

ZGUCAN-programme, University of Maribor, Slovenia

Curriculum scenario for CLIL LOTE in the language classroom and in other subjects

Why is this scenario interesting?

The scenario describes a mandatory in-service CLIL LOTE course for primary school and language teachers.

The program includes: 6 ECTS CLIL, 9 ECTS didactics in mathematics and other non-language subjects, 9 ECTS didactics in arts, sports, and music. In all these topics the CLIL perspective is taken into account.

The course promotes transitions from pre-school to upper primary education.

Short description:

The scenario describes a teacher education programme in English or German that has been offered annually at the University of Maribor in Slovenia since 2015. The programme is entitled ZGUCAN (<https://ff.um.si/center-za-vsezivljenjsko-izobrazevanje/zgucan/>). The acronym ZGUCAN means, translated into English, 'Early Learning of English or German'.

ZGUCAN is a one-year in-service training programme for teachers of early language acquisition in the foreign languages English or German. According to a 2013 decree of the Slovenian Ministry of Education, this in-service training is compulsory for all foreign language teachers and primary school teachers who want to teach the foreign languages English or German in kindergarten or in grades 1-5 at primary school.

The programme comprises 60 ECTS, of which 6 ECTS are reserved for CLIL.

In addition to CLIL, the programme contains the following compulsory focal points: didactics of mathematics, environmental education, art, music and sports (together 18 ECTS), in which the respective didactics are partly also addressed from a CLIL perspective.

Context:

There are three comparable Continuing Professional Development programmes in Slovenia that are accredited with the Slovenian National Agency for Quality in Education. One of them is the ZGUCAN programme described in the scenario, which is offered at the University of Maribor.

Most teachers who complete the ZGUCAN programme teach English. However, there are also about 20% teachers who teach German as a first or second foreign language each year. In most cases, the teachers are sent directly by the school management for further training.

Of three comparable continuing education programmes in Slovenia, ZGUCAN is the only one that also has German as a target language. The other two work with English or, on the border of Italy, with English and Italian. The ZGUCAN programme thus reflects the interest in German in the border area to Austria, where in some schools German is either the first foreign language or German and English are compulsory from grade 1. In our opinion, the ZGUCAN programme contributes not only to the implementation of CLIL, but also to the strengthening of German as a LOTE language, and the programme has an - albeit limited - influence on the establishment of German as a foreign language at schools. The quality of the programme is reviewed by the Slovenian National Agency at three-year intervals.

How does this scenario support transitions?

The training programme directly integrates the transition between education and work, as it is a compulsory training that all teachers must take if they want to teach the foreign languages English or German in kindergarten or in grades 1-5 of primary school. In the implementation of the programme, it is also foreseen that the lecturers invite guests from the field, cooperate a lot with schools and also involve the schools in improving the quality of the programme.

The further education programme will also address the transitions between the educational levels. It is linked to the kindergarten curriculum and to foreign language teaching from grade 6 onwards.

Course description**1. The CLIL Continuing Education module for English and German (6 ECTS)****Learning objectives:**

Comparison of CLIL with other approaches

The different dimensions of the CLIL approach: the teacher, the learners, the linguistic and non-linguistic objectives, etc.

Addressing and reflecting on CLIL in practice.

The analysis of video material and microteaching should serve as a stimulus to reflect on the concrete use of CLIL in teaching practice, i.e., to think about how to effectively combine CLIL and foreign language learning in the primary level.

2. The continuing education module for didactics in mathematics, other non-language subjects, art, sport and music (18 ECTS)**Learning objectives:**

To understand basics, apply practically, plan through the CLIL perspective and prepare materials.

Approaches/Methods

Different methods are used in the programme,
e.g.:

- teamwork
- case studies
- simulations
- role plays
- reflections
- discussions
- e-learning

Example 1:

Teaching materials (two modules of approx. 15 hours each) for CLIL at primary level are developed in teams. In each team there are foreign language teachers and primary school teachers.

For each teaching unit

- Objectives are set both for foreign language teaching and for the other subjects,
- activities are described and
- planned for the teachers.

At the end, there is a joint reflection, starting with the question of how the teamwork went and how the participants benefited from the teamwork.

Example 2:

After the implementation of teaching units in the primary sector in schools, teachers reflect in writing on their experiences and attitudes towards CLIL from different perspectives according to given criteria.

Short description of how the scenario links CLIL LOTE and plurilingual education:

The language of instruction in the courses is Slovenian, because English and German teachers teach together in the ZGUCAN programme. Both languages are used in examples and in microteaching. The English teachers, some of whom have very little knowledge of German (about one third of the participants each year), react very positively to the contextualised use of German because they experience for themselves how CLIL works in practice.

Within the framework of the programme, CLIL in Slovenia is placed in the context of EU language policy and made a topic of discussion. In connection with this, functional multilingualism in the Slovenian context is also discussed, which mainly refers to migrants in Slovenia (mostly from the ex-Yugoslavian region).

Most of the teachers who complete the ZGUCAN programme come from the regions of Styria and Carinthia in Slovenia, where German is more established in primary education than in other regions. In this sense, the ZGUCAN programme also deals with regional languages and school policies.

Suggestions for further development:

The programme partly builds a bridge to the kindergarten curriculum because foreign languages are offered in kindergartens and more than 95% of the children attend kindergarten. Unfortunately, however, this transition is not systematically addressed, but mainly depends on the individual priorities of the teachers.

It is a challenge that CLIL is not allowed by law in Slovenia (with the exception of the minority region). Therefore, CLIL is not integrated into subject lessons, but the focus is on CLIL in language lessons. CLIL is anchored in the curriculum for the first and second foreign language. This is also reflected in some textbooks for the first and second foreign language, in which learning objectives for language and content learning are defined for grades 1-5. It would be desirable to integrate the CLIL approach even more consistently into the textbooks and to be able to implement CLIL legally in the other subjects as well.

Author: Prof. Dr Alja Lipavic Ostir, University of Maribor, Slovenia, alja.lipavic@um.si