

CLIL, Language Across Curricula

The abbreviation mentioned in the title can be decoded as **Content and Language Integrated Learning**. It means that the language and the content of some subject, let's say art, physical training, biology..., are integrated and both are taught, not only used.

This strategy started in the 90s of the 20th century in Finland and it spread all over Europe. It is supported by the EU educational policy from 2004. In the **Czech** educational system different **names** appeared and they roughly mean the same: two subjects (language and another subject) learnt together:

1. Třídy s výukou vybraných předmětů v cizím jazyce
2. Třídy se specifickými formami rozšířené výuky cizího jazyka a výukou dalších vybraných předmětů v cizím jazyce
3. Dvojjazyčně/bilingvní třídy
4. Dvojjazyčně/bilingvní sekce
5. Angličtina napříč předměty

When a subject is taught in a foreign language, the student has the chance to see how **language works in real situations**. His/her self-confidence is strengthened in the language and s/he is encouraged to study more. Sometimes the **lessons** are just **bilingual**: the students are supposed to know the language at a certain level and they are taught the subject in a foreign language. The subject is taught and explained but not the language. **The language is just a tool**. The goal is to teach the subject not the language. This is not CLIL. It is just bilingual teaching. In **CLIL both is taught and learnt: the subject and the language** at the same time. The student is not supposed to be at a certain level of language. Later in language lessons the material from CLIL lessons can be of great help and the lesson can be based on what the students know from CLIL. Thanks to CLIL natural atmosphere and environment for the language is created, students' **motivation** is better and the use of language is immediate. In special language lessons we usually have to imitate the situations for students to speak, write and use the language. Whilst in CLIL the situations come naturally. In language lessons they are taught the language that they will use sometimes in the future. Whilst in CLIL they use the language immediately. The research has proved that students' results in the language and in the subject are very good thanks to CLIL.

There is a large **difference in methodology** between language teaching and teaching the subject in a foreign language. When we teach the language, we are mainly focussed on teaching the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). When we teach the subject in a foreign language the four skills are the tools helping us to explain things, to bring new information. This is very important for the students' future career. They will be able to use the language in various situations, in discussions, explanations, expressing opinions.

Thanks to our basic school curricula it is easier to integrate the language into other subjects than it is in later grades. Therefore the teachers at a basic school are asked to study English to be able to use it with children. In 6th and later grades either the native speakers use CLIL or teachers whose specialization is English plus another subject. The lessons are quite demanding for the teachers as they have to speak English (or another language) during the lesson, they have to be able to discuss, solve the problems, explain things from the subject, all in a foreign language.