

Kovacs, Claudia. 2009. *Lexical Learning in CLIL Geography Classrooms*. MA Thesis, University of Vienna.

Abstract

The objective of this predominantly qualitative study was to analyse lexical learning in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) geography classrooms. The overall object of interest was to provide an adequate picture of strategies of vocabulary presentation in CLIL classrooms and vocabulary learning strategies applied by Austrian CLIL students. Even though the data is limited to CLIL geography lessons, the general trends may be representative for several kinds of CLIL classes. These insights can further contribute to a better understanding of language teaching in general.

In order to answer the research questions, CLIL geography lessons of two teachers, an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and a non-EFL teacher were recorded. A close study of the transcripts, interviews with the teachers and questionnaires answered by the students of both classes were investigated to reveal presentation and learning strategies. The sources of data are CLIL geography lessons of two classes at the seventh grade of lower secondary education, dealing with the same topic, namely demography. Thus, allowing a basic comparison of the teaching of the trained and the non-trained English teacher.

Results indicate that a bulk of strategies was employed for presenting and explaining vocabulary. Interestingly, many strategies did not occur in isolation, but often several strategies were applied to convey a particular lexical item. As regards the language training of the teachers, the analysis revealed the same tendencies of strategy use with the limitation that the non-EFL teacher used the respective strategies less often.

Concerning vocabulary learning strategies, the results varied greatly between the individual classes. Despite the request to report vocabulary learning strategies in CLIL classes, many students referred to their general vocabulary learning strategies rather than to CLIL-specific ones. Consequently, the vocabulary learning strategies reported by the students did not necessarily reflect the presentation techniques employed by the teacher.

As this study only provides a brief insight into the teaching practice of two teachers dealing with one specific topic, other topics and other teachers as well as the efficacy of the adopted strategies have to be investigated in order to be able to pronounce a fully substantiated call for further training of vocabulary presentation skills for teachers.