



Università degli Studi di Genova

CENTRO LINGUISTICO DI ATENEO  
Corso di Perfezionamento CLIL 20 CFU

## Final essay on methodological-disciplinary aspects

The CLIL project “How to do a Questionnaire” is part of a broader programme on which I started to work with the students last year. During their fourth grade we read together materials in English concerning the questionnaire. Therefore, not only were the students already familiar with part of the themes and concepts, but also with some of the specific vocabulary.

Despite the work carried out the previous year, we had some difficulties in putting theory into practice. Applying CLIL methodology to our work was particularly demanding because:

- students had to learn how to study in English a subject they had always dealt with in Italian. They therefore had to make an effort and shift from thinking and learning in their mother-tongue to studying in a foreign language.
- students of the same class showed different levels of competence in both L2 and TIC, so it was hard to create a homogeneous programme.
- most of the students developed a strong affective filter and consequently had strong difficulties in developing and expressing ideas in L2.

Having taken into account the difficulties listed above, I tried to adopt a soft approach in order to motivate students and create a serene working atmosphere. The didactic programme was therefore shaped on learners’ needs, still, its essence was preserved. Students showed to have fully understood the significance of the project, which will be discussed during the final graduation exam, or *esame di Stato*.

In spite of all hardships, the experience turned out to be positive and productive on the whole. The majority of students worked diligently and each of them managed to overcome shyness and fully exploit their own learning skills.

Students better performed in games and tasks combining language learning and elements of ludic engagement. The positively competitive environment of ludic activities played

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an essential role in motivating learners to overcome shyness, as a matter of fact. As far as I am concerned, the most challenging aspect for the students was its presentation to a selected sample of other students. Speaking in public is not easy, even when the speech is delivered in our mother-tongue, let alone in English. In addition to this, the audience had no clue of what they would have talked about, it was not a teacher listening in order to judge them, for once. The public consisted of a group of peers, hence the objective was not respecting grammar and pronunciation rules, but clearly delivering instructions for a questionnaire. In spite of all the difficulties it implied, students brilliantly performed the task and managed to increase their self-confidence and overcome shyness. To conclude, CLIL motivated students by simply setting a real objective. The task-based activities through which it was achieved stimulated students to express themselves freely in English and to fully develop their hidden potential.

### **Project presentation:**

The project's final version was published on [\*\*SCHOOLSTORMING\*\*](#), a blog followed by a wide variety of users, most of which are not specifically interested in CLIL. In order to make data accessible to everyone we started by presenting the survey outcomes, the questionnaire model, graphs showing results and a podcast in which students introduces the experience. In order to encourage cooperation among teachers, a link to our working materials can be found at the end of the post.

### **Conclusions:**

In my view, CLIL represents a turning point in language acquisition and teaching strategies. What really makes it effective is the innovative role that language plays within a different context allows students to enjoy the experience of a different learning environment, which greatly contributes to broaden their views and stimulates their curiosity towards other cultures. By cleverly exploiting technology, CLIL reshapes our conception of school and therefore broadens the boundaries of education. From my point of view, the teacher plays a central role in shaping this new learning environment. Students are encouraged to overcome their fear of making mistakes and to appreciate language as a mean of changing perspective and discovering new ways of thinking. Language returns to its true nature, that of being a tool, not an end in itself.