

CREATIVE CULTURES IN COLOURS

Using CLIL methodology, Art is a subject to be taught to students during their ESO studies through a foreign language, in this case English, with dual-focused aims; namely the learning of course content and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language.

“Colours” is a Unit from the spiral syllabus of Art. The materials elaborated for this CLIL classroom are meant to be implemented during the 3rd course of ESO, but they can be also adapted to be taught in the 2nd course. This is because there might be different approaches needed to achieve competencies and skills during the ESO curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to follow the teaching notes in order to find a stimulating variety of suggestions and create an interactive classroom. Teachers can also add their own activities to enhance the main objectives.

“Colours” is based on a Social Constructivism approach which builds on Vygotskian principles of private speech, scaffolding and the zone of proximal development. Private speech is the foundation for all higher order thinking processes. “Saying what you know is the way you know what you know” is a sentence repeated in Do Coyle’s lessons. The Zone of Proximal Development refers to the tasks a child is unable to complete alone, but is able to complete with the assistance of an adult or a more knowledgeable peer. The idea of scaffolding focuses on the assistance teachers give to a student or groups of students in a learning context. In order for a child to learn new concepts or skills the teacher must provide scaffolding for the learning experience, giving students the tools to learn autonomously and to learn to be confident. As the child’s ability increases, the level of teacher support decreases. Scaffolding is directly linked to the personal needs of the individual. Cooperative learning becomes essential by promoting the sharing of ideas, providing moral support when dealing with new and difficult challenges and discussing complex individual cases together

“Colours” is a project of English Art Laboratory. The unit is organized in three main parts: The first part, BASIC THEORY, is the longest and most detailed. The other two topics, MEANING AND EXPRESSION and CREATIVITY AND ART, are presented as a guide so that individual teachers can adapt them according to their own classrooms.

Lessons plans, teaching notes, students worksheets and supplementary material are provided for the entire project. In order to work with the complexity and ensure successful learning, teaching notes make clear suggestions to the teacher in terms of the sequence of development in the classroom, involving five Power Point presentations, simultaneously interfering with the activities and other indications. In most cases, explanations will be supported by visuals shown in the Power Point presentations that provide the basis for classroom development. In the supplementary material, crucial videos to show are listed. Some key classroom language (of learning and for learning) is also included as well as other general scaffolding to support CLIL learners and to give the language they need to discuss, debate, justify and explain. A general assessment sheet and the 5 PPTs are included.

“Colours” is not an easy topic. There are many contradictory concepts that have been explained to students during their primary education. Moreover, colours are also embedded in cultural traditional theories. Therefore, the content is especially chosen to maintain clarity and objectiveness. There have been many attempts to distinguish incorrect assumptions including those contained in a great deal of internet material: sometimes red appears as a primary pigment colour, cyan is missed and blue doesn't always have the same meaning as a hue. To achieve a correct vision of colour theory has become a key objective of this project. Some websites and videos have been purposefully selected to clarify the confusion. In addition, suggestions have been made in order to help students to be able to select different contents critically, which is also an important aim of the Unit .i.e. achieving a personal holistic vision of colour.

“Colours” as a CLIL unit, is flexible and it is intentionally conceived as an attractive and motivated subject that is specially related to different cultural perspectives. CLIL potentialities have been summarized in the 4Cs- Framework (Coyle, 2002) as four essential principles: content, communication, cognition, and culture.

Giving students low and high order thinking skills, in order to encourage them to deal with problem-solving as an intellectual challenge in language as well as in the content, is an essential aim of this project. Some warm up activities can be done to start an Art CLIL lesson. It is strongly recommended to use ICT when using these materials because it will give students richness and autonomy to build up a personalised approach to elaborating their own portfolio. Collaboration and cooperation between language departments and other subject departments is crucial. Teachers have been sharing successes and practices, working together regionally, nationally and across countries to succeed in CLIL practice.

There are many strategies for scaffolding student learning and some are exposed on these materials, basically by giving models of structures, phrases, starters and also asking student to have his own key word list related to the topic. Scaffolding can also be provided by an auxiliary language teacher, visual descriptions, key word definitions, translations or synonyms, using dictionaries, books or online resources.

All the images included in these materials are online resources and are only meant to be used for educational proposals.