Summary

Episode 1

Short-term teacher training event

Compiled by Triin Lingiene, the coordinator
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Introduction

The first short-term joint staff training event of the project "May ICT be with you" took place 3–5 December 2019 in Tartu, Estonia. Altogether 11 teachers participated. Nine working sessions were held, and a cultural programme carried out. During the three working days, the following agenda items were covered:

1. The essence of the project
2. Partnership agreement
3. The logo and the tagline of the project
4. The dates for Episodes II, III and IV
5. The three feature films of this project
6. The texts (content resources)
   a. *Visible Learning* by John Hattie
   b. 6 T's Approach to CBI by Stoller&Grabe 1997
   c. *CLIL* by Kay Bentley
   d. The Language of Movies: Using Film to Teach Visual Literacy in the EFL Classroom by Benjamin J. Thurn
   e. A film project on the example of the 2009 biographical sports drama film *Invictus*
   f. Blended learning in EFL: Adopting a Principled Approach to Integrating Technology by Claire Whittaker
   g. Introduction to learning objects
7. The project website
8. Evaluation

The event was successful thanks to highly motivated participants, good organisation, excellent working conditions and full support of the senior management of Tartu Tamme Gümnaasium.

The essence of the project

We have joined their forces to aim for more innovation in foreign language instruction, and greater depth in their teaching and learning practices.

Our 21-month strategic partnership will help us find some good answers to the questions related to motivation, success criteria and deep work. In fact, we are quite eager to learn to which extent will

- teaching language with film motivate students to work harder and achieve higher;
- teaching content with language make foreign language instruction more effective; and
- combining e-learning with face-to-face instruction encourage students to improve their learning skills.

We will be working on two skill sets in parallel: developing the participants' language skills with the help of film, and developing their content skills with the help of English as a foreign language. 3 feature films will serve as contextually rich sources of authentic material, and 3 value-based debates will perform as the most important task-generated texts.

Partnership agreement

To summarize a rather comprehensive document, the 5 partner schools agreed that the aims and objectives of the project will be pursued in close transnational collaboration throughout the project period. The tasks and responsibilities in connection with the project management were fairly divided and such aspects as budget, time, quality and risk management, along with dissemination, implementation and sustainability, covered.

The logo and the tagline of the project

LANGUAGE WITH FILM &
CONTENT WITH LANGUAGE

Drawn by Simon Kohn from Germany

The dates for Episodes II, III and IV

· 2 – 6 March 2020
· 29 June – 1 July 2020
· 5 – 9 October 2020

The 3 feature films of this project

1. _Wonder_
2. _Keeping Mum_
3. _The Breakfast Club_

Visible Learning by John Hattie

5 CLAIMS

1. Visible teaching and learning occurs when learning is the explicit and transparent goal.
2. The act of teaching requires deliberate interventions to ensure that there is cognitive change in the student.
3. A safe environment for the learner (and for the teacher) is an environment in which error is welcomed and fostered.
4. Learning is not always pleasurable and easy.
5. When teaching and learning are visible, there is a greater likelihood of students reaching higher levels of achievement.

3 QUESTIONS

1. Where are you going?
2. How are you going?
3. Where to next?

Teachers are adaptive learning experts who know where students are on the continuum from novice to capable to proficient, when students are or are not learning, and where to go next, and who can create a classroom climate to attain these learning goals.

10 CONCEPTS

1. Self-efficacy
2. Self-handicapping
3. Self-motivation
4. Self-goals
5. Social goals
6. Self-dependence
7. Self-discounting and distortion
8. Self-perfectionism
9. Hopelessness
10. Social comparison

5 COMPONENTS OF LEARNING INTENTIONS & SUCCESS CRITERIA

1. Challenge
2. Commitment
3. Confidence
4. Student expectations
5. Conceptual understanding

It is not the knowledge or ideas, but the learner's construction of this knowledge and ideas that are critical.

CRITIQUE

According to [Thomas Aastrup Rømer](#) (2019), John Hattie's theory of Visible Learning is a theory of evaluation that denies education as such. Moreover, as Hattie's theory belongs to the radical constructivist paradigm, it results in a double breakdown of the essence of teaching.

Is our teaching visible to our students? Is their learning visible to us?

6 T's Approach to CBI by Stoller&Grabe (1997)

Content-based instruction (CBI) is a means of developing linguistic ability. It has strong connections to project work, task-based learning and a holistic approach to language instruction. The focus of a CBI lesson is on the topic or subject matter.

Theme-based instruction (TBI) links together many different activities by their content; the theme or topic runs through everything that happens in the classroom and acts as a connecting thread. Effective theme-based teaching is extremely demanding on teachers in both planning and in implementation.

All approaches to CBI view language as a medium for learning content, and content as a resource for learning language.

- Purposeful and meaningful language use in the classroom
- Distinction between academic and social language
- Student involvement in content learning Cooperative learning
- Student negotiation of language and content tasks
- Development of discourse-based abilities
- Motivating content materials

8 APPROACHES TO CBI (CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION)

1. *The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) approach*
2. *English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction*
3. *University-level foreign language CBI*
4. *The Canadian approach presented by Mohan*
5. *A genre-based approach to K-12 literacy instruction with a content emphasis*
6. *Language immersion programs*
7. *The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach*
8. *Whole language instruction*

A SIX T'S APPROACH TO CBI

a) Theme based instruction
b) The extension of CBI to support any language learning context
c) Coherent content resources and appropriate language learning activities

THE 6 CURRICULAR COMPONENTS

Themes: the central ideas

Texts: instructor-compiled, instructor-generated, task-generated and external content resources

Topics: the subunits of content

Threads: linkages across themes

Tasks: the instructional activities and techniques

Transitions: explicitly planned actions providing coherence across topics and tasks

✦ *How much do we know about CBI or TBI?*

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) by Kay Bentley

- CLIL is an approach or method which integrates the teaching of content from the curriculum with the teaching of a non-native language
- It helps language learners to develop and communicate ideas about science, arts, technology and the like.
- CLIL teachers can be subject teachers, language teachers, primary classroom teachers or classroom assistants.

DIFFERENT MODELS OF CLIL

	Type of CLIL	Time	Context
Soft CLIL	Language-led	45 minutes once a week	Some curricular topics are taught during a language course.
	Subject-led (modular)	15 hours during one term	Schools or teachers choose parts of the subject syllabus which they teach in the target language.
Hard CLIL	Subject-led (partial immersion)	about 50% of the curriculum	About half of the curriculum is taught in the target language. The content can reflect what is taught in the L1 curriculum or can be new content.

The 4 Cs of CLI

CONTENT	COGNITION
COMMUNICATION	CULTURE

CLIL teachers and learners need knowledge of the language of their curricular subject.

- *The content-obligatory language*: the vocabulary, grammatical structures and functional language for specific subjects
- *The content-compatible language*: the everyday language to describe, compare and contrast, speculate and/ or describe cause and effect

Although the main focus is on learners' understanding of subject content, the learning of language must be aided, too. It can be done by highlighting vocabulary and chunks, modelling sentences, allowing learners to be more relaxed about using the target language, correcting learners by recasting language immediately after they make mistakes, and analysing errors to identify difficulties learners have when producing English.

CLIL assessment can focus on areas of subject content, on areas of language, on communication skills, cognitive skills, practical skills, and on learning skills.

🔸 *What is our experience with scaffolding, consolidating and differentiation?*

The Language of Movies: Using Film to Teach Visual Literacy in the EFL Classroom by Benjamin J. Thurn

AUTHENTIC TEXTS

Pros

- Increasing language proficiency through content areas
- Providing access to the speech forms native speakers most often use (idioms, collocations, sentence frames)
- Adding culture to language instruction
- Helping students to have a more positive educational attitude

Cons

- Overwhelming students with difficult and complex language structures
- Providing language learners with less interesting materials
- Supporting stereotypes and bias

THE ADVANTAGES OF USING FILM IN THE CLASSROOM

- Offering a contextually rich source of authentic material
- Bringing culture into the classroom
- Providing a multilingual and multicultural oasis
- Being a part of popular culture
- Promoting fluency development
- Increasing student motivation
- Decreasing anxiety

Using film effectively in the classroom can influence not only comprehension, but also critical thinking, motivation, autonomous learning, and affective variables, such as anxiety. It allows learners to explore than target culture in an authentic and contextualized way.

FILM

- serves as an authentic, readily available, culturally-rich text that can be used in the language classroom;
- can easily show the values, customs and interactions of people in English-speaking countries;
- improves language learners' ability to perceive and understand issues in a variety of ways and from multiple perspectives;
- provides an authentic source of language modelling;
- converts meaning through word-choice, stress and intonation;
- merges three communication modes: the vocal, the visual, and the verbal; and
- is the most similar way to approximate the conditions of living in the target culture.

➕ *Are we ready to use film for language instruction? If so, do we know how to do it?*

A film project on the example of the 2009 biographical sports drama film *Invictus*

SUMMARY

Teaching language with film is about content based learning (CBL), i.e. the language becomes the medium through which something new is learned.

- CBL helps students to become better at diverse thinking and provides them with multimodal texts and learning activities.
- Authentic texts broaden students' vocabulary, add the culture aspect to language learning, and improve motivation.

Last year, we chose a 2009 American-South African biographical sports drama film called *Invictus* to be our film. It tells a story about the South African President Nelson Mandela and François Pienaar, the captain of the South Africa rugby union team, and how they together fought against apartheid in South Africa. Our aim was to work on our students' vocabulary as well as extend their knowledge of history, sports and human values.

We divided our film project into three parts:

- pre-film activities (content and language preparation);
- watching the film (note taking and task sheets); and
- post-film activities (whole group discussion, film reviews, group presentations and feedback).

This project was a success, and it encouraged us to undertake another film project next school year.

REFLECTION

According to the constructivist approach to learning, technology should be given more space in foreign language instruction. However, the use of ICT should be well-thought-out.

We now know that teaching language with film makes the learning process more varied. We also know that film has the potential of motivating the indifferent and inspiring the motivated. Besides, our own students proved us that film did help them considerably improve their writing and public speaking skills along the way.

As this was our first film project, we didn't know what to expect. However, everything turned out better than we had expected, so we felt encouraged enough to run another film project in the future as well.

Inga, Maarika and Triin from Tartu Tamme Gümnaasium

Blended learning in EFL: Adopting a Principled Approach to Integrating Technology by Claire Whittaker

BLENDED LEARNING

Blended learning is an approach to learning that combines face-to-face and online learning experiences. Ideally, each (online and off) will complement the other by using its particular strengths.

Many tech-savvy teachers lack know-how on how to design blended learning courses and incorporate technology in a principled way.

TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY – A BASIC CHECKLIST

1. Will the technology be used to enhance and support learning?
2. Will it do something that couldn't otherwise be achieved?
3. Will the students be in charge of using technology?
4. Are you sure that using technology is the best option?
5. Are the computers in your classroom capable of running the software you want to use?

ADVICE FROM PRACTICE

Course development
- Use an existing face-to-face course as the basis for the lend.
- Add technological changes gradually.
- Consider how the course will evolve and change

Integration/complementary
- Integrate rather than simply use ICT.
- Create a link between topics and skills.
- Web-based activities should add value to classroom activities.

Tools
- Prefer freely available resources.
- Compensate or improve what is lacking in the traditional classroom.

Tasks
- Build online tasks around social interactivity.
- Build in learner autonomy and reflection.

Scaffolding
- Use classroom time to provide for an appropriate level of scaffolding for each learner.
- Provide guided tasks whilst still allowing freedom to create new items.

Roles
- Students and instructors will change the roles they have in a face-to-face classroom.
- Pay attention to the amount of online tutor support to avoid tutor overload.

Training
- Instructor training in the lend is an on-going process.
- Just as students will have to relearn how to learn, teachers have to learn how to teach.

✦ *How capable are we of integrating rather than simply using ICT in our daily practices?*

Introduction to learning objects

THE SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING OBJECTS

1. *Interoperability*: Learning objects can be used in a variety of software suites, across platforms (Mac, PC)

2. *Reusability*: The ability a well-designed Learning Object has to fit a multitude of scenarios and circumstances

3. *Manageability*: Objects need to be able to be tracked and updated

4. *Flexibility*: Learning Objects must be adaptable to serve the needs of learners and bring them closer to achieving their learning objectives

5. *Accessibility*: This distinguishing factor relates to the fact that objects must be online, searchable and well categorized to be true Learning Objects

6. *Durability*: Within reason, Learning Objects must stand the test of time with regards to their content and their delivery mechanism

7. *Scalability*: It's important for Learning Objects to be neither narrow in focus, nor too large to be incorporated along with other objects, so designing with scalability in mind is a must.

3 MAIN TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

1. Learn *from* a computer (CBT, e-instruction, etc.): learning objects in a narrow sense
2. Learn *with* a computer (cognitive tool, writing-to-learn, etc.): software tools
3. Learn *via* a computer (CSCL, etc.): communication (peer learning)

Watch two videos on learning objects.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5cp7KoUI7JQ
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5a_VZVOEQDc

Have a look at an example of a learning object.

- https://elerilearningobjects.wordpress.com

How capable are we of integrating rather than simply using ICT in our daily practices?

The project website

We are going to construct a WordPress website under the domain name 'griterasmusplus.eu'.

The website will have a similar structure of https://clickerasmusplus.eu/, and we have chosen its theme to be https://avada.theme-fusion.com/construction/.

We plan the site to have up to 50 pages and an unlimited number of blog posts. In addition, there will be three WordPress.com sites outside this website to present the three pedagogical resources. We are going to add content throughout the project period.

Evaluation

The participants said that the event helped them dig deeper into the essence of the project, successfully cover the agenda items, and effectively participate in training sessions.

Everyone was confident that a strong bond was created among the participants. Teachers also enjoyed discussing various ways to teach and they picked up some good ideas about how to work with film.

The participants paid attention to some problems, too. They saw disagreement between the partners and/or getting lost in too many opportunities as possible hurdles. Still another difficulty mentioned was too much focus on specific or theoretical topics instead of practical and hands-on activities. Finally, more free time would have been highly appreciated.

The following suggestions were made for the next teacher training event:

1. The participants should have more interactive activities and sharing sessions to give examples of the methods or techniques they already use at their schools.
2. The activities should be done in different venues.
3. Extra attention should be paid to strategies and methods that support student autonomy as well as the meaningful use of ICT.

All in all, it was a well-prepared event, which boosted intercultural communication and togetherness between the partners. It was an effective start of the whole project.