

To CLIL or not to CLIL, *that is the question...*

Gordon Kennedy

August 2022

Verona, VR



SCIENTIX

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CLIL – Content Language Integrated Learning

“... the fundamental principle of CLIL is that there is an integration between using language to learn and learning to use language through the development of content.”

Professor Do Coyle (Univ. of Edinburgh)

In other words, *content* is key.



L1 and L2

- CLIL purists argue that there is no place for L1 in the CLIL classroom.
- But ... a CLIL science lesson is NOT just the technical vocabulary of the subject, *it is the elaboration of the scientific concepts in L2.*
- *There is no space for doubts!*
- If there are doubts, questioning will reveal understanding.



The Experience of *Talking About Science*

Using practical laboratory experiments to engage the language.

An experiment is a useful tool to work on:

- The underlying scientific method. (C)
- Understanding instructions. (L)
- Recording measurements, taking notes, writing reports. (L)
- Making the connection between **observation** and **explanation** via **description**. (L+C)

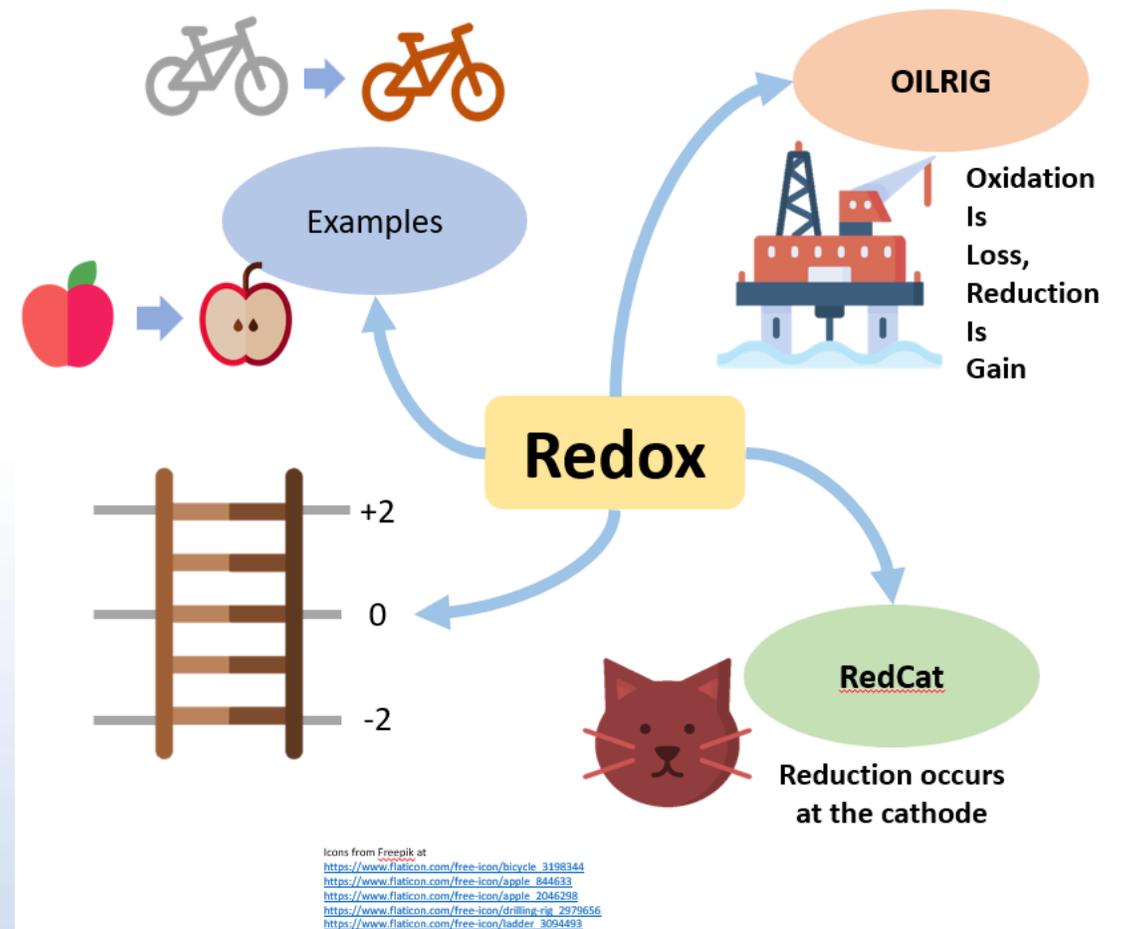
L = linguistic; C = content



Reduction-oxidation module (3rd y)

First hour – in class

- *Conceptual mapping* for basic vocabulary and concepts
- Then observation with *gallium beating heart* video



Second hour – laboratory



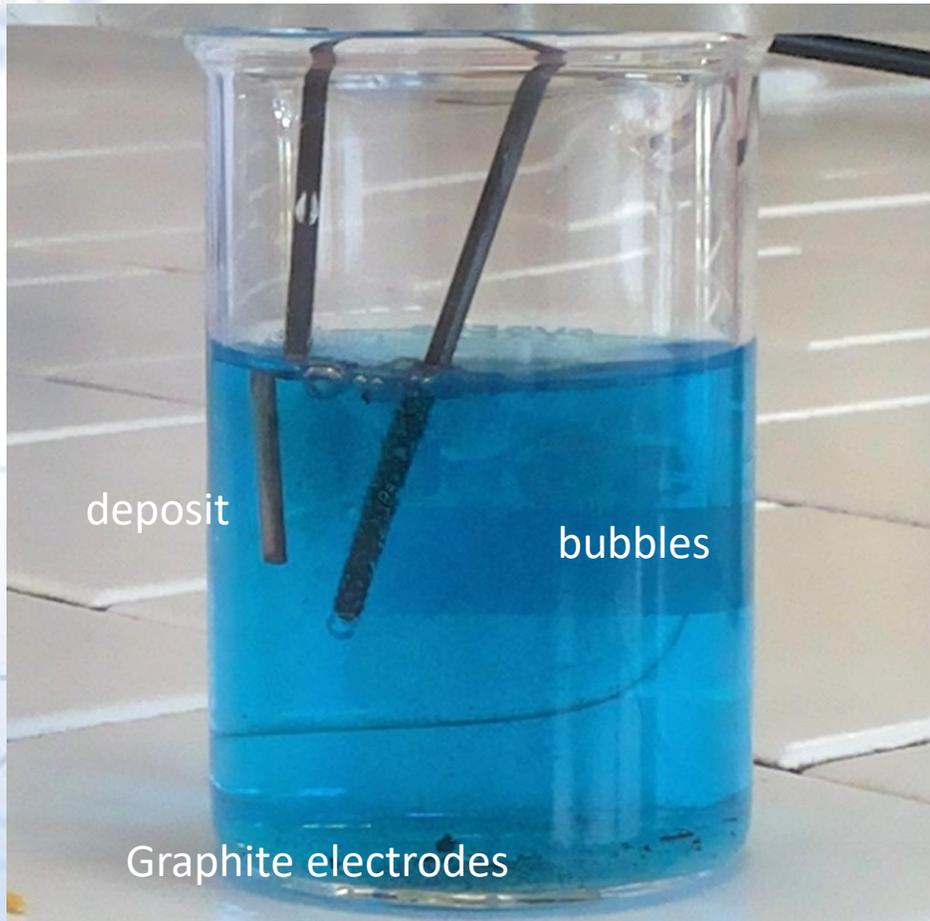
Electrolysis of CuSO_4 solution with (i) copper and then (ii) graphite electrodes.

- Simple apparatus, small scale, quick.
- Group work.

Questions to students.

- What can you see...?
- Relate this to what you know about the system.
- How can you explain this? ...

Observations on the experience



Things which students find difficult: Language

- Vocabulary for description.
- Expression of ideas.
- Feeling confident in speaking.

Content

- Reasoning around what is in the system.

Observations on language

“Only 5-10% of a technical text is actually technical.”*

- In the classroom, it is not usually the technical words that cause problems, *it is confidence in the scaffolding language.*
- Science CLIL needs the *support of the language teachers as well!*
- Pre-preparation: sharing procedures, vocabulary lists, background reading

*Newmark, Peter, *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1988. p151



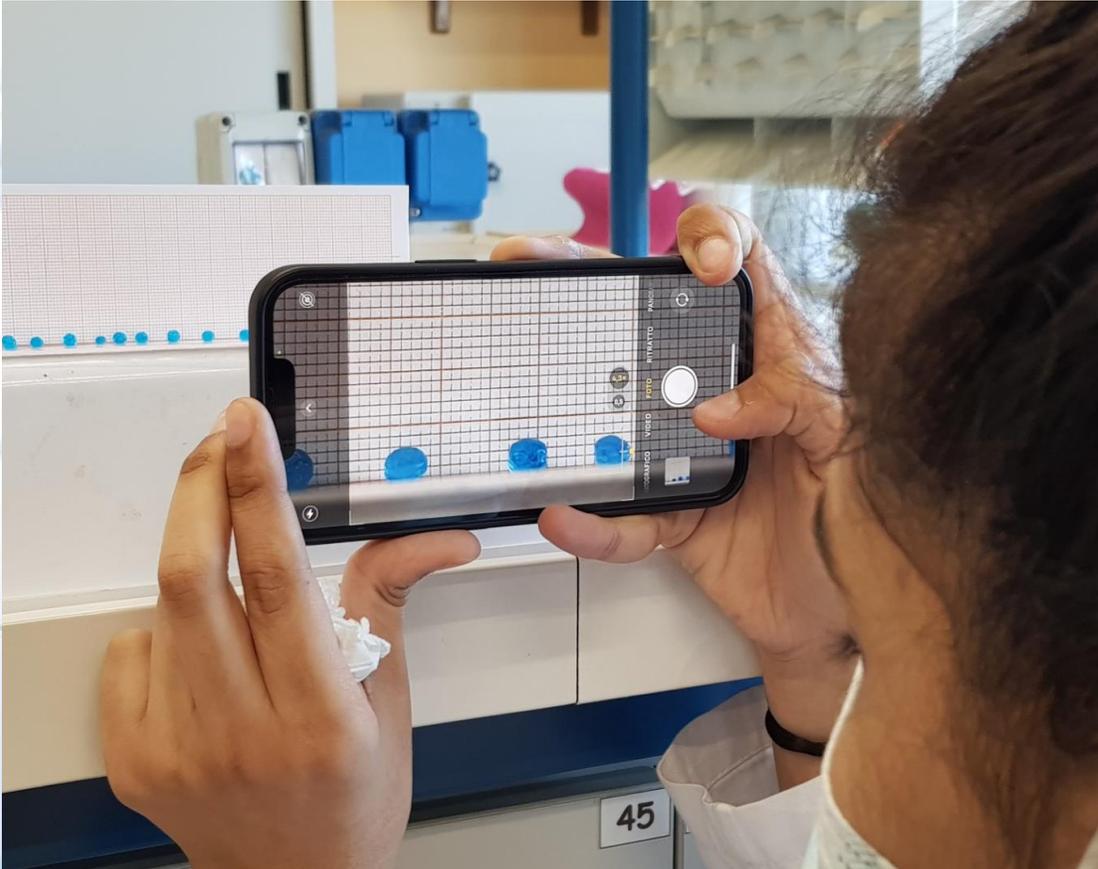
Conclusions

Doing experiments in English is a great way to engage language.

Experiments present opportunities for

- natural scaffolding language.
- vocabulary for description.
- creating and responding to questions.

To be successful, the approach needs to involve the language teachers as well!



Riferimento

Contact:

Via Talking About Science website at:

www.talkingaboutscience.com



Thank you!

3° Conferenza Nazionale Scientix – Italia

28 – 30 Settembre 2022



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