

INTRODUCING GEOGRAPHY INTO THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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Geography as a set of knowledge rarely attracts attention of the teachers of English. However, it may confirm the most productive of modern approaches to teaching English – CLIL (an acronym for Content and Language Integrated Learning). It is an approach to teaching when learners gain knowledge and understanding of the subject while simultaneously learning and using the target language.

It is important to notice that ‘content’ is the first word in CLIL. This is because curricular content leads language learning. Learning about geography involves developing knowledge and understanding of: where learners live; other people and places; how people and places interrelate; the significance of location; human and physical environments; causes and consequences of change; explaining geographical patterns and processes.

Teaching geography may become a powerful tool not only in terms of vocabulary development, but also as a basis for thinking development.

Geography promotes such thinking operations as Cause-and-Effect and may be coupled with such topics as Animals, Food, National Cuisine and Pastimes.

Therefore teachers of English have to know the specific academic language that learners need in order to question and explain, to analyse and evaluate evidence, to make conclusions and justify them. Teachers have to present the language of geography and help learners notice key grammatical patterns as well as key content vocabulary. By doing this, learners can effectively communicate their knowledge of geographical concept.

References

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