the training did not only offer theoretical enrichment but also professional development and self-awareness at the same time. The training gave space to and facilitated self-reflection from various aspects. *(László Katona, university lecturer, Budapest)*

I felt lucky when I was told I would have a Civilisation class two years ago, because I would be able to talk about something other than topics related to grammar,



vocabulary or the current topic of our course book. However, the difficulties of the situation also arose quickly – lack of course books and materials, out-dated ideas of immersion teaching, etc. – which are familiar to many colleagues (and not only in Hungary). I think we need to share knowledge and experience as much as we can, and not limit ourselves to materials or theories specific only to our subjects. With courses like this we can encourage and support each other that however varied the circumstances in CLIL are, we could still find mutual ground to start new practices from, or some common points we can connect the ideas to. I hope to be more attentive to new concepts and to be able to find opportunities to better myself in this field. I would like to take part in the IATEFL-H annual conference, too, not only for my professional development but to get another chance to meet and collaborate with these colleagues.

(Adrienn Csépe, vocational school teacher, Szombathely)

I don't think Hungarian teachers are fully aware of CLIL and its potential in Hungary. This is an idea that has to be strengthened in my school, and there are two ways to strengthen the experience. First, I can share it with all my colleagues in our academic year starting conference. Secondly, we can discuss it in our English-teaching community in our regular, weekly meetings. Additionally, since it is part of my teaching practice, anything that I have learnt goes into lesson planning, and then into teaching. So after all, all my students and most likely their parents will learn about all these new ideas and types of teaching I have been experimenting with in the last seven years. CLIL, content and higher order thinking skills are greatly important in our fast changing, constantly developing world. *(Balázs Dicső-Erdődi, secondary school teacher, Budapest)*