

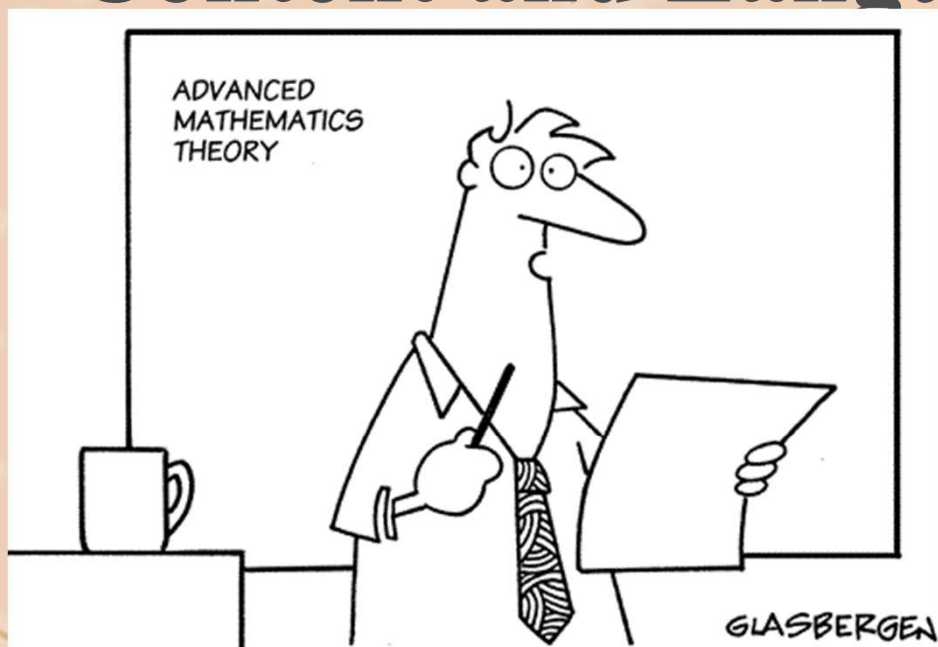
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION NEWS

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Content and Language Integrated



"Today's test is 70% of your final grade which makes up 35% of your grade for the semester and 20% of your GPA for 50% of your scholastic career for 15% of the curriculum. If you can explain this to the person next you, you pass the test."

How Learning a New Language Improves Tolerance

There are many [benefits](#) to knowing more than one language. For example, it has been shown that [aging adults](#) who speak more than one language have less likelihood of developing dementia. Additionally, the bilingual [brain](#) becomes better at

Unfortunately, not all American universities consider [learning foreign languages](#) a worthwhile investment.

Why is foreign language study important at the university level?

As an [applied linguist](#), I study how learning multiple languages can have cognitive and emotional benefits. One of these benefits that's not obvious is that language learning improves tolerance.

This happens in two important ways.

The first is that it opens

4.2. CLIL

The methodology of SLA/ FLA:

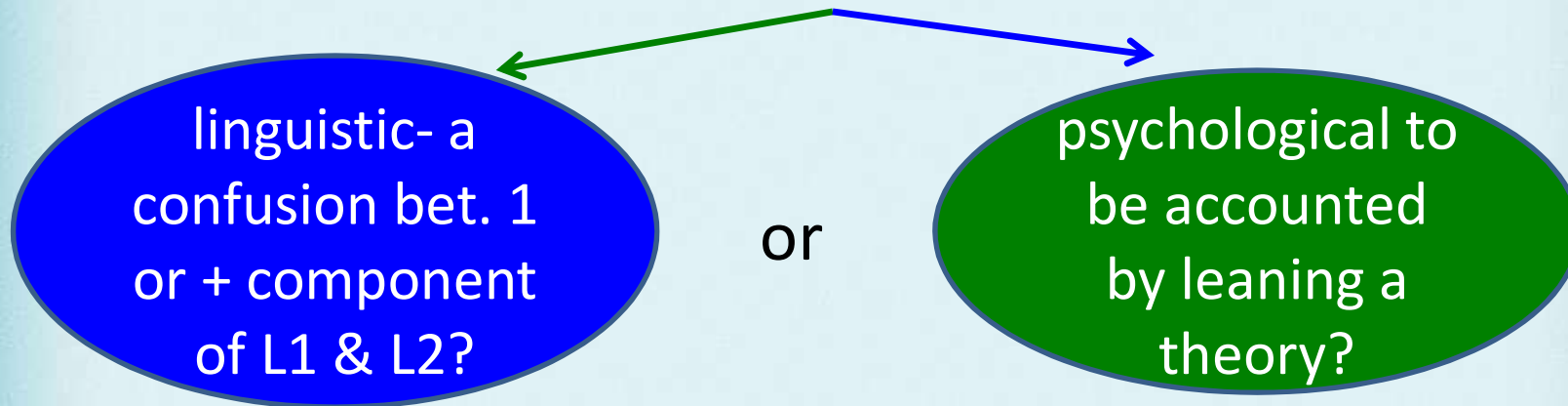
- a. SLA research: what are the stages of SL learning?
- b. Curriculum design: what does the learner need to know?
- c. Language testing: what are the markers of successful SL?

4.2. Stages of learning

a. SLA research: what are the stages of SL learning?

Research in SLA started by investigating the problems of the learners' mistakes.

→ A **mistake** is a (un/filled) gap in a learner's knowledge of the TL **BUT** is it...



Applied linguistics has (1) put these 2 explanations together & (2) look at the error system without seeking causes.

4.2. Stages of learning

Researchers → mistakes learners made reflected a systematic incomplete knowledge of L2.

Interlanguage → developing lang. system of L2 learners.

Learners of L2 seem to acquire grammatical features of the lang. in predictable stages, e.g. *question formation*:

Stage 1 → **Single words:** *children?, what's your name?*

Stage 2 → **Declarative word order:** *The boy throws the ball?*

Stage 3 → **Fronting:** *Where the children are?, Do in this picture there is 4 astronauts?*

4.2. Stages of learning

Stage 4 → **Inversion in *wh*- with copula & y/n questions:** *where is the sun?, is there a fish?*

Stage 5 → **Inversion in *wh*- questions with *do*:** *how do you say...?*

Stage 6 → **Complex questions** (question tag, negative or embedded questions): *it's better, isn't it; why can't we go?, can you tell what time it is?*

Developmental patterns look at L1 influence:

- ✓ Most learners **draw on their knowledge** of other lang.
- ✓ L1 influence is a **subtle & evolving** aspect of L2.
- ✓ **Not all patterns** are transferred from L1 to L2

4.2. Stages of learning

- ✓ There are **changes over time**: learners recognise similarities bet. L1 & L2 as they know more about L2.
- ✓ Some lang. aspects are more **affected by L1 influence**, e.g. *pronunciation* & *word order* than *morphemes*.
- ✓ Though developmental patterns are similar among learners, learners may be **slowed down** if an interlang. pattern is similar to their L1.

All learners use pre-verbal negation (*I no like that*), but Spanish L1 learners use it longer than learners whose L1 doesn't have pre-verbal negation.

When German learners place the negation after the modals, they may also use it after lexical verbs (*he plays no basketball*) matching the German negation pattern.

4.2. Stages of learning

- ✓ Learners know some patterns **aren't transferable** as *idioms*.
- ✓ When L2 is very different from L1, learners are **less likely to transfer**.
- ✓ L1 influence **constrains** the use of L2 patterns within a stage.

French students of English L2 with an advanced use of subject-verb inversion failed to use questions with noun subjects, as in French noun subjects cannot be inverted:

Can he play basketball?/ **Can John play basketball?**

4.2. Curriculum design

b. Curriculum design: what does the learner need to know?

Lang. teaching is not limited to the classroom; it takes in:

- the education of the teacher,
- the preparation for the teaching,
- the curriculum design & planning,
- the assessment system

Curriculum design & planning includes:

- ✓ Purposes for which a learner needs a lang.
- ✓ Setting of goals, syllabus, teaching methods & materials.
- ✓ Evaluation of the effects of these procedures on learners.

4.2. Curriculum design

Instruction doesn't allow learners to skip stages, but to move faster through them.

Teaching English methods in the past:

➤ **Grammar-translation lang. teaching** influenced by study of Latin & Ancient Greek.

Curriculum aims  lang. as an academic discipline:

- grammar rules explained in L1
- vocabulary lists learned with translation equivalents
- sentence translation.

Language use deferred to university completion.

4.2. Curriculum design

- The **direct method** claimed that everything had to be done through the lang. under instruction.
 - translation & L1 explanation were banned.
 - grammar rules & vocab. were worked out by students.
 - success ➡ how close learner's lang. was to that of the native speaker.
- **Natural lang. learning** defended SLA by repeating the route of the native speaker:
 - learning would occur without explanation or correction
- The **communicative approach** focussed on lang. use in context, i.e. on communicative activities:
 - success ➡ ability to do things with lang.

4.2. CLIL: Definition & goals

More natural input is provided through communicative & content-based language teaching (*Content and Language Integrated Learning -CLIL*).

- Definition:

“Any educational situation in which an additional lang. & therefore not the most widely used lang. of the environment is used for the teaching & learning of subjects other than the lang. itself” (Marsh & Langé, 2000).

- Goals

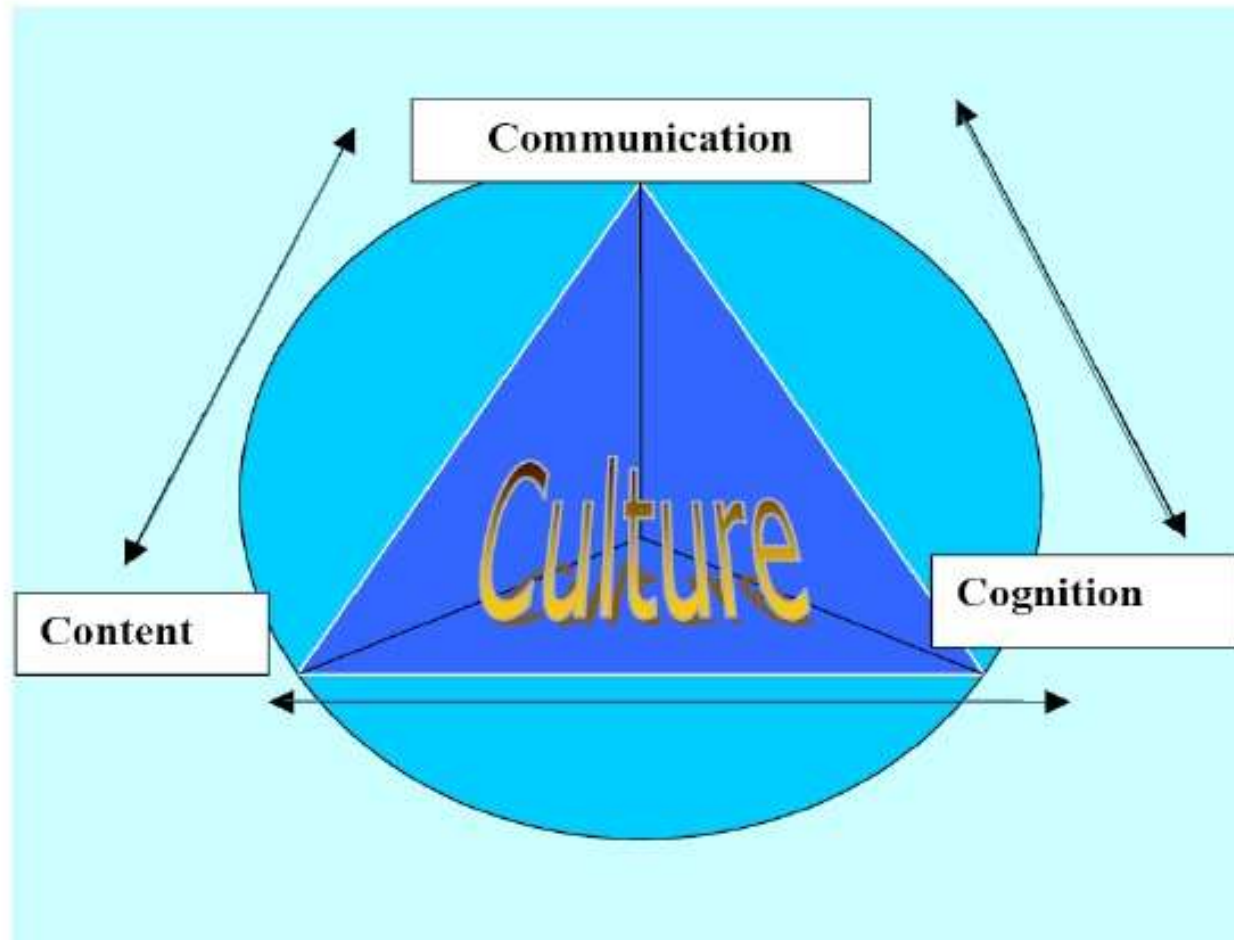
- ✓ Acquire knowledge using an L2.
- ✓ Acquire necessary skills in L1 & L2.
- ✓ Understand & value both cultures.
- ✓ Develop cognitive & social skills.

4.2. CLIL support from SLA research

- ✓ Natural lang. acquisition happens in context (Curtain & Pesola 1994).
- ✓ Lang. acquisition occurs through conversational interaction (Long 1983).
- ✓ SLA enhanced by *comprehensible input* (Krashen 1985)
- ✓ Cummins' notion of CALP (*Cognitive Academic Lang. Proficiency*) as opposed to BICS (*Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills*) shows that students need to learn content while developing CALP.
- ✓ Lang. learning becomes more concrete than abstract.
- ✓ Complex lang. is best taught with authentic content.

4.2. CLIL model

The 4Cs conceptual framework for CLIL



Coyle (1999, 2005)

4.2. A successful CLIL lesson combines

- **Content:** Progression in knowledge, skills & understanding related to specific elements of the curriculum.
- **Communication:** Using an L2 to learn while learning to use language.
- **Cognitive:** Developing thinking skills which link concept formation, understanding & language.
- **Culture:** Exposure to alternative perspectives & shared understandings, which deepen awareness of otherness & self.

(Coyle 1999, 2005)

4.2. CLIL lesson characteristics

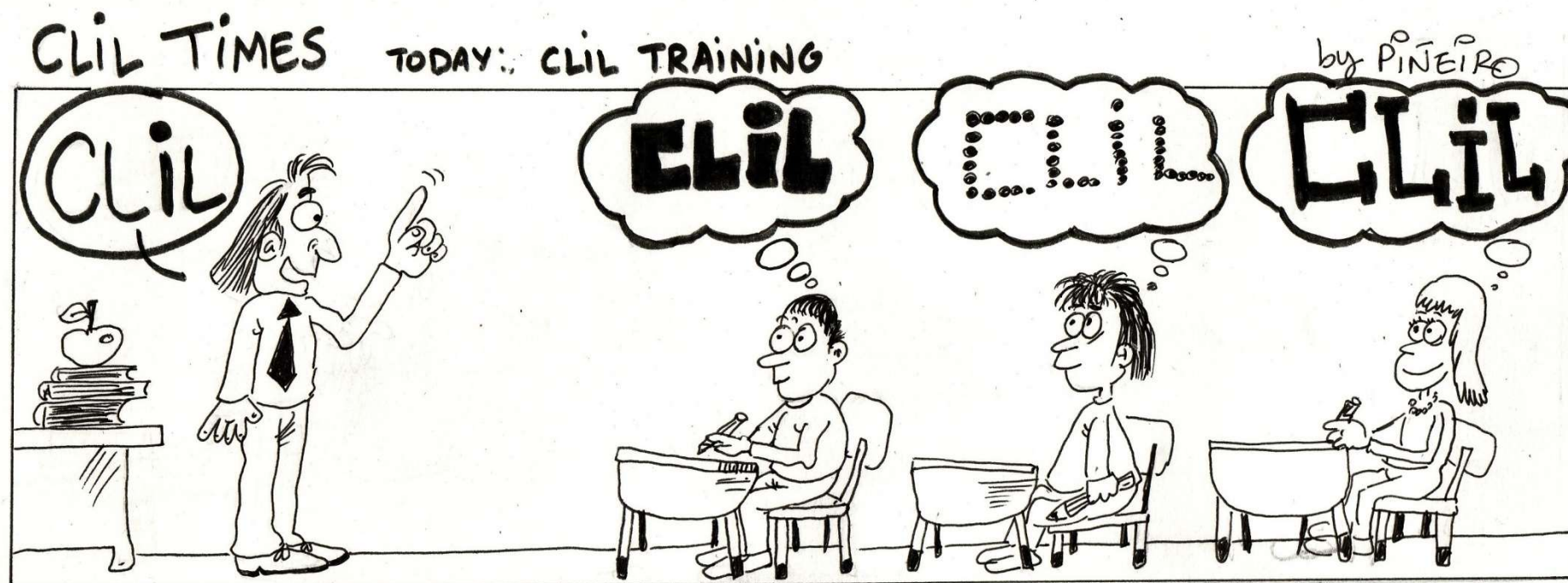
- ✓ emphasis is on **meaning** rather than on form.
- ✓ lang. is **functional** & dictated by the context of the subject.
- ✓ lang. is approached **lexically** rather than grammatically.
- ✓ **integrate lang. & skills**, & receptive & productive skills.
- ✓ learning environment allows learners to develop + **effective comprehension & communication skills**.
- ✓ learners look at content from a different perspective when taught in an L2: **intercultural learning happens**.
- ✓ learners develop + accurate **academic concepts** in an L2.
- ✓ lessons are based on reading or listening texts/passages.

4.2. CLIL characteristics

- ✓ the lang. focus doesn't consider structural grading.
- ✓ authenticity: topics related to students' needs & use of authentic materials.
- ✓ active learning: students talk more, cooperate, discuss. Teacher is a guide & provider.
- ✓ learning is based on prior knowledge & interests.
- ✓ different learning styles are considered.
- ✓ classes are planned together with subject & lang. teachers.
- ✓ learning also happens outside the classroom.

4.2. How does this happen?

- Lang. camps
- Student exchanges
- Lang. practice abroad
- Immersion
- Lang. showers
- One or several subjects
- CLIL modules
- Project work



4.2. CLIL limitations

- Lang. teachers lack the knowledge on the subject & subject teachers don't have enough FL knowledge.
- Differences bet. teachers responsible for linguistic & non-linguistic areas.
- New concepts are always difficult to accept & grasp.
- Content specific explanations can be a barrier in the process of learning/teaching.
- Problems with grammatical accuracy & lexical precision.
- Shortage of materials.
- Gaps in learners' knowledge & how to use lang. outside class (e.g. uncertain about the *vous* & *tu*).

4.2. CLIL limitations

- Assessment: what & how to evaluate?
- Only the teachers' lang. is used.
- Speech typical of teenager/child interaction is rare or absent.
- Little motivation to move forward if they make themselves understood.
- If errors influenced by L1 don't interfere with meaning they may not be noticed, e.g. *she's wearing a skirt red*.



4.2. CLIL lesson framework

A CLIL lesson usu. follows a 4-stage framework:

1. Processing the text:

- Texts are usu. accompanied by illustrations.
- Learners need structural markers to go through content

2. Identification & organisation of knowledge by diagrams

3. Lang. identification:

- Highlight useful lang. & categorise it to function.
- Attention to collocations, subject-specific vocab., etc.

4. Tasks for students are subject-oriented for production.

4.2. Planning CLIL lessons

- Objectives: concepts.
- Content: academic & cultural.
- Linguistic adaptation (academic lang).
- Learning through tasks (pre-task, task, follow-up)
- Work individually, in pairs & in groups.
- Criteria for evaluation



4.2. CLIL methodology

1. Enhance student involvement

- ❖ Negotiation of topics & tasks
- ❖ Project work.

2. Facilitate comprehension

- ❖ Comprehension tasks.
- ❖ Brief teacher explanations.
- ❖ Paralinguistic & linguistic strategies.

3. Promote student-student interaction

- ❖ Input comprehensability.
- ❖ Pair & small group-work.

4.2. CLIL methodology

4. **Work on academic skills characteristic of the subject**

- ❖ Interpretation of flowcharts to organise information.
- ❖ Cause-&-effect relationships.

5. **Work on communicative skills for academic purposes**

- ❖ Fluency & ability to attract audience.

6. **Code-switching as a feature of CLIL classroom**

7. **Joint assessment of content & communication skills**

- ❖ Awareness of learners' linguistic limitations.
- ❖ Testing of simple facts with multiple choice questions written with the help of the students

4.2. Difficulties

- ☐ Can students listen & understand teachers talking about subjects in an L2?
- ☐ Can students talk about subjects themselves – to each other in groups & to the teacher in the class?
- ☐ Can they read subject textbooks & write about subjects in an L2?
- ☐ Language is likely to be an issue at word level or text level.
- ☐ Who lectures, the subject or the language teacher?
- ☐ Do they work in groups or the whole class?

4.2. Conclusions

- ❖ From a lang. point of view, CLIL contains nothing new to the FL teacher.
- ❖ CLIL supports lang. production in the same way as an FL teacher by teaching strategies for reading & listening & structures & vocabulary for spoken or written lang.
- ❖ The emphasis is on the conten (with grammar embedded within) & communication.
- ❖ Difference: the lang. teacher is the subject teacher or the subject teacher exploits lang. skills.
- ❖ Teaching through content is useful in multilingual education.

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