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with contributions by Joseph Sheils (2016)

The language dimension in all subjects¹

Council of Europe (Language Policy Unit)

Main field(s)

Nano: Language learning		Micro: Teaching methods		Meso: Piloting schools		Macro: (Inter)systemic approach	
1.1.	✓	2.1.	✓	3.1.	✓	4.1.	
2.1.	✓	2.2.	✓	3.2.	✓	4.2.	
3.1.		2.3.		3.3.		4.3.	
4.1.		2.4.		3.4.		4.4.	
5.1.		2.5.		3.5.		4.5.	

What is it?

The language dimension in all subjects is a handbook for curriculum development and teacher education published by the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe.

Core Idea: Fostering language-sensitive teaching by underlining the central role of language in all subjects (cross-curricula role of language in the learning process) and taking in account the language dimension in classroom practice (language requirements of tasks and activities).

Who is it for?

- Teachers and teacher educators
- School principals and inspectors
- Decision makers in education policy

Keys for EOL

- **Track 1 : Developing whole school linguistic guidelines**
 - Describing general attitudes the school will foster towards language(s);
 - Compiling a glossary of key language terminology learners should acquire;
 - Drawing up an inventory of the key uses of language in order to support teachers of all subjects in adopting a global approach to language which could be adapted to the specific context of each subject.
- **Track 2 : Facilitating language use and learning for pupils in all subjects**
 - Reflecting on text genres: text types, discourse genres, reading aims and strategies;
 - Explaining the relationship between discourse and cognition, particularly the link between language and knowledge construction;
 - Explaining the specific 'literacy' of each subject: communication, discussion, application, transfer of knowledge.
- **Track 3 : Clarifying the language dimension of teaching of each subject**
 - Guided or general interaction: helping learners to discuss different contents, to adopt specific terminology;
 - Collecting and using data: searching for information, acquiring knowledge, using data;
 - Presenting or sharing knowledge on three levels: functions (assessing, reporting, presenting etc.), texts (synthesis, transfer, creative writing, etc.) and discourse (describing, narrating, informing, arguing).

¹ Beacco J.-C., Fleming M., Goullier F., Thürman E., Vollmer H., with contributions by Joseph Sheils (2016), *A handbook for curriculum development and teacher training: The language dimension in all subjects*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/language-policy/a-handbook-for-curriculum-development-and-teacher-training.-the-language-dimension-in-all-subjects>

Suggestion for EOL

Training teachers for scaffolding (chapter 4)

“Scaffolding” means providing learners with successive levels of temporary language support.

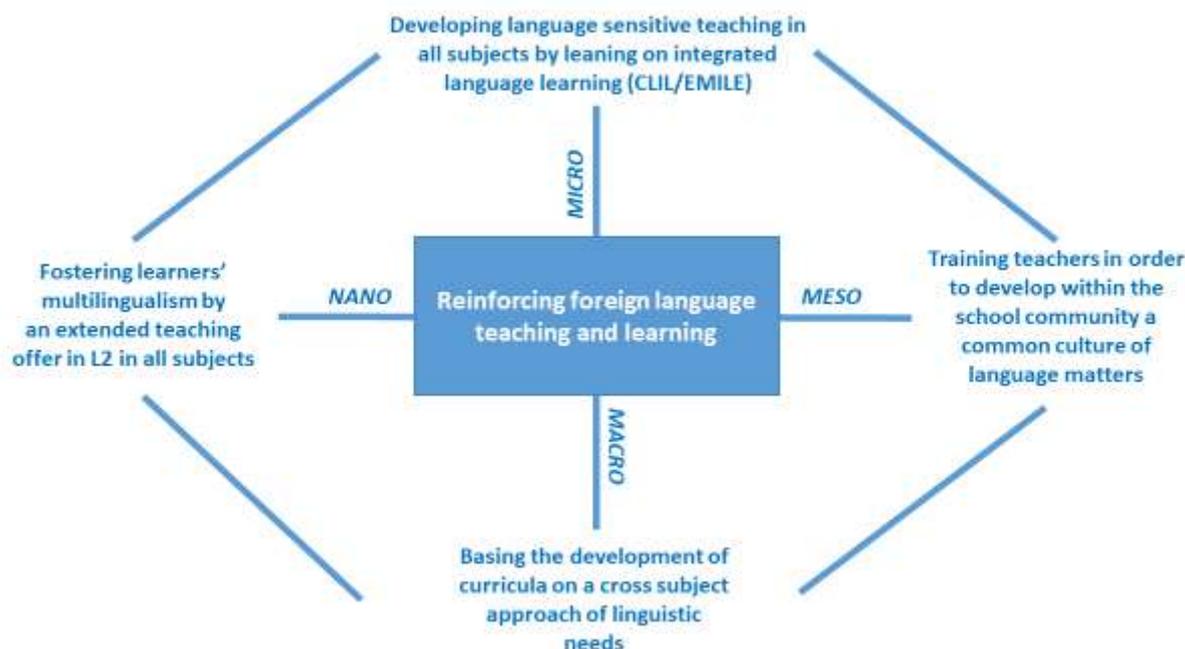
Here are some skills:

- **explaining** a new concept through a concept map;
- **comparing** with a first/another language and culture;
- focusing on particular words to **develop metalinguistic skills**;
- **providing and explicating fruitful examples**; asking students to notice **particular aspects/features of language use**;
- **highlighting language patterns for specific cognitive-linguistic functions** (define, evaluate, etc.);
- **providing textual models (genres) for oral or written content-based communication** (e.g. define, describe, explain, evaluate, argue);
- **communicating / discussing knowledge** means using questions to probe students’ conceptions and prompt them to describe their interpretations and challenge their opinions;
- using in a complementary way **different ways of representing ideas and concepts** (e.g. visuals, diagrams, charts, highlighting, various media and technology);
- giving **feedback** to improve subject literacy.



Mapping all language potentials

This publication contains many proposals in order to take into account of the language dimension of all subjects in the context of foreign languages (CLIL/EMILE), but also with regard to migrant learners who are taught in L2. The following scheme attempts to illustrate the importance of combining all different areas.



Similar resources

1. Beacco J.-C., Coste D., van de Ven P.-H. and Vollmer H. (2010), “Language and school subjects – Linguistic dimensions of knowledge building in school curricula”, Council of Europe, Strasbourg. <https://rm.coe.int/16805a0c1b>
2. Zwiers J. (2008), *Building academic language: Essential practices for content classrooms*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
3. Becker-Mrotzek M., Schramm K., Thürmann E., Vollmer H. (2013), *Sprache im Fach*, Waxmann, Münster.