

**UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY AND ART
TEACHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**CLIL METHOD IN THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
IN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**SATURA UN VALODAS
INTEGRĒTĀS MĀCĪŠANĀS METODE
ANĢĻU VALODAS, KĀ SVEŠVALODAS APĢŪVĒ SĀKUMSKOLĀ**

DIPLOMA PAPER

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**RIGA
2011**

**LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTES
PEDAGOĢIJAS, PSIHOLOĢIJAS UN MĀKSLAS FAKULTĀTES
SKOLOTĀJU IZGLĪTĪBAS NODAĻAS**

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DIPLOMDARBS**

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ABSTRACT

Very often secondary school students complain that they have spent 12 years at school, did many different things, studied lots of subjects, but have not learnt English. Teachers say it is students to be blamed; students say it is teachers' fault – boring lessons, old books and old methods. They require something that develops together with them morally and practically and one of the possible solutions could be Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). It has not been stated that CLIL is the only appropriate method, but it is worth trying to pilot it within real classroom and with real students. The aim the Diploma paper was to study the methodology of CLIL and its impact on the acquisition of English. Case study was used as a method of research to find out how CLIL method helps students to acquire English. 1st to 3rd grade students were involved in the case study at Jurmala Alternative School (JAS). The data were obtained through lesson analysis, lesson observation and practical lessons using CLIL materials for primary school learners. The Case study lasted for one month and many lessons were recorded in the audio version. The research data showed that students enjoyed the lessons and they learnt lots of new vocabulary, as well as they had the opportunity to take practical exercises and practise speaking a lot. The period was not long enough to give strong opinion whether CLIL increased the level of English for all the students, but as lesson observation showed each individual learnt new information anyway, whether it was in the field of language or a subject. During the case study many different subjects were used in a combination with English –maths, geography, biology, art, IT and many different social skills – communicating, sharing information, explaining etc.

ANOTĀCIJA

Ļoti bieži vidusskolēni sūdzas, ka viņi ir pavadījuši 12 gadus skolā, darījuši daudz dažādu lietu, mācījušies daudz dažādu priekšmetu, bet nav iemācījušies angļu valodu. Skolotāji uzskata, ka skolēni būtu vainojami, skolēni saka, ka tā ir skolotāju vaina - garlaicīgas nodarbības, morāli novecojušas grāmatas un metodes. Tie pieprasa kaut ko, kas attīstās kopā ar viņiem morāli un praktiski un viens no iespējamajiem risinājumiem varētu būt Satura un Valodas Integrēta Apguve (SVIA). Netiek uzskatīt, ka SVIA ir vienīgais piemērotais veids, taču ir vērts mēģināt, lai izmēģinātu metodi, tā ir jāiesniedz reālās klases un reāliem studentiem. Diplomdarba mērķis bija izpētīt SVIA metodes un to ietekmi uz angļu valodas apguvi. Situācijas izpēte tika izmantota kā metode pētījumus, lai noskaidrotu, kā SVIA metodes palīdz skolēniem apgūt angļu valodu. 1.-3. klašu skolēniem tika iesaistīti gadījumā pētījumā Jūrmalas Alternatīvajā Skolā (JAS). Dati tika iegūti, izmantojot mācību analīzi, nodarbību novērošana un praktiskās nodarbības, izmantojot SVIA materiālus pamatskolu audzēkņiem. Situācijas izpēte ilga vienu mēnesi, un vairākas nodarbības tika ierakstītas audio versijā. Rezultāti parādīja, ka studenti apguva daudz jaunu vārdu, kā arī viņiem bija iespēja izmantot valodu praktiski, runājot daudz. Periods nebija pietiekami ilgs, lai sniegtu pārlicību, vai SVIA palielināja angļu valodas līmeni visiem skolēniem, bet kā mācība novērojumi liecina, ka katrs apgūst jaunu informāciju, vai tas bija saistībā ar priekšmetu, vai valodu. Situācijas izpētes laikā dažādi mācību priekšmeti tika izmantotas kopā ar angļu valodu – matemātika, ģeogrāfija, bioloģija, māksla, IT un daudzas dažādas sociālās prasmes - komunikācijas, apmaiņu, izskaidrojot u.c.

DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I declare that this study is my own and does not contain any unacknowledged work from any source.

Signature

Guntis Zenfs

30 May, 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to the CLIL expert Mrs. Gunta Krīgere who gave me very useful materials, an interesting and valuable interview as well as her precious time. While doing my research, the answers Mrs. Krīgere shared, helped me to understand the CLIL method more thoroughly, as well as comprehend the further activities to accomplish the Diploma Paper professionally and correctly.

Last but not the least; I would like to thank my adviser of the Diploma Paper Indra Odiņa who helped me a lot in gathering information, collecting data and never refused her help when I asked for. Without her help I could never accomplish my Diploma Paper.

Thanking you,

Guntis Zenfs

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades the CLIL (*Content and Language Integrated Learning*) method is becoming more and more popular because of the fact that Europe Union has set challenging target – all the citizens of EU have to speak at least two foreign languages apart from their native language. In the international language conference 2002 writers and CLIL experts said that by 2010 there will be no need for English teachers because the language will be integrated into subjects. This has not happened yet, but no doubts CLIL has started its way to more and more schools. Many European countries already follow this example and have adjusted CLIL methods to both foreign students and their native citizens.

The problem with schools today is that children spend 12 years by their desks and learn very little information which they will be able to use in their further lives. Similar it is with English. Most schools offer English lessons from Grade 3, and it is planned that by the year 2012 English will be taught from Grade 1. So it means that students when they finish secondary school will have had approximately 1200 lessons of English plus internet, movies, songs and cartoons children watch every day for many hours. After studying the English language for 12 years all the students could be expected to speak English like natives. Do they speak? The answer is short – no. One absurd explanation could be that 21st century students are not able to acquire knowledge with the same old methods, as in the previous century, but on the other hand many students say that when they have private lessons or attend any language courses their knowledge improves. The result should be that children know English as well as natives, but the average exam results, according to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science in the school year 2009 are less than 50 points – 47,66 of 80. The problem has to be solved at schools where they spend most of their time. Students are being thrown around like tennis balls. Parents say they cannot pay attention to their offsprings because they do not have time enough and some parents strongly believe it is teachers' responsibility to educate their children. The author has had a conversation with one parent at school where he works. The whole discussion was more like a monologue where a parent was complaining and justifying herself for not paying enough attention to her child, but at the end of the meeting she said: *"...and actually I have brought my child to school, what else do you want from me."* In the other case there is a 4th grade student who has spent a year in Lebanon and learnt English at the level which is equal to native speakers and theoretical background level which is equal to 8th or 9th grade level in Latvia. Apart from all, the student has also

developed her knowledge in all the other subjects as well. It has turned out that if the child who does not know the language or has very limited knowledge is able to learn the language with CLIL much faster and better than children at ordinary schools where the foreign language is taught only as the subject 3 to 5 times a week. One more reason in the favor of CLIL method is that it can be adjusted not only to the national language of the country, but also to any minoring language, for example, in France the CLIL method is used to teach such languages as Breton, Catalan in France, or Sami in Norway. What it basically means is that theoretically any language can be taught in any country. If this method is popular then after years it will be possible to make Latvia the country where people speak four and more languages which are possible to learn in relatively short period. No need to spend many years at school struggling with one language for twelve years. With this method it is likely to take a couple of years for per-intermediate level and maybe some more for higher levels. At first it might be difficult to teach all the subjects with CLIL, but the experience of France, Spain, Bulgaria, and Romania has shown that it is quite possible to teach only a part from all the subjects in a foreign language. For example, music and art are taught in English, but all the other subjects are taught in the native language.

The aim of the Diploma Paper is to discover how CLIL method helps non-native speakers to acquire English.

The objectives of the Diploma Paper are:

1. To study the theory on the acquisition of the English as a foreign language;
2. To explore the methodology of CLIL;
3. To pilot CLIL exercises with primary level students;
4. To carry the interview with the CLIL expert in Latvia;
5. To clarify parent's opinion about the CLIL method.

The research questions are:

1. What the historical background and future perspectives of the CLIL method are;
2. What methodology CLIL includes;
3. What result of learning with CLIL is.

The Hypothesis: CLIL method in English lessons helps students to acquire content based vocabulary in shorter time, in more motivated way, and raises primary school students' level of the English language.

A Case Study is used as a method of research to explore CLIL method. The practical CLIL lessons were conducted at Jurmala Alternative School from March 31, 2011

till April 29, 2011. The students were 1st to 3rd graders who had been studying English since 1st grade. Altogether there were **72** CLIL lessons. In each class there were 16 -18 students and divided into two groups according to their level of English; 8 – 9 students in each group.

The data collecting methods were observation of primary school students to find out how they learn English with CLIL method and interview with the expert of CLIL in Latvia and a mother whose daughter (age 10) has studied in Lebanon for a year.

The Diploma Paper consists of 3 chapters of literature review and one chapter of Case Study.

The first chapter deals with the basic principles how English is learnt and taught. Mainly the chapter explains what different methods and ways are used to learn English.

The second chapter describes how CLIL has developed in different countries and what purposes it has been used for. The chapter also shows different usage of CLIL method and its adjustment to different learning situations.

The third chapter provides the information on CLIL methodology: what methods are used and what the main difference between CLIL lesson and usual language lessons is.

The last chapter is an outline of observations for practical CLIL teaching lessons. Also the case study provides audio records to make the feeling and atmosphere of CLIL lessons more understandable and enjoyable. The great deal to writing the Diploma Paper was taken from the interviews with Gunta Krīgere (the CLIL expert) whose answers were used to better understand the CLIL methodology and Emilija Liepa, whose daughter Karla is fluent in three foreign languages – English, Russian and Arabic. These two interviews helped to understand how CLIL works theoretically and what practical results are from this method.

1. THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

There are lots of different books published all over the world on *how to teach English, how to develop all language skills, how to develop grammar and vocabulary* etc., but many of these materials are misunderstood by teacher who understands that it is English they work with not students.

The general problem is that students' needs are replaced by language needs – it is emphasized what skills students need to learn not how language can serve well to learners. Thus, the attention is diverting from students to a book, from teaching students to teaching –book. Aslam (2006) says that students after having studied the English language for 10–12 years can barely remember 1500 words when they enter universities and they are not able to use the language effectively in their daily lives. They are not able to communicate among each other. In the following chapter the author will show some of the possible strategies that can be used in student – oriented classrooms. The lack of creativity also leads to a common scene when a teacher enters a classroom and follows the book activity by activity, sentence by sentence, and thus returning to the first problem – teaching a book not students.

Mercer and Swann (1996) suggest starting a language course with asking a couple of questions to avoid any possible problems in the future: “What role is English playing in each learner’s life?” and “How can a language serve to a student?” When these questions are answered, the further decisions can be made on teaching and learning methods, material design and the length of course and lessons etc.

It is important not to omit all four skills, but to understand that teachers teach students not subjects and what strategies can be used to connect (*reading, writing, speaking and listening*). Creativity could be one of the possible variants to successful teaching and learning. Cremin (2009) has designed a book where all the four language skills (speaking, reading, listening and writing) are taught through creative approaches. People mistakenly believe that creativity only refers to art and music, but it is possible to think, act creatively in any subject. Creativeness does not mean that teachers have to invent exercises or approaches that have never existed before. Wright (2009) agrees that creativity belongs to all the subjects not only creative ones. What *being creative* means is that a teacher can make children think creatively by questioning them and making them ask questions and even doubting everything.

When teaching speaking the first step to successful conversation is asking questions. The exercise can be very essential –a small conversation about a pond. The pond is deep and it is impossible to see what is under the surface of the water. These conditions give plenty of space for learners’ free imagination. The creativeness in speaking does not require much. Children need to understand the context and the necessity of each task, unlikely when speaking tasks are taken from books and delivered straight to learners. Similar conversations with adjusted themes can be managed with adults as well.

Other creative suggestions are offered by Wright (2009) that “we learn how to drive a car by driving not watching”. At math lessons students could build a model of a house showing all the geometrical figures and angles, for example.

Whether it is a math or English role play lesson that joins these both lessons together, the main role is to use practically what students have learnt, and using already in a classroom not after 10 years when students will have their *adult* or *real* lives outside the classroom.

The active participation in classroom discussions during English lesson seems to be far more important than spending hours and hours struggling with grammar or difficult reading texts. Griffiths (2008) suggests that turning a classroom into a live discussion place is the key to successful language acquisition. One problem that discourages students to speak is that they are afraid of others who can speak English better. At school the environment is artificial where students are used to the fact that teacher speaks better English, but on the street when learners meet other peers they cannot speak. For this reason, group discussions are very important because the atmosphere becomes more natural. It is advisable to change pairs from time to time so students can develop their listening skills with different classmates who have different levels, speed and style of English. It has been clarified that good speaking and listening skills can be developed by group discussions, pair discussions and pair chats, but what the role of reading is? According to Griffiths (2008) culture has a very important role in using reading texts in lessons. Texts that contain unfamiliar culture to a learner pose a higher reading challenge than texts about familiar culture. It is also important to adapt text to if not each individual then to each class certainly. The texts have to be challenging, but achievable in connection with interesting contexts which offer students new and useful information. Teachers measure the knowledge of students’ reading skills by checking how many *true/false* or *gap filling* examples are correct, but McCormack and Pasquarelli (2009) direct teachers’ attention that it is not enough if students are very good at learning in a classroom and doing all the exercises from activity books. A good reader is the one who is able to read

strategically they know how to gain information from a wide variety of texts with wide range of difficulty levels. Teachers have to teach the strategies how to cope with difficult and different texts in a real life situation. The following strategy is very essential and easy to practise.

Teachers ask students to read out aloud without allowing them to read silently at first. This is a typical real life situation. McCormack and Pasquarelli (2009) offered an example when a person at wedding is asked to read out aloud a small story of how young couple met each other. The person agreed on the condition that the copy is given to him first so he can practise reading silently before reading out aloud.

This situation shows that it is important to allow students read the text silently because in a real life very seldom they will be asked to read out aloud without any practice. Similarly as with speaking and listening it is important to have *real life connection* with any tasks and activities that are given to students.

Real life connection is often lacking when dealing with writing exercises. In all the course books there are different kinds of letters (*formal, informal, semi-formal, survey* etc.) and teachers always try to drill all the variants a couple of months before examination so it is still *fresh* in students' minds. When exam writing tasks are compared with what is needed in reality, there is a huge gap between these two requirements. For example, when applying for universities abroad there is no formal letter needed because special programs are designed where students have to download their motivation letter and if they pass to the next level then it is either an interview or a requirement to send a personal portfolio to a university applied. The main idea of CLIL method is that language subjects combine any other subjects together and one helps to learn the other by using a foreign language.

CLIL helps to learn both – subject and language without grammar rules, only using the language in practice.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF CLIL IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

2.1 The development of CLIL in different countries

According to Marsh (2000) the CLIL or *Content and language integrated learning* is a method where subjects are taught through a non-native language with two aims – the learning of content and a foreign language.

CLIL is one of many teaching methods to acquire any kind of subjects through the language which is not native to those who learn the subjects.

As Graddol (2006: 86) says: “it is very realistic to study Science and Geography with the combining element – English that does not make any problems and the fact that these subjects are taught through the foreign language does not make the subject acquisition more difficult”.

The development of CLIL can be seen in two different views. In Europe CLIL arose from new curriculum in Finland in the mid 1990s. But according to Lang (2009) the process how CLIL developed on the other side of the ocean – in the U.S. where there was an urgent need to solve the problems of immigrant students who did not have the English level high enough to learn in this language.

Today the CLIL method is adopted by many European countries, such as Sweden, Germany, France, Bulgaria, Austria and many other countries. Also Lebanon has decided to use the CLIL method in some schools – in the capital Beirut and some other schools.

According to Bax and Zwart (2001) significant changes started in the end of 20th century when a common demand in Europe emerged that all the European citizens should speak more than two languages apart from their mother tongue.

Lang (2009) says that officially the roots of the CLIL are found in the U.S., but on the other hand many researches and document studies show that basically very many European countries have their own principles and purposes for the further development of CLIL.

Also Scott (2006) implies CLIL is not new method at all because it became popular when many immigrants moved to other countries and their children had to study at their new schools. Very often children did not know anything about their new place where they lived, let alone the language. Scott (2006) also says that similarities to the CLIL which is known today can be found back in those times when old Greek and Latin languages were taught through literature. In Pakistan the Koran is taught in Arabic, though not all the students know this language. (The national language is Urdu).

The biggest countries in Europe have already been using CLIL methods for more than 50 years. There are hundreds of examples how CLIL is adjusted to different kinds of educational institutions and different types of learners who learn using CLIL, thus the following situations are just some closest examples how CLIL might develop in Latvia, what targets could be set. According to Trim (2001) in France there are two different CLIL approaches regarding the delivery in private and public schools. Apart from the requirements that CLIL sets (the target language has to be used for 100 per cent), in France there already exists the rule that the target language should be used not less than 50 per cent, though this regards lyceums. France is also one of the countries which offer CLIL methods in French schools abroad, for example, Germany. In France CLIL was not introduced in one day. The influence happened step by step. At first the CLIL was introduced to lower level education institutions in *colleges* (in France these are lower secondary schools) with two language hours a week. The most popular subjects in France taught through CLIL approach are history and geography. Other subjects can be and are taught as well, like music, art and even such important and difficult subjects as math and science.

Different countries have different aims and purposes why schools and private teaching institutions choose to teach using CLIL method. In France it was introduced to direct students learning more than one native language, thus providing them opportunity to acquire several different languages using CLIL method.

According to Marsh (2000) the reason why CLIL was introduced in Germany was the significant number of immigrant children. The German government had learnt from Danish experience that people from other countries who migrate to different countries for any reasons – political, private or in search for work not always accept the culture or customs of values of the country they have chosen to live in. Thus, Germany decided to take the measurements of protection to ensure that the immigrants or at least their children will learn the native language and culture, in this case – the German language and culture.

In this case the CLIL was used to reach two different targets – teach immigrants German and through German the culture.

The second reason of CLIL in Germany was to have *intensive second language*. This means that by the age of 8 children are literate in both languages – native and any second language. Unlike France where no difference was set among math, literature, chemistry or art, the Germans follow slightly different methods. Math and similar subjects are always taught in mother tongue, but “environmental studies” such as fine arts or music are basically taught in the second language. The classes are usually not bigger than 24 pupils.

In Spain, however, the situation seemed the most difficult because the target of CLIL was to work with 3 languages simultaneously – Spanish, Basque and English. The target was to teach English to Spanish and also people living in north – central regions of Spain known as Basques. The other target was to teach Basques English apart from Spanish, thus turning Basques into trilingual language speakers. According to subjects, Spain also followed the path similar to France where no subjects were sorted to be taught through CLIL. The subject pattern was the same for both – Spanish and Basques.

The results were positive, during the first course which took place in 1991 and lasted for 19 months and the other piloting scheme from 1996 – 1999 showed that more than 50 per cent of all the students (4 year old) were able to communicate in these languages.

The experience of Spain shows that it is possible to adjust CLIL to minority language users to teach them the country language and also any foreign language using the target language in the classroom.

It might be questionable whether it is CLIL that helps to achieve results, but it is just one of the methodological tools to learn and teach the language. No doubts that many different methods could also be used to teach, for example, Basques the Spanish language or English to Spanish people. The key of CLIL is that in all the cases the target language is used to communicate between teachers and learners.

All the examples mentioned above have one common characteristic – English is the target language and the tool to teach all the subjects, but according to CLIL methodology, any language can be taught through any other language, so the last example will show how, in this case, French is taught in the U.K. The figures show that French with 2603 learners is the most common language to be learnt in the U.K., leaving behind German which has been chosen by less than a half of students – 1032 and Spanish with a number of 1550. The first three places have been taken by the languages which geographically surrender Great Britain, thus it might be a reason why exactly these 3 languages are used the most widely across the U.K.

All the examples above showed that each country used CLIL for different purposes, but the question is what the future perspectives for this method are: whether the CLIL method survives in the near future where all the languages together with teaching methods change.

In some countries CLIL methods have been used for more than a half of a century, but in some countries, like Latvia, CLIL methods are not used widely, with some exception of specific language schools.

2.2 The future perspectives of CLIL

What is the future for CLIL? What Marsh (2000) says is that one thing is clear – foreign languages tend to expand among all the countries, including young learners and adult learners. In addition, adult learners tend to join language courses or individual studies more than ever before, and the number of adults willing to learn grows.

Whether CLIL will be able to survive in the future depends on systematic changes and innovations in education system in each particular country, for example, there should be teacher training courses and teaching materials of CLIL. The question of assessment and teacher mutual collaboration has to be thought over more thoroughly.

In ordinary schools the most subjects are teacher – learner oriented, but CLIL requires the *can –do* approach where students work individually and the teacher's role is reduced to only one or two duties – advice and monitor the students' individual work. Thus, the social skills have to be included in curriculum as an imprescriptible part. The skills which have to be included in syllabus could be the ones related to capability to work and search for information individually, this goes together with one of the CLIL principles that the target language is the only language used in a classroom, this means that if a student has not managed to understand any nuances at a lesson, one has to be able to search the information individually, this is also one of the skills that is highly developed in the student who has learnt at a school with CLIL methods.

Marsh (2000) highlights that during last years the access of the internet at home has increased to 80%; also availability of internet at schools is significant as well. Learners are currently surrounded by all the advantages and disadvantages what the internet can offer. This is the fact that has to be taken into account not only in terms of CLIL future, but any other teaching method and ordinary school programs. This suggests introducing a bigger part of self-learning of languages outside the classroom, showing that internet can be used as a powerful tool that can really help students make the internet work for them in terms of language studies. According to the fact that internet and other IT technologies have been widely used, it is advisable for schools to use more technical innovation in classrooms because this is what students do at home and the future schools should not try to stop students from using computers at schools. Combining IT and subjects could reduce the time students spend at school and increase their knowledge of particular subject.

What concerns teachers, then this seems the most sophisticated issue. One of the corner stones for CLIL is teaching subjects through English. This is where the problem rises –most of the teachers are not educated in at least two subjects, where one of them is

English. For example, a CLIL teacher has to know English and in addition one other subject to teach. Thus, teacher education courses have to be developed where teachers could learn a language and a subject simultaneously.

Mackenzie (http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=153865907143) says that “the future of CLIL is obvious and this method has lots to offer to both, teachers and learners. The main reason why the future seems perspective is that CLIL lessons are highly student-centered which means that students are individuals and they have the opportunity to communicate within a classroom.”

It seems that each country which used Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has its own history of CLIL. In this chapter only few countries were observed, but there are many different ones and there are different aims for using CLIL in lessons. No matter whether CLIL is used to teach migrants German, as it was in Germany or local dialects to Basques, there is still one common characteristic that links all these different experiences – result. No matter what the target is, it has been reached using CLIL method. With CLIL children can learn English faster and what is important they are capable to use the language in their daily life, what matters the most.

3. CLIL METHODOLOGY

Language can be activated by providing specific vocabulary that can be useful for the lesson, for instance, topic for the lesson is to speak about water – its use, characteristics etc. then appropriate vocabulary is provided connected with water.

When activating knowledge teachers usually take into account the learners' previous knowledge about the topic they are about to discover, for example, Geography lesson with the topic *China*. Teacher is aware that definitely there is something students know about China, thus they are asked to tell the classmates what they know about China. Knowledge in many cases is one and the same, but experience usually differs from how students have learnt what they know. For example, some students have read books about China, some have seen movies, but maybe somebody has even been in China. In this case the teacher's task is to accept any source students have taken the information from and there cannot be any doubts about the validity of information because this is students' experience. It may be incorrect, but their experience has to be accepted.

The role of the teacher in activating all these aspects is to provide learners with language input. Teacher has to communicate with students all the time (*the model of active listening is good*) when a teacher shows the interest when a student is speaking and make them communicate among each other because CLIL means using language naturally.

Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols (2008: 29) set core features according to the CLIL methodology. They explain that CLIL methodology consists of:

“Multiple focuses

- Supporting language learning in content classes and content learning in language classes;
- Integrating many subjects;
- Organizing learning through themes and projects.

Safe and enriching learning environment

- Building student confidence to experiment in language and content;
- Increasing student language awareness by encouraging them.

Authenticity

- Using materials from media and other sources.

Active learning

- Students communicating more than the teacher;
- Peer working;

- Teachers acting as adviser;
- Students evaluating their progress.

Co –operating

- Mutual cooperation between CLIL and non-CLIL teachers;
- Involving parents in CLIL”.

These general CLIL focuses show that students are still in the center of the learning process, leaving behind curriculum, teacher and language skills. CLIL aims are meant to allow students to learn a language naturally; this is possible when a language is already used in a classroom.

Marsh (2000: 6) says that: “CLIL is *dual-focused education* because CLIL lesson basically has two main aims. The one is when the lesson is aimed to the subject, topic or theme and the other is aimed to the language itself. Thus, both these aims can be achieved in different ways in the classroom according to timing, group size and student age. For example, it can involve 8 year old students having 2 lessons per week for 30 minutes in which they sing songs, play different games in the target language or it can involve 14 year old students having 3 or even 5 lessons per week of studying as much as a half or even more subjects in the foreign language”.

What CLIL offers to students is realistic and natural environment of both subject and language acquisition. Bentley (2010) agrees saying that in CLIL learners do two things at a time – they study a curricular subject and through this they develop learning skills in a target language.

Marsh (2000: 3) uses the term *naturalness* which basically explains that “the main task of CLIL method – forming the environment where the process of learning is not represented by theory and grammar of the language, in this case it is English, but allowing the acquisition process to happen naturally. The phenomenon is that it has been proven that the language level rises sharply when students are forced to think in the target language, thus leaving no place for their native language and allowing students to experience in their practical studies how theoretical basis is used in natural conversations and problem solving situation”.

Very often the question occurs whether to use the CLIL method at all. Opponents to this method insist that for children it is difficult to learn some theoretical subjects such as Math in their own language let alone studying this subject in a foreign language, such opinions occur, but as Graddol (1997) has claimed that there is no single way of teaching and learning English and thus there is no one perfect syllabus or the most appropriate

method to be used for language learning, thus CLIL is only one of the possible solutions to language acquisition.

According to Graddol (1997) the best grade to use CLIL is secondary school where students have acquired some basic knowledge before and are capable to use the language as a tool not the language they are struggling with. However, the case study showed that younger students are as capable as older students to manage studies with CLIL even at Grade 3.

The most important element that is required is very close collaboration between English teacher and subject teachers, to ensure that in the same secondary school the students will be able to continue their studies in English. At this point English teachers lose their subject, thus dedicating most of the time concentrating on students' preparation for other subjects, thus English serves as a tool for other subjects losing its own aims and targets. This sequence is impossible because one subject cannot be used as a sub-subject for other discipline, thus the only variant is that teachers are bilingual and are capable to teach English and one more subject. Similar experience is in Austria where all the prospective new teachers have to study and therefore become teachers for two different subjects, for example, English and Geography. This is the most realistic option for CLIL to be used at school.

In France there is also different experience, language teachers and subject teachers collaborate preparing common lesson plans and teaching strategies. Although this is very time consuming process and not all the teachers are capable to do it. For different purposes different approaches can be used, for instance, the CLIL method is also adjustable to the second or even the third language. The method can be used to foster learners' knowledge in any language they want to learn. Whether it is easier or not to study the subjects in a foreign language, it is the question that depends on a number of different issues, for example, how much time is dedicated to the acquisition and what is the expected outcome. Scott (2006) has set several points that explain the most important advantages of this method:

- *Content – related materials.* The materials stimulate students to communicate. When materials are subject-related, like all the study books which emphasize the skills student will learn from a particular reading text not the contexts and the cultural background.

- *Communicative and task-based materials.* It has been suggested that students learn better when they have to do something using the target language. This can be done in any subject related to the curriculum. In Math lessons they might be asked to

explain the difference between parallelogram and rectangle, for instance. In history it can be essays or presentations on a subject.

- *Language and culture.* A language learner with limited information about the culture has also limited possibilities to acquire a wide range of knowledge. Students have to know the cultural background of the countries where the target language is spoken. Culture issue is well-planned in CLIL program.

- *School time table.* Language teachers always seem not to have enough lessons for the subject, but time tables are already over-burdened with subject. The solution is very simple. Some of the specific subjects can be transferred to the foreign language, thus many problems can be solved.

- *Collaboration of parents.* Parents have always considered that it is important for their children to speak a second and even a third language, thus schools where more than one foreign language is offered always seem more attractive to parents. CLIL covers it with content.

Marsh (2000: 8) also adds that “the advantage of CLIL is that in these lessons students are forced to think in this language. The theory that Marshal proposes is that students being able to think about anything in a different language helps them to develop the ability to understand the *concept* of a task, for example. What this means is that thinking in different language helps students to understand how things work. This concerns not only the language but the learning in general”.

CLIL also provides situation where the attention is switched to “*what I can do with the language*” rather than “*I learn the rules and terms which I do not know how to use in real life situations*”.

It is natural that all the children are different in CLIL classrooms because students have different levels in the target language and the subject. One key part of CLIL methodology requires the communication between students where they can learn from each other.

All the children gain from CLIL lesson, not only the ones who are considered as being good at languages.

Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols (2008) also say that CLIL is a risk – taking method. CLIL students take extra risks. Students do not always understand every word which they hear or read, as the activities go further their knowledge, not often they can say in words what they want to say. CLIL students are expected to guess the meaning of words and understand the main idea of complex texts. They are also asked to express their thought about topics they have never thought of in their native language.

3.1 Syllabus

Scott (2006) says that no specific curriculum is needed in CLIL, although a detailed material selection has to be made if the subject is taught in a foreign language. One of the variants that Scott suggests is that subject teacher comes together with English teacher and they select themes to be taught through English.

To know what material to provide in CLIL, it is important to clarify what skills are the most important in CLIL. Several authors have different opinions. It should be logical that all the language skills are equally important because methods do not change a language and its learning/teaching structure.

Scott (2006) says that at first it may seem that good oral skills are a key to successful result at CLIL, but this could be if there were no other subjects involved with CLIL method. For instance, if CLIL was just language learning with communicative skill in first place then speaking skills would play a significant role, but writing skills are even more important than speaking skills because when joining together CLIL with other subjects students have to develop ability to compose definitions, reports, compile the results etc. What Knapp and Seidlhofer (2009) insist on is that a CLIL's main focus must be regarded towards writing skill in the target language.

However, Sajda (2008:29) agrees with Scott (2006) saying that: "communicative skills are very important especially for young learners when they learn to speak their mother tongue, and it comes natural that they want to do the same in other languages too". Scott (2006) separates oral skills from writing skills, but Sajda (2008) uses grammar to share the level skill importance. This goes together with what Marsh (2000) has said that the first language may be used if it is necessary for students to understand the context.

These were only thoughts that were expressed only by some authors showing that all the skills are needed at CLIL methodology. Scott (2006), Knapp and Seidlhofer (2009: 557) agree that: "writing is the skill that is the most important". However, Sajda (2008: 5) says that: "grammar is more important because for young learners the most important thing is to understand the concept of forming the sentences in a foreign language"

These opinions show that successful syllabus is the one where all the skills are combined, thus all the skills have to be represented in CLIL program.

While comparing different authors, one important conclusion was made – CLIL does not require specific syllabus designed for CLIL lessons. Basically, if a teacher follows the guidelines:

- CLIL lessons are learner-centered;

- First language can be used only when contextual matters depend on it;
- Students communicate among each other;
- Any learning difficulties and problems are solved within the classroom;
- There is continuous collaboration between subject teacher and language teacher.

No specific syllabus is needed. It is important not to confuse syllabus with methodology. According to Scott (2006) and Sajda (2008) no specific syllabus is needed because aims stay the same. CLIL aims are the same as usual program aims – to teach all four skills with sub – skills and with additional communicative competences. Thus, no specific curriculum is required. However, methodology needs to be specialized to CLIL – careful first and target language combination. With CLIL lesson it is more difficult to try using only target language because as it has been discussed before, the usage of native language depends on the students’ level of understanding the subject. It means that, for example, in usual English lesson teacher can explain some precise topics in the mother tongue, for example, all grammar is explained in the native language, whereas in a CLIL lesson it is impossible to use this model considering to explain one precise topic only in the native language, for example, all the geographical features explained in a mother tongue. According to the classroom language more careful criteria have to be taken into account – content, tasks and approach to explaining things. It is important not to lose the essence of CLIL – teaching usual school subjects using the target language.

So far it has been discovered that CLIL does not require specific subject syllabus as long as it agrees with a school program and demands. The situation is completely different with material selection for CLIL. As Marsh (2000) already mentioned that proper material selection for CLIL students is very important.

3.2 The selection and application of materials and activities

Machunsky (2009: 13) says that: “there are very limited material sources for bilingual teaching, thus teachers have to be very proactive. CLIL materials often differ from materials which can be found in school course books or ELT (*English Language Teaching*) course books. Language course books usually select materials according to grammar and topics. The greater emphasis in material selection is put on *how to teach grammar through these materials* not *what content students will learn*”.

Bentley (2010) suggests selecting materials which contain a wide range of content vocabulary and are also nearer to the authentic language. Several questions have been set to decide whether the material is appropriate for CLIL. Material has to be:

- Selected in accordance with students’ age and the level of English;
- Linked to CLIL aims –content and communication;
- Supported with considerable word banks;
- Varied in activities and skills;
- Motivating and interesting.

The authors Machunsky (2009) and Bentley (2010) agree that usual course book materials cannot be used in CLIL, however syllabus remains the same. The most important issues to be taken into consideration are vocabulary and content because both – language and subject must be combined equally.

In CLIL materials have to be selected carefully because teachers need to help students understand the content of a subject and there are several ways how to do it – using vocabulary, texts and even a classroom.

Bentley (2010) also suggests several practical recommendations to help children understand the context better. As almost no translation is done in CLIL classrooms than one of the ways to show the meaning of words is to include short explanations or definitions with examples to unknown vocabulary highlighting it with bold font. Word banks and glossaries are also one of the variants to be added to key content words. To explain the vocabulary, it is always important to visualize content; this is why all the course books used in CLIL are very colorful with many images. Adding diagrams is also one of the ways to clarify the context. Before each text it is advisable for a teacher to adjust the material by removing unnecessary details and paraphrasing words that might cause problems.

Very many activities overlap together in both – CLIL and ELT course books, for example, gap filling, matching, multiply choice, true/false, ordering words etc. However,

CLIL activities need to be based not only on activating specific language skills, but also teaching the content of a subject.

Deller and Price (2007) suggest lots of different ways how to teach, for example, *Wh*-questions through Art, reading through Music, learning description and sequence through Chemistry, past simple tenses through History, numbering through Physics, spelling through Biology, comparing and contrasting through Geography and many other subject and language skill combinations.

At first it might seem silly studying *Wh*-questions through Art because what usually people understand by art is painting pictures and modeling with clay. Integrating English into Art is easy and interesting. A topic, for example, could be Pablo Picasso. Teacher together with students discuss what they have heard about Pablo Picasso (*activate the knowledge*) or give them additional information about the painter. After they have finished, students are asked to work into groups or pairs and ask any questions they want to know about Pablo Picasso. The role of a teacher is to monitor the work and help students if they have problems with forming questions. During the lesson two topics are covered for two seemingly incompatible subjects.

Reading can also be integrated in any other subject with any other topic – music, for instance, as students are skillful enough to read in their native languages and for the subject, in this case it is music, content is more important than students' language skills, then why Music theory cannot be integrated into an English text? Language theory requires pre-while-after reading stages. Pre-stage is asking students what they know about bagpipes, for example. While-reading stage is reading text for general information and after-reading stage is answering questions about the text or any other reading activities. With this activity students have learnt theory on music and learnt some new words in English as well as practised their reading skills. Additional task can involve speaking with asking questions or even grammar with defining tense constructions.

Chemistry is a very good subject for teaching ordering, sequence and description because Chemistry as a subject basically consists of sequence and proportions. Why not use English in explaining chemical activities?

The sequence and activity type depends on both – the knowledge of English and Chemistry. Both subjects have to be integrated according to the knowledge level. Experiment description can be accomplished using English because mainly imperative mood is used with familiar words and additional Chemistry vocabulary. No doubts that students will remember the vocabulary because they use visual, kinesthetic and maybe audio information to manage the task. Students are able to experiment according to the

subject and have fun explaining operations in English, thus they strengthen the knowledge in two different subjects.

History is a subject about the past. Combining all the enormous mass of information from historical sources with English, the past tenses can be learnt through the context of history. The examples are many as well as usages are many.

Students are bored in their history classes because they cannot remember all the dates and years when *the most important* events had happened. Why concentrate on themes which are not relevant to what students want to learn and can use in their lives? Using less, but more interesting topics in history lessons can guarantee that students will remember them; of course, curriculum must be followed as well. The possible topic could be, for example, Roman food 2000 years ago. Students might be asked to prepare the information about the topic at home and during next lesson tell the class what they have found. Many variations are possible with grouping (individual, pair or group work) and delivery (project, poster, or presentation). Students like when they can do something on their own and boring history lesson can be turned into interesting and useful combinations between English and history.

When thinking about physics, the first what usually comes into mind is power, energy, speed and other terms connected with movement. Physics is numbers and formulas, although numbering in English tends to cause problems between “*teens*”, “*forty and fortieth*” etc. Practice makes perfect and the best way to learn confusing numbers is using them in practical manner. The teacher could specially prepare tasks and experiments where students have to work with “*teen*” and serial numbers. This may include degrees, sizes etc.

Biology is the subject where many new words occur which are also very difficult to pronounce, for example, *abiogenesis*, *biogeneses* etc. Teacher cannot forget that both – subject and language have to be used. There is no sense to use word in biology lesson to learn spelling in English, but flowers, plants can be spelt during biology lesson in English. Two targets can be achieved – students know flowers and maybe flower parts for older classes and spelling in English.

Geography lessons uncover a wider range of countries which are all different. There are no two equal countries. The world has helped teachers to use this phenomenon in a classroom. Sometimes when teachers use comparatives and superlatives they use classroom objects to help students understand better, but the problem is that in tests students use the same classroom objects as examples, this leads to the situation when students cannot compare different things in real life. Geography can help. Anything can be compared through this subject from a size to prosperity of each country. Utility of such

examples is higher because outside the classroom it is more likely that students will have to compare the cultural differences between two countries rather than the size of two pencils.

These are only few examples that show that no specific materials are needed for CLIL lessons; however, there are special worksheets for primary students. What CLIL requires is combining subject and a target language equally and teachers being creative and placing students in the center of the lesson.

3.3 Assessment in CLIL lessons

Assessment has always been one of the most arguable topics among teachers and students because there is no one common example or standard how to prepare tests to evaluate each language skills, therefore each teacher individually decides what to evaluate and how.

According to CLIL this problem is even more topical because a teacher has to evaluate two different subjects with one mark.

Catalone (2003) explains that assessment in bilingual teaching has a risk to be unfair to students. A student can know math very well, but cannot express it in a foreign language. The only way to reduce unfairness is to separate subject knowledge and language knowledge, but the overall mark consists of both marks together.

Dale, van der Es and Tanner (2010) say that first of all the assessment influences the way how learners learn. It is well known that assessment is a tool which teachers use to steer learners' behavior.

For bilingual learners' assessment can be a source of information about learners' progress and their needs. Assessment can also show what kind of a language is needed to improve learner's knowledge in a subject.

Authors also divide two different types of assessments – assessment of learning and assessment for learning. The first one shows what a learner skills and knowledge are in particular subjects, thus teachers and parents can follow the development of the student.

Assessment for learning means using assessment in a classroom to develop students' achievements.

Honig (2010) says that she has experienced different situations when CLIL teachers decide what to evaluate in CLIL and what not. For example, there are no oral

examinations in CLIL lessons. However, much emphasis has been put on evaluating proficiency all together.

Kiely (http://www.developingteachers.com/articles_tchtraining/clilpf_richard.htm) explains that “there are two major types of language assessment. First, there is language assessment as measurement, where the goal is to determine either the level of a student, or the extent to which specific language content has been learned. The former is typically used to for program admissions purposes (Is the language level right for entry to a specific program?), or placement purposes (Which level class is suitable for a student?). Measures of attainment usually take place at the end of a course and relate to the specific content and skills taught. Second, there is assessment for learning, a focus of research and development in recent years, which sees assessment practices as integrated into teaching, and oriented, not towards a statement of level, but towards enhanced learning. Assessment is thus viewed as an integral part of the process of teaching and the development of learning opportunities. In Ross’ characterization of this type of assessment – Formative Assessment – the focus is on the role of the student and on interaction as characteristics of this form of assessment.”

Grenfell (2002) agrees that assessment in CLIL is very difficult because it requires the evaluation in both – language and content. Thus, at this point the teachers have to be professional enough to distinguish what knowledge students show in content and what in the language. Dalto-Puffer (2007) also suggests that the CLIL lesson does not consist only of a subject or a language, but CLIL teachers have to assess each part separately and give one overall mark.

All the authors, Dalton- Puffer (2007), Grenfell (2002) and Kiely agrees that assessment and evaluation in CLIL is needed, but it is also very difficult and important to see the border between a language part and a content part. The teacher has to decide whether it is a language part where a student succeeds more or content part.

4. THE CASE STUDY AT JURMALA ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

The aim of the research is to show that teaching English to primary level students is not confined with songs and hand clapping. The amount of knowledge what children can learn depends on how much a teacher can teach them. Sometimes school principles make a mistake by offering a primary level English teacher's position to a person who does not have the appropriate qualification, thus it is very difficult to teach English at a high level and professionally.

To practically try what has been written in the theory part, the author decided to teach 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade students for a month by using "*Curricular Content Resources for Primary*" CLIL exercise book. In a research part there are detailed descriptions for all the CLIL lessons and 2 interviews with the CLIL expert and a mother whose daughter spent one year in Lebanon and attended a local English school and basically learnt English during one year.

All CLIL lessons were carried out at Jurmala Alternative School where the author has been working with primary students for 3 years.

According to Zenfs (2010) there are 9 grades at Jurmala Alternative School (JAS) and each grade has its own classroom where they have most of their subjects and morning circles. Grades 4–9 are located on the 2nd floor but grades 1–3 on the 5th floor. As younger students (Grades 1–3) need more space to play games, do projects, study and just relax, they have occupied 3 the biggest classrooms in the school.

If a teacher has planned to show any kind of material on the big screen then one can go to the library and watch it on a projector. In a language classroom there are no tables there, so the students can move around the classroom freely and without having teacher in front of the class and pupils behind tables. The aim of not having tables in a language classroom is explained by having natural environment – students and a teacher come together and spend some time for learning English. On the 5th floor there are big flashcards on the wall in three languages –Latvian, English and Russian. Russian is the second foreign language at JAS.

The project system has always been a very important part for both teachers and students. Since the school was established in 1991 the school has been taking part in lots of different projects, for example, feeding wild animals.

In recent years the school has decided to sort all the projects according to systematic sequence.

What does it mean? All the teachers of the school decide what project they are going to take part in this year and all the teachers take a small part of it. For example, this year the project was “Green environment”. In terms of this project each teacher chooses a topic, for example, “Garbage Recycling”, “Save energy” etc. This kind of system helps all the school to be joined and have a sense of togetherness. Previous year the main topic was “Charity” where again 2–4 teachers gathered together and made their team together with students and chose their own subject, for example, audio stories to blind children, where the group went to the studio and recorded the stories on CDs.

According to English, there are three lessons a week where students are divided into two groups according to their English level. The testing system is simple –first two weeks children are divided into groups randomly then after two weeks the teacher has a clear view how to divide students according to their English level.

During the years students have to learn 250–300 new words –10 new words or phrases each week with a test on vocabulary on Fridays. 1st graders have spoken test and 2nd and 3rd graders have written test.

CLIL method would be the most appropriate in the acquisition of new vocabulary because the time students practise their new vocabulary is basically only the language classroom, thus the teacher has to use the target language as much as it is possible and when adding some context what CLIL suggests than 40 min. long lesson is filled with different activities and contents combined under the usage of English

4.1 CLIL in practice

The time period was March 31 till April 29, 2011 when the author taught his primary school students at JAS where the author has been working himself for 3 years. Altogether there were **72 CLIL** lessons practiced in the case study and **36** randomly selected lessons were included in the Diploma paper. Grades 1., 2., and 3. participated in CLIL lessons. There are 16 – 18 students in each grade; 8 – 9 students in each group. Each group has English 3 times a week. Each lesson has a date, which grade it was and what the topic was. Lessons are not sorted according to the dates because there were no double lessons when one topic was taught for two lessons in two different days, so all the lessons were single with no continuation. All the observations were carefully fixed and some lessons were recorded and added in the text as (*Track No...*). Also other recordings and a short video lesson was added to the appendix. The materials of lessons in the appendix are included the same order they are in the cases study. The descriptive worksheets contain the information of an activity – its topic, aim, description and possible outcomes. Also students' successes and failures were analyzed and discussed. The material background was taken from **a special CLIL material book**.

Different lessons were combined together with English. (*Table 1.*). From each lesson there were 1–2 students' worksheets taken as an example. Also one additional worksheet of a student's feedback was taken to find out what one's opinion of the lesson was. During CLIL lessons, students practiced different subject combinations. *According to the dates, the examples of each lesson can be found in the Appendix.*

Table 1. What topics were covered during the case study.

GRADE	TOPIC	GRADE	TOPIC
2	POEM	3	WORK IN THE I-NET
3	NEEDS TO SURVIVE	1	FUNNY MATH
1	ANIMALS	2	SENSES
2	CAPITALCITIES	3	STORY DOMINO
2	GLOBE	3	ANIMAL GROUPS
3	HEALTH	1	LIVING/NON-LIVING
1	COORDINATES	2	SENSES
2	VEGETABLES	1	MOVES
1	ANIMALS AND PLANTS	2	DINOSAUR
1	ANIMALS/ACTIVITIES	2	TEETH
2	ANIMALS- YOUNG AND ADULT	2	BODY/ART
3	GEOGRAPHY	1	TASTE ON A TANGUE

Lesson No. **1. and 2.** -POEM

Date/class: 31. 03.11., 2nd. Both groups

Description of activity: Students have visual examples and they have to write a poem using all the information.

As the whole class was together (usually the class is divided into two parts) it was a bit difficult to manage complete silence and concentration on the task. The first mistake that the teacher did was forgetting about activating the lesson. The possible activating task could have been asking students what verbs of sense they remembered and what part of their bodies they used to activate the sense. The CLIL task was combining writing with anatomy of a human body. After this task there was an extra task given when students had to add adjectives in their poems to make it more challenging. Although, this was a writing lesson, students enjoyed it. To see the adjectives in their poems students had to highlight adjectives with different colors. To avoid any spelling mistakes, teacher asked the students to name as many adjectives as they could and wrote them on a whiteboard. The adjectives were: *beautiful, loud, slim, colorful, small, fat, scared, boring, dangerous, exciting, pink, dull, icy, oily, slippery, loud, noisy, short, skinny, long, big, thin, fat, brown, white*. One student could not resist telling something silly like: "Teacher, I will write down that I saw a *stupid* rabbit" Of course, such words cannot be used in a classroom because these are classified as rude words and should not be used in a classroom. The teacher explained that there are plenty words on the board to choose from. The boy agreed.

The exercise seemed very simple and essential, but some important features were discovered – how students were able to rewrite sentences from examples, how they had understood the task and whether they had been listening attentively and how seriously they had perceived the task. On the one hand instead of writing the words on the board teacher could have asked the students to try spelling them, but this would have taken too much time and the lesson aim – writing combined with human body vocabulary would be changed into a spelling lesson.

The teacher observed that some students had problems with rewriting the text from the whiteboard (*the possibility that students might not have understood the handwriting of the teacher is excluded because teacher paid special attention to his handwriting to avoid such problems*). 4 the most diligent students wrote Latvian translations to the unknown words so they did not have to ask 100 times the meaning to the teacher. 3 did exactly the same way –asked the meaning of the same word over and over again.

Some objects in poems were colored. This can have two possible explanations – either students were bored and tried to entertain themselves or they were very accurate.

The students who painted a rabbit and a flower from a painting were girls. Girls usually ask the teacher whether they are allowed to paint objects, features they are having at that moment on their worksheet.

During the lesson the teacher tried to use only English and where necessary pointed at some objects on the worksheet or drew on the whiteboard explanatory pictures. For the teacher it was a surprise that the student who finished the task first was from the second group where students had lower English knowledge skills.

According to the CLIL theory it is usual practice when students show better results in both –a subject and a language when they are combined. Maybe student could not invent such a poem during the English lesson using only given words; but pictures and student's own experience about how they saw and felt the world had helped her.

In general all the students enjoyed the lesson and they learnt some new features about English that was the most important objective in the lesson.

Lesson No. **3. and 4.** - WORK WITH THE INTERNET

Date/class: 05. 04.11., 3rd. both groups

Description of activity: Students have a task to find in the internet the capital cities of 17 countries.

The aim of the activity was to teach 3rd graders how to search for information in the internet using different search engines.

The task was to find 17 capital cities in the internet and students were given 15 minutes to do the task. After this task the next one was more challenging – to find out about people and language but there was not enough time so the teacher decided to change the task and asked the students to find any information they want. In *Track 1*. there are students' answers to the question: "What information did you find?" According to students' answers the teacher asked some additional sentences to foster students' talk. From the group only two students were natives –Gustavs from Canada and Niklavs for the USA all the rest students were Latvians. Students' answers were not prepared before the recording.

Children seemed enjoying the lesson. The *Figure No. 1.* below shows the IT classroom and children working on their tasks. Some answers were asked to clarify how students worked with the internet, what language they used to find the information and what search engines they used. All the students agreed saying that they used English to search for the information.



Figure No. 1. The IT classroom and 3rd grade students.

The most popular search engine was *Google* and *Wikipedia*; however, less popular engines were used such as *Bing* and *Answer.com*.

Japan and Italy were the easiest countries to find because Italy looks like a boot which they knew since they started speaking and Japan for the negative popularity it had after all the catastrophes.

Nowadays children use internet more than ever before. Why not teach them how to use the internet sources not just for fun but also for their studies as well?

Adults say that internet is only harm to children, but meanwhile they do not teach them the advantages of using the internet. It also depends on whether parents control what their children use internet for. Children do not read books because it seems too slow. They want to gain new information fast and in entertaining way, thus they find internet exciting. This lesson showed that all the advantages of the internet can be used for learning English in a very interesting way. However, children are very good at playing games in the internet, but it does not necessarily mean that they are good at using the internet in any other ways. It can be concluded that students liked the lesson a lot because since that lesson they asked the teacher to go down to a computer classroom and have a lesson there. Some students even took the worksheet home saying they will try to finish the task at home.

For this task many variations are possible, for example, competition – who will find all the countries first. One student said that she liked everything she did during the lesson and there were no things she did not like. (*Track No.2*).

The exercise was very essential and did not require much knowledge from an English teacher, but CLIL method in this lesson helped to use children's experience to combine learning English through internet.

Lesson No. **5. and 6.** - FUNNY MATH

Date/class: 05. 04.11., 1^{st.} both groups

Description of activity: Children learn math by counting the parts of the body.

The aim of the lesson was to teach children counting and thinking in English. As children already knew these mathematical actions than the aim of the lesson was to concentrate on a language part, however, the numbers were small the aim was to make students count and subtract in English. (The example sheet see in Appendix with the date 05.04.11.). When students received their worksheets teacher clarified unknown words so pupils could concentrate only on counting and thinking – the context was clear. The aim for the teacher was to use English as much as possible.

The exercises in a worksheet were graded – the first example was easier than the last one. At the end of the exercise children had to decide on their own what part they wanted to count. Children decided to count 7 bears and 6 cats and the question was – How many legs?

Some students did the task very quickly, what was interesting, these were not children who were very good at English, but vice versa – they were good at numbers and this helped them to do well in the lesson. With first examples the teacher helped children understand how to count, what strategies to use. Some students used fingers, but some draw small pictures with body parts they had to count. The example in *Figure No. 2.* shows how the teacher helped counting using pictures. The objects were not represented like they were in reality because precise drawing would turn this lesson into an art lesson which would take too much time, also the aim was to concentrate on mathematics not pictures. While doing the exercise children had to negotiate among each other upon what animals to choose and how many legs and wings they had. This made them not only count but also speak in English. In *Figure No. 3.* another additional task was shown were teacher put different colour letters on the whiteboard and children had to count how many blue, red, green, orange, blue, purple and yellow letters there were on the whiteboard all the figures were written on the whiteboard (in perfect variant each colour word would be written in the same colour, but there was no such possibility) and children had to count and subtract different colour letters. For example, count all yellow letters and blue ones. To control that students used English while counting they were asked to count aloud forwards and backwards counting and subtracting – all was done aloud so they practised maths in English.

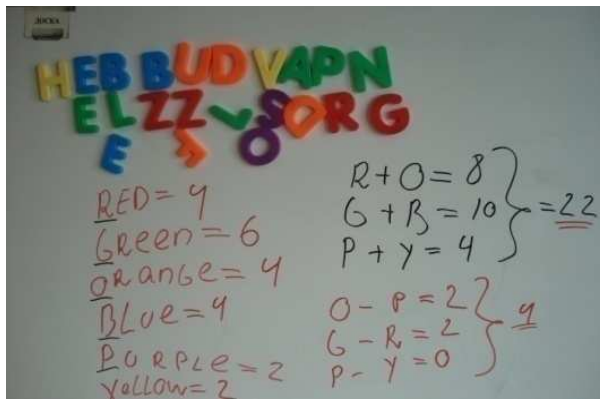


Figure No. 2. Teacher's drawings to help children with counting

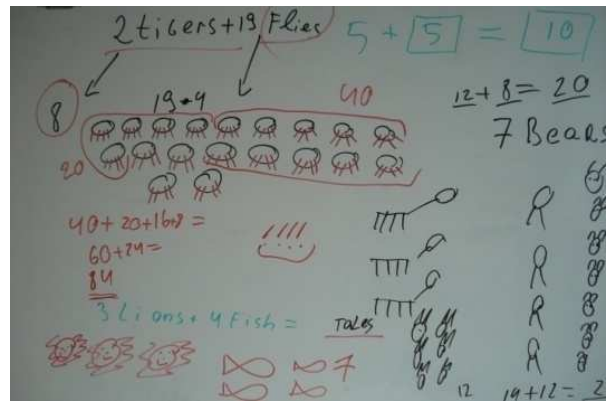


Figure No. 3. Counting letters and colours

To revise animals and their body parts the teacher decided to put on the white board different animals and asked the children to count together all the legs of a crocodile, zebra and penguin. This task developed students' listening skills with help of visual aids. The teacher had several conclusions at the end of the lesson:

1. Students repeated numbers and used them in a natural way by counting. When usually numbers are taught children are asked to count in a sequence from 1 to 10, but this does not mean they will be able to use the numbers, thus the lesson offered them a practical usage of numbers.
2. Different students have different approaches. Some of them used numbers written on the whiteboard to help them count, some used coloured letters and counted themselves.
3. If a student is not equally good at both subjects, it does not mean that the lesson will be failure as the example with one girl showed that she enjoyed the lesson because she was better at maths than English and by repeating several times numbers, animals, human part etc. she also repeated and learnt some new words in English.
4. Children enjoyed the lesson and had a great fun. Teaching English does not mean singing songs for 3 years without any clue and feedback whether it really helps children to learn English. Many adults say: "We only sang songs and danced in English lesson that is all I remember."

Lesson No. **7. and 8.** - SENSES OF TASTE

Date/class: 05. 04.11., 2nd both groups

Description of activity: Students experiment with taste.

The aim of the lesson was to make students remember the vocabulary about taste by their own experience. During this lesson the teacher tried to experiment with children's

senses. There was a plate with pieces of a lemon, a cup of coffee and candies on a table. Students were first asked to say what they felt when they saw these items. During the activity students had to circle the correct words that explained the picture, for example, honey is sweet, but coffee is bitter. Using a real lemon, coffee and sweet which students tasted during the lesson helped them to *taste the words*. One way is that they learn by heart the meaning of *sour*, but when they have tried a lemon in a classroom the word “will lie” down in their experience which undoubtedly is far easier to remember. CLIL also suggests – learning by experience. After students had practiced new words for some time the next activity was to make associations with real eatable products also combining their newly learnt experience about tastes. The new vocabulary activating was carried out by drilling:

Teacher: I say a lemon you say....

Students: sour

Teacher: I say candies you say...

Students: Sweet

Teacher: I say bitter you say...

Students: coffee

The same kinds of drills using both – products and sense words were repeated over and over again with small interruption when children asked to try teacher’s coffee or a piece of a lemon. In the group there were 7 children. Other variants of drills could have been when negative sentences were added or yes/no questions. Also a great range of vocabulary can be added to the same 4 words of taste , for example, salty went together with French fries from the exercise but there were plenty other words that were salty. The same word chains could be made with other words. The next lesson teacher checked whether students had remembered anything and asked them to associate coffee and lemon with other words. Surprisingly all the students answered bitter and sour and some even remembered that the coffee was not that bitter.

Lesson No. **9. and 10.** - ANIMAL GROUPING

Date/class: 14. 04.11., 3rd both groups

Description of activity: Students classify animals according to their biological classification.

The aim of the lesson was to introduce students with the classification of animals – reptiles, mammals, fish, birds and insects. According to CLIL this lesson combined biology

and English. The first task for students was to decide how they would classify all the animals. There are some answers:

- Home animals and wild. It meant that a cat was in the same row as fish. This is what one girl said. If we classify all the animals according to the place where they live and the classification is home and wild animals then animals of different species could be put together.
- Carnivore and herbivorous. The girl could not say to which group she would add fish.
- Poisonous, cannibals, vegetarians and water animals. The boy tried to cover all the animal he knew but he could not answer the question whether it is possible to have the same animal in several classes.

After the introduction students received handouts where they had to classify animals according to their biological classes. In the group there were 8 students – 4 boys and 4 girls. The competition was boys against girls. Before the task some unknown words had been clarified such as mammals and reptiles. When students had classified the given animals they were asked to name as many other animals as they could. The small victory for the teacher was when students used English as a classroom language to clarify what animals went under which class. The group enjoyed the lesson and learnt some specific new words. Even if they did not remember them straight after the lesson, the words would be in their passive vocabulary and the next time when they heard them they would know they had learnt them or heard already.

The second group, however, did the task more enthusiastically and finished it earlier than the first group, although the second group had lower level of English, but in some other lessons it was already proven that when combining English with other subjects common level of knowledge rose and students who had lower level in English showed higher results in combined subject – English tasks.

Very interesting discussion took place when one student said that boys were not mammals because they did not give birth, but cats and dogs are mammals. Then the teacher explained that every living creature that produced milk, gave births, was warm blooded was a mammal. The teacher explained that boys did not give birth but they had warm blood and students agreed with that. Another bright example – a girl said that hippos were fish because they lived in water! Interesting that sea snake was also a fish because it lived in water. Such lessons were very interesting and gave lots of fun and new knowledge to both – teacher and students. The last examples were more like fun but it was good that children could joke in English. Learning English as a subject was very interesting and exciting and

if a teacher was skillful enough to use students' own knowledge and experience in English lessons then even the quietest students would have something to say and there would not be any problems with passive students and boring lessons, however, what could be interesting to one could be boring to the other. From CLIL children learnt biological classification of animals.

Lesson No. **11. and 12.** - LIVING AND NON – LIVING

Date/class: 14. 04.11., 1^{st.} both groups

Description of activity: Students decide whether objects on their flashcards are living or not.

The aim of the lesson was to make students talk and revise known vocabulary. Animal words had been familiar so the teacher would force students using their knowledge to explain what they saw on flashcards or whether the expression agreed with living or non-living objects. During the activity teacher said the sentence: "drinks water, needs food, can hear, can't eat etc." And students decided whether the description was about living or non-living objects. This activity developed listening and speaking skills, they had to understand not only separate words but also phrases with different grammatical structure – with modals, positive and negative sentences. During the lesson teacher tried to speak English as much as possible even if students answered in Latvian. They had to listen to the language. When observing the students' development during all three primary classes together, then usually students start speaking the language after one year, year and a half. It means that teachers should not worry when their students do not speak first year but for the teacher it is important to speak the language as much as possible even daily instruction when repeated several times settles in pupils' minds.

This was the first lesson when the difference between both groups was so significant, but the teacher managed to react and did not give the weakest group the same tasks he gave to the strongest group because the task would not give the expected result if the exercise was too challenging for the group. To make the task easier but challenging, the teacher used more Latvian words and spoke in English slower repeating the same words and phrases several times pointing at flash cards. According to CLIL the aim of this lesson was to make students speak the English language using their own knowledge rather than using new vocabulary. CLIL suggests that there are 3 types how children learn new information. Through experience when they do something and use the language, through knowledge when they speak about what they know and content when they use newly adopted information.

Lesson No. **13. and 14.** - STORY DOMINO

Date/class: 08. 04.11., 3rd. both groups

Description of activity: Students first listened to a story and then played a story domino. Students had to put flashcards in the order according to the text they heard.

First the children were asked whether they remembered a story of Magic beans. Some of them said they had read it some time ago. To be sure that all the students knew a plot of the story in English the teacher read it aloud to all the class.

The aim of the lesson was to practise listening, working with flashcards. Children listened to a story read by their teacher and put flashcards where the spoken information was drawn. Students played the game individually and the winner was the one who finished first –matched the text together with the picture.

It was interesting to observe children doing the exercise. *Figures No. 4.and 5.* Students who had higher knowledge used their memory to find how pieces went together, but students who could not understand the whole text tried to find key words on pictures and that also helped. There was the difference between how both groups did the task. First group first listened twice to the text and only then tried to do the domino using their memory or key words, but the second group tried to find order pictures while listening. There was no order given when and how to do the task, and both variants were accepted. After the domino game children were asked to retell the story of Magic beans by looking at flashcards in (*Track No. 3*). The method was very useful because it could be adjusted to any topic and any grade.

It took lots of time to prepare such domino games, but the activity which was rather a game was very useful because students could develop all the skills depending on how teachers combined different exercises.



Figures No. 4. 3rd grade students solving the picture domino.

Such exercises require some experience from a teacher because sometimes teachers have to invent new additional exercises during the lesson. CLIL part in this task was to use students' knowledge about the story of a magic bean which they all had heard before, but in the lesson they told the plot of the story in English, although they all knew it in their native language. That is why there was a well known story used to allow students to concentrate on using English.



Figures No. 5. 3rd grade students solving the picture domino.

Lesson No. **15. and 16.** - SENSES

Date/class: 14. 04.11., 2nd. both groups

Description of activity: Students do a quiz about senses using their own experience.

During this lesson students did a quiz about senses and another listening task. The text was about Goldilocks and what she saw, smelled, heard and tasted. The aim of this activity was to develop listening skills – listening for specific information. The task was also challenging because students had to listen to quite advanced words such as porridge, sausage, cottage which were difficult to distinguish.

The next task was to do a “five senses quiz” where students had to decide which parts of their body they use to perceive the objects. Students had problems when they had to decide how cotton wool feels – cold, hard or soft because the task was experience and knowledge based and if they had never touched the wool than they could not do the task no matter how high the English level was. It means that experience based tasks could help to learn the language, but the teacher had to be aware that students have that knowledge. This was again experience based lesson to foster students speak about things they know already (wool is soft or cotton is rough) rather than make them use newly acquired knowledge in connection with English.

Lesson No. **17. and 18.** - NEEDS TO SURVIVE

Date/class: 01. 04.11., 3rd. both groups

Description of activity: students do an exercise based on their knowledge about needs and necessities.

During this lesson speaking skill, sub skill – giving an opinion, explaining what people need to survive was developed. First students were asked to share their opinion about what people need to survive. Students said that people need air, water etc. After they had answered the question, students were asked to turn the other side of the paper and draw things they needed to be happy. The teacher explained the difference between needs and necessities. The first were needs that were necessary to survive and others were needs they wanted to be happy or at least they thought so. The following sentences are what students had said they needed to be happy: (all sentences are fixed precisely how students said, most of the students spoke in English).

Estere: *“I need friends; I need some humans who can make me laugh every day. That would be it. And friends who care about my feelings”*. It is very good that this girl mentioned such qualities as care, feelings, friends, and not all the students thought the same.

Elina: *“I need swimming, dancing, friends and am...happy life”*. What is happy life to you? *“When I can travel”*. A girl with a positive point of view. The only problem was that she did not know the real qualities of being happy, but the question about what made her happy and she answered a true answer. During lessons when students had to speak about serious themes such as life, necessities, needs etc. the teacher could discover many new things about students and connected it with nice speaking in English.

Niklavs: *“OK! Fishing, video games, money, friends and jokes”*. Whether it influences or not, but his father is American and only Niklavs and Gustavs who is from Canada had mentioned money in their top three necessities they needed to be happy.

Gustavs: *“Money, food, TV, home and friends”*. Why did you place money in the first place? *“Money can buy anything”*. Sad, but true that children put money above all. This is how they grow and how their parents teach them. No doubts that in the future they might be millionaires, but serious problems will occur when they realize they cannot earn all the money in the world.

Krisjanis: *“Food, friends, sleep, home, money, TV”*. Good that the boy made his top three more or less reasonable, but by a word “food” he meant crisps, sweets, and coke because potatoes and vegetables are not tasty so that kind of food did not make him happy. It was interesting to observe how students created their inside world When having this

discussion with children, which turned to a lesson of Ethics. If a school psychologist asked them to make their top three or five there would be lots of useful information to work with and no doubts some serious problems could have been prevented.

Students actually are not afraid to talk about their feelings unless they are strictly forced to speak. A conversation in free atmosphere during the lesson can give more information than a private dialogue with school's social worker.

Eliza: "Good friends, air, animals, sleep, money and family".

Matiss: "Friends, home, PC, money, family". There must have been mistakes in educating our children at home. Money is good, but when explaining the necessity of money parents have to explain the difference between earning money and living to earn money. If students have problems with setting their values, how teachers can make them study any subject (history, geography etc.) when all that students have in their minds is PC, video games and money. They think they will never ever need history or art not even English because money is the most important in their lives. During lessons it is important to teach a subject, but with a small input of other skills they might need in their lives – patience, hard work and proper understanding of values.

Above all was the answer when students said they did not need sunlight because they could live in their homes with the lights on. It was explained that there would be serious problems if the electricity went out of order. The teacher made an experiment trying to show that it is impossible to live without sunlight.

All the students were asked to close their eyes and complete a very easy exercise – form a circle. When they opened their eyes and realized that the form they had made was far to be similar with a circle, students agreed that it would be difficult to live without natural light.

Lesson No. **19. and 20.** - ANIMALS

Date/class: 01. 04.11., 1^{2t.} both groups

Description of activity: Children had to decide what kind of a coat each animal had.

On the whiteboard there were many pictures (*Figure No. 6*) and children had to decide which were animals, insects and plants. When they had done this task they were asked to describe each animal's fur, where they slept, lived and ate. Students repeated known vocabulary and answered the questions. Funny moments occurred when students were asked to explain what ladybirds ate. One girl explained that ladybirds eat smaller insects which are on their way when they fly home. The teacher explained that ladybirds eat leaves not small animals and children revised vocabulary about insects and learnt that

ladybirds eat leaves. The task was speaking based where students used their knowledge and English vocabulary to explain pictures. For more advanced students or to make the tasks more challenging with the same pictures, it is advisable to ask more sophisticated questions about the same pictures. For example, a picture about lions; first children might be asked to describe visually the picture but more advanced question could be; how a lion is feeling at this moment, or what lions are usually like? Such exercises do not require time investment and long preparation, but the results are good – students actually speak about topic they know, only using English.



Figure No. 6. Pictures on the whiteboard used to help students do the task.

Lesson No. **21. and 22.** - CAPITAL CITIES AND GLOBE

Date/class: 01. 04.11., 2nd. both groups

Description of activity: Students work with a globe and decide to which country they can go using what kind of a transport.

The aim of this lesson was to combine geography with English. During the lesson students would learn how to explore the globe (*Figure No. 7.*) and decide which city or country they travel to with what kind of transports. On the worksheet there were only cities, but teacher decided to make the task more challenging and asked children to find in which country each city was. When students finished this task there was still some time left so the teacher asked children to find rivers, oceans, lakes etc.

Before doing the task the teacher asked students to try to remember what kinds of transport they knew and when they used them. Then students were asked to find the countries on the globe. The first city was Tokyo and students found that it was in Japan and described Japan – it is an island, located to the far East of the world and there had happened a terrible disaster lately.

The next country might seem illogical, but some students really did not know where Latvia is.

It has been considered that children have to know it but sometimes teachers think it is obvious that they do not show them where our country is on a globe. Some children showed that Latvia is in Russia because it is the biggest country in the world – at least this information they knew. The next city was London and again children had to decide where it was and describe the country. Almost all the students knew where it was, but they did not really understand what England, Wales and United Kingdom is. Teacher spent some time explaining and showing on a huge map all the parts of the U.K. Students said that U.K. is also an island like Japan and they were asked to compare both islands – size, language, location etc.

Some exercises were invented during the lesson. The teacher has to feel the tone in the classroom and think 2 steps ahead.



Figure No. 7. Students practise using globe in their English lesson

When a lesson is based on speaking, themes can change several times because all the students have different opinions and it is impossible and actually not necessary to guess what students might say.

New York – before the lesson a half of the students were convinced that New York was in Europe. It was great surprise when the secret was revealed – it was on the other side of the ocean.

This was the same situation that teachers consider that students know some essential facts and do not explain them so the result is that students do not know these essential things like where New York is that Japan is an island and the capital of the USA is not California.

Not only with primary grade students, but also with older class students it happens that teachers think that students have to know something, but they just blame them for not knowing where explaining is needed. Even essential facts have to be explained.

Lesson No. **23. and 24.** - HEALTH

Date/class: 31. 03.11., 3rd. both groups

Description of activity: Students do exercises about their health and body.

The first task for the teacher was to activate students' thinking in English by using students' own experience. The teacher wrote on the whiteboard "Health" and asked students to share their knowledge what they do to be healthy.

All instructions were in English. During the next task students did the worksheet where they decided how often they did these activities and had a conversation with the teacher and each other. For example, clean teeth. Each student said how often they cleaned teeth and then shared with others whether it was enough or was not and what the consequences are for that. All the activities were knowledge based so students had to concentrate only on speaking; not content. For instance, washing hands; all students did this and the task was to explain this in English. When students wanted to say something but they could not express it in English, the teacher first asked the class whether they knew how to say it in English.



Figure No. 8. Children practiced cleaning teeth.

Almost always there was at least one or two students who could help, if not then the teacher helped with vocabulary and corrected sentence structures. According to the task students were also asked to explain some activities in details, for example, eating fruit. The girl said she always ate fruit and the teacher asked her about her favorite fruit. If teachers

want to know some more information or they feel that students want to continue talking about one particular topic then extra sentences could be about the origin of fruit, what fruit are available in the country and whether they enough or they better prefer fruit from hot countries. Many variations can be done with one task, teachers only have to catch the common feeling of the class – how they feel about each particular topic and whether they want to speak about it. CLIL content was to practically do something with the language. In the middle of the classroom there was a big example of teeth and a huge brush (*Figure No. 8*) and children had to clean the teeth and tell what exactly they were doing to keep their teeth white.

Lesson No. **25. and 26.** - VEGETABLES

Date/class: 08. 04.11., 2nd. both groups

Description of activity: students had to sort different vegetables according to the way they eat them.

CLIL exercise was about vegetables – how people eat them; peeled or washed, cooked or raw. First of all, the words were clarified if there were any unknown. During the activity children decided whether they eat the vegetables peeled or washed. Some students asked what to do when they neither peel nor wash the vegetables, how to sort them. The answer was simple: "you have two variants – either wash or peel the vegetable." The teacher explained that they cannot eat vegetables straight away. They first need to be washed. Problems occurred when students did not know what to do with carrots because when they buy carrots, they are already packed in plastic bags ready to use.

We laugh at Americans saying their children from big cities have never seen a pig or do not know where milk comes from but this situation was similar – carrots from "Narvesen" and potatoes either French fries or already peeled from the shop.

During the next task children had to sort the vegetables according to how they eat them – raw or boiled. There was an interesting discussion about pumpkins and potatoes because children said they could eat both vegetables raw and cooked. The teacher said if they thought like this then they could eat all the vegetables both ways and to make the choice easier the teacher suggested students imagining that they had this vegetable on a table and how would they eat it. This helped and students said they would first cook and then eat potatoes.

From the CLIL students were asked again to "work with the language" in the classroom there were several vegetables and students had to peel them and explain what

they were doing and why. The aim was to allow students do daily things with explanations in English.

Lesson No. **27. and 28.** - ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Date/class: 08. 04.11., 1^{st.} both groups

Description of activity: students put together correct animal and plant parts.

CLIL plan was to talk about animals and plants –which were living and which were not. On the white board there were two flashcards, the teacher pointed to each of them and asked questions:

- Is it a plant or an animal?
- Can it run?
- Can it hear?
- Has it got leaves?
- Has it got roots?
- Can it see?

Answers were correct and students enjoyed it because some funny and bizarre things were said. The next task was to put together animal or plant bodies, listening to the teacher's instructions. For example, take a head from a giraffe and body from a tree, legs are from a boy. After they had finished the bodies, children were asked whether it was correct and if not then what was wrong and what changes needed to be made. The same way the game was repeated over and over again. Students enjoyed the lesson and developed listening skill, sub skill – listening for instructions. Students also learnt some new words – roots, leaves and torso. This time CLIL offered to have a lesson in a natural way; or to play with what is real and what is not. (*Figures No. 9.and 10.*).No specific grammar terms were revised before the activity so students could know what to say. During the lesson students and teacher just spoke English.



Figures No. 9.and 10. Students' flashcards were put together according to teacher's orders.

Lesson No. **29. and 30.** - ANIMALS AND ACTIVITIES

Date/class: 07. 04.11., 1st.both groups

Description of activity: students matched together verbs with animals.

First of all students were asked to match animals with what they eat and what they do. For example, teacher said: "zebra" and students said: "eats leaves and runs very fast". When students were given a worksheet there was only one instruction – match animals with verbs. No translation or any other hints were given. The purpose was to observe how students deal with unknown words. In the whole text there was only one new word – crawl and children were supposed to first match the words they knew and then look what verbs and what animals they had left. All the students asked the meanings of the unknown words, but the teacher did not tell them, saying that first they had to match verbs they knew and then deal with unknown word. When students followed this sequence, they found out that the unknown word went together with a word "spider" and they knew the meaning in Latvian themselves. The activity was not difficult, but the aim was to teach a strategy how to deal with unknown words and how to work with a text when there are words students do not know. It was explained that always when students have any problems with vocabulary, they have to do what they know and often the unknown words reveal their meanings.

The additional exercise was an informative task about kangaroos, cheetahs and snails that a kangaroo can jump 12 meters long, cheetahs can speed up as fast as 96km/h and snails are the slowest of all animals – they can move just few meters in 1 hour.

Students revised known words, learnt some new, learnt that first of all they have to do what they know and discovered new information about animals. The aim of the CLIL is that children get excited with the topic and forge that they are speaking in another language. The aim of the lesson was to teach them new information about animals only in a different language. No present simple tense was explained, children practiced it while speaking.

Lesson No. **31. and 32.** - ADULT AND YOUNG ANIMALS

Date/class: 08. 04.11., 2st. both groups

Description of activity: students practice in pairs vocabulary about animals and their children.

2nd grade students knew a lot of animals already so they were asked whether they knew any animal babies. The only word they knew was a puppy. This was also expected. The students received worksheet where they had to cut out adult and young animal pairs,

then fold them and practice studying them in pairs. The practising activity lasted some 10 – 15 minutes. (*Track No. 4*).

For the teacher it was very important to observe all the pairs simultaneously because the vocabulary was new and they could not learn new words incorrectly so all the time while students were practising new words, the teacher was walking around the classroom and correcting children if they had any mistakes. If one and the same mistake occurred several times for many pairs then activity was stopped and students together with the teacher practised the word a couple of times.

The lesson was mainly based on drilling in different ways – pair drilling, individual and group drilling. Some teachers say it is an old method and do not work with students today but it is not quite true. When students drill words several times they listen to them and a teacher also pays more attention to precisely correct pronunciation. About CLIL content this lesson was a good example showing that there is no need to write on the whiteboard the correct pronunciation rules, all the teacher had to do was just to stop the activity and drill difficult words together with children. There is no need to teach children pronunciation rules if there is no lots of practical use at least in a lesson.

Lesson No. **33. and 34.** - WHERE ANIMALS LIVE

Date/class: 19. 04.11., 1st. both groups

Description of activity: students cut out animals and glue them at places where they live.

The aim of the activity was to develop sorting/matching skill when students had to cut out animal pictures and decide where which animal lived. Other variants of this activity could be when students had to sort animals according to the country where they grow or in which season we eat them. The classifying types of activities are good because they cover a wide range of vocabulary – any words can be classified in many different ways.

All the instructions were explained in English with the help of gestures. Teachers should not be afraid of using too much of English in a classroom, saying that children will not understand because their language level is low. Teacher has to feel the mood in the lesson; it can be read in their faces whether they understand something or nothing. In each class at least 2-3 children will understand more than other, and the ones who do not understand will follow the ones who have understood. For example, the teacher asked to cut out figures from worksheets. Some students understood a word “cut” some did not, but they looked around to what other were doing and after 20th maybe 30th time they will understand that word too. Students at any age and grade have to be offered an opportunity to listen to the language and form their passive knowledge of a language.

Some students start speaking after 6 month, some after 2 years, and some after 5 years but sooner or later they will speak if they are spoken to in their English lessons.

According to the task – listening skill can be developed also by the way how an exercise is checked. One variant is to ask students to call out each animal and decide where it lives, the other variant is to ask them to name all water animals, then air animals etc. If 8 students are asked to answer the same question, the 7th and 8th will automatically repeat what previous students have said but if each student is asked different questions about the same task then it will make them think in English what is one of the most important tasks in CLIL.

Lesson No. **35. and 36.** - GEOGRAPHY AND ORIENTATION

Date/class: 15. 04.11., 3rd. both groups

Description of activity: Students draw a map of their school.

During the lesson children developed speaking skill – sub skill – explaining a map. The task was to draw a map of students' school and then explain it. To avoid that all the students would have similar maps, the extra condition is to ask three imaginary objects and explain why they had chosen that. The second task was to draw any imaginary map, using the given symbols. During both lessons students asked for new words, thus their vocabulary was extended. There was complete silence while doing the exercise because students perceived the task very seriously. Some of the map examples can be seen in Appendix, found by the lesson date.

Second group had difficulties with drawing a precise map, so the teacher asked the students to draw any kind of a map using the given symbols.

After these 72 lessons the author compared the case study month with CLIL and all the previous years he worked at school. It is difficult to evaluate one method if it has been used only for 4 – 5, but what can be concluded is that CLIL materials offer a wider range of activities specially for young learners and as CLIL is connected with other subjects then basically the source of materials can never repeat. Each lesson provides completely new experience, emotions, motivation and wider knowledge.

For the author himself it was very interesting indeed because when 1st grader starts speaking you can never know what he/she is about to say and where one's ideas are flying around. That makes this method special and actually the only future of acquiring the language.

4.2 The interview with the CLIL expert Gunta Krīgere

The author met the CLIL expert Gunta Krīgere and there was a very important conversation about CLIL, its usage, methodology and the future perspectives in Latvia. The expert also provided lots of useful information which was used to write the theoretical part of the Diploma Paper. The whole conversation was 40 minutes from which the audio interview lasted for 23 minutes.

The expert explained that the first time when she heard about CLIL was in a year 2000 when the British Council organized courses for teachers and the leader of course was Janet Eniver and she provided first CLIL materials which were called the Cross Curricular Approach at that time, and they spent many hours dealing with those materials. That was a turn. Expert explained that it was quite difficult at the beginning.

The first practical lesson with CLIL was when she made a project about water and asked her colleague to film for 10 hours. After that she analyzed all the lessons. This was basically how Mrs. Krīgere started using CLIL. To the answer about any difficulties, the expert said that it is hard to observe the lesson not from the language point of view but from students' point of view.

While dealing with CLIL often one question occurred in author's mind whether is it not easier to open an ordinary language school rather than introducing CLIL in ordinary state schools. The expert explained that maybe it was better to have a language school and have so called full immersion when all the subjects are in a target language. Doubts could be according to the language matters, whether the language part is not missing in the mass of subject information. Maybe at schools where all the subjects are taught in a foreign language they do not develop all the four language skills. There has to be a balance between a subject and a language.

The expert also said that she used CLIL methods in her practice, but not all the lessons are with CLIL. Mrs. Krīgere also informed that one important project was to include animal classification into 4th grade English study book.

The CLIL expert also explained that each expert has one's own opinion, but CLIL is definitely more interesting with more practical inputs, for example, experimenting with yeast during English lessons. CLIL can be also adjusted to usual subject books with little changes in context and methodology. One of possible disadvantages could be that good CLIL lessons demand more investment if they are experiment based.

The expert found it difficult to speak about any future perspectives because, but the perfect variant would be that teachers would use something from CLIL in their lessons.

As the CLIL method is not taught specially for new teachers then it was important to know what possibilities for already working teachers are to include CLIL in practice. The author explained that there are special CLIL material books which are mainly oriented to language teachers, but there are always enthusiasts who like teaching and those teachers will find ways to improve teaching even with CLIL.

Methodology says that all the subjects can be taught through CLIL, the expert only agreed with it, but it is important for a teacher to decide at what extent to use the subject and language balance.

During the theoretical part such issue was discovered as the main principle in CLIL. The expert also had her own opinion about it. She insists that cooperation and interaction between language teachers and subject teachers. They have to work hand in hand, because not all the teachers are subject and language professionals, thus basically two teachers have to work as one.

The most questionable issue is whether students with different language and subject levels can work together. The expert explained that the CLIL theory says that weaker students gain as well by listening. The knowledge of one subject helps to develop the other. Marsh (2000) also said that with CLIL results might be not that rapid at first, so teachers and students have to work hard and be patient

When speaking about education, parents' opinion has to be always taken into consideration and Gunta Krīgere agrees with that saying that parents have to be informed that their children will learn by CLIL method. Also school administration has to be involved, because at the beginning the language development might not be as fast as parent would want it. The expert also says that: *" I have always considered that no matter which grade teacher one is, the level of a language has to be high. It is very important how to start (teaching and learning process with young learners.) It is very important to make strong basis because if teacher teaches something wrong, later it is very difficult to change*

The interview with the CLIL expert helped to carry the case study and understand how to deal with CLIL in lesson. It was very important to know what experienced CLIL experts say about this method.

4.3. The interview with CLIL experienced parent

The first time when the author met Karla (10) the daughter of Emilija Liepa (the name has been changed) to develop her English skills, it was amazing how perfect her English was and her Arabic accent made her speech rather exotic to the author's ears. In *Track No. 5* there is a whole lesson recorded with Karla without her knowing that, because if she knew, she would not allow recording the lesson or she just would not speak. The lesson took place in her house. The aim of the lesson was to show how it is possible to learn English in 2 years for a student whose family is not native speakers of English. First grade Karla spent in the Jurmala International School after that she went to Lebanon and learnt for a year and a half at Beirut Language School.

Answering the question about parent role Emilija agreed that parents always have to take part into what their children do at school. What she likes the most is that school always informs parents through emails. This means that parents do not have to be afraid of teachers and they are always informed about what is going on at school without spending their time on a way to and from a school.

Emilija also says that for Karla it was not difficult to learn all the subjects in a foreign language because when a child starts learning in early age it is easier to pick up a new language, but at the same time she says it might be difficult for parents to follow the school work if they do not know the language.

Author wanted to know what disadvantages are for good language schools and why in Latvia there are not many language schools (2 altogether). The answer was that the disadvantage is that language schools are still very expensive in Latvia and answering the question about any possible schooling system improvement, Emilija suggested the system which is widely used across the whole world – there is the connected school net across different countries and all the schools use the same methods and have the same program. The only thing that changes is the country where the school is, thus for parents and children it is easier to get used to a new school because evaluating system and program is similar no matter in which side of the world the school is. In Latvia the only school that used this system is International school in Jurmala.

Answering the question about the future of good learning and teaching, Emilija explained that the only method to have high results in a language is learning at schools where subjects are taught in that foreign language. Whether it is CLIL or ordinary English school, but, as she says, since she finished her English studies many years ago, nothing much has changed and this direction when subjects is combined with a language and there

are almost no practical lesson of the language is basically the only progressive and good result oriented method.

Altogether Emilija agrees that learning in a foreign language has only advantages and benefits because the child learns not only a subject, but also a language in a short period of time. 3 years is enough to have very good basics. Latvia's schooling system provides English for 12 years and the results are not as high as they should be.

The answer to the question whether other languages could be learnt the same way, Emilija answered that English plus a subject is just one model. She believes that all the subjects and all the languages can be mixed together.

Interesting answer was received when Mrs. Liepa said that basically any school in Latvia in any region can be an international school all we need is perspective teachers with high motivation and high level of professionalism.

The interview helped the author to understand what parents think about different methods and schooling system altogether. In professional issues such as methodology, behavior etc. teachers always speak with other colleagues, but it is important to share any information with parents as well, as it was showed in this interview that parents are intelligent enough to help teachers with new ideas and different opinion.

CONCLUSION

During the Diploma Paper all the research questions have been answered by studying historical background and future perspectives of the CLIL method and researching methodological issues in practice. It has also been clarified what the result of learning with CLIL is and students' feedback given to further improvements.

It can be assumed that the aim of the Diploma Paper – to discover how CLIL method helps non – native speakers to acquire English has been achieved. The author of the Diploma Paper has come to conclusion that the main element which helps students to acquire English with CLIL is using the language and working with it rather than theoretically learning grammar and correct spelling and pronunciation rules.

It is also important to mention that the whole Case Study including observation sheets, material selection, audio recordings, classroom management, interviews and author's continuing analysis of each lesson gave the understanding that such method (CLIL) can be adjusted to schools in Latvia and ordinary one – language or one –subject teachers can use CLIL in their classrooms. It was also discovered that CLIL has specific approach in how to combine subjects and language – there has to be a balance between these two elements. It was also concluded that CLIL teachers have to be prepared for long and careful lesson planning and keeping in mind the aim of the lesson. Not always new is better, but when combined with appropriate language skills and subject topics the results can be noteworthy – first grade students start to speak and understand the English language. Parents have to be ready that their offsprings will have to spend more time studying the target language, because CLIL experts agree that this method is effective but the result is not immediate, also students with lower level of English would have to make more effort to improve the language skills but the CLIL theory says that stronger students help weaker students. It was also surprisingly to discover that there are some schools in Latvia where math, biology and art is taught using some inputs from CLIL methods and there is great possibility that after 10 – 15 years there will be no need for language teachers; all the content subjects will be integrated within the language subjects and future teachers will have to master a language and a subject, as it is in some European countries already. The author thinks that the hypothesis was verified because in only 72 lessons students learnt content based vocabulary (geography, biology, animal grouping), were motivated to attend English lessons with the pleasure and students' English level increased, especially speaking part.

THESES

1. Depending on what age group students are what the expected target is, the approach and methods how to teach a language changes. Teachers have to change together with students and sometimes think like students to have successful results. Also creativity can be used in any subject and almost any topics to prevent students being bored during lessons.
2. However the CLIL method is not widely used in Latvia and there are many experts representing two common opinions; some say that CLIL is the future method of learning content subjects and language subjects, although others say CLIL is as good and as bad as all the rest methods with advantages and disadvantages.
3. There are differences between CLIL methodology and ordinary language methods. Special CLIL material compilations have been published for teachers to use some exercise from CLIL. It is not obligatory to lead all the lessons with CLIL. It is acceptable to *connect* and *disconnect* CLIL depending on students, topics and teachers expectations.
4. There are 3 ways how students work with information in CLIL lessons; experience based, when students “work” with the language during the classroom. Knowledge based, when students use their own knowledge to express themselves in lessons and content or subject based when a language is combined together with other subjects.
5. Discovering and working with CLIL means tedious and asertive work. Teachers have to be highly motivated and professional even when teaching English to young learners, as well as passionate with the work they do because teachers have students’ key to success. Teachers an motivate stundets to work and affect them to hate the subject, school and all that is in any connection with eduaction.
6. CLIL method requires setting clear aims for each lesson; otherwise the CLIL lesson will turn into a usual vocabulary check lesson or grammar lesson. To help teachers not to lose the aim, it is important to keep in mind that we use the language as a tool to teach other subjects not to learn the language itself.
7. Working with CLIL does not mean excluding the language, but finding the balance between language and subject teaching during lessons.
8. Working with primary level students does not mean singing songs and playing games for three years without any clue whether it help students to learn the language.

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APPENDIX 1

All the lesson materials added in the appendix are originals thus there is no numeration on each page, however, each lesson can be found and distinguished by its date, grade and the topic of each lesson.