

ICT, ESP, CLIL – Open Doors to Vocational Foreign Language Learning

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Abstract

The targets, perspectives and possibilities to teach vocational English in a vocational school have changed a great deal – and for better – during this century. The incentive for that has been the intercultural and international approach towards the future workforce in Europe. The students of a vocational school can experience the necessity of foreign languages during their study years already. There are international vocational competitions, European projects, student exchange programs and youth events. There are project partners, partner schools, international employers and friends. The students would soon realize that they need a common foreign language to share ideas with their peers and partners from other countries. I am teaching vocational English for future tourism managers and service people in hotels and restaurants. In the course of many years I have seen that the key of the language studies for future service people is to provide practical examples, models and cases. In fact, during their English classes they should learn a new role: how to communicate with international customers or partners respecting the cultural aspects. At that point a teacher is starting a "3D movie" – which means that one has to consider at least three spheres to get the feeling of the reality. The spheres to mix and mingle in a multipurpose vocational English module are as follows:

How to find the focal points of the vocational modules to be learned in English classes? - CLIL

How to find a wide range of examples and models with international aspect? – ICT

How to use the examples, models and cases for language learning purposes? - ESP

Good work skills have always been a must in a vocational school, now the foreign language skills have become equally important. To give the students, whose language skills range from A to C, good opportunities to learn the language, a teacher can rely on CLIL and ESP as for methodology, and on ICT to explore a great variety of multimedia options.