

COMBINING CEFR AND 4C CLIL FRAMEWORKS FOR PRINCIPLED LITERATURE IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

An abundance of research and scholarship highlighting why and how literature (i.e., novels, plays, poetry, short stories) can be used effectively in foreign language learning contexts exists. However, these publications prioritize “literary” learning objectives over “language” ones. We aim to support the effective teaching of literature in foreign language learning classrooms by providing a structured and principled approach to developing an integrated literature in language learning course or module that equally prioritizes “content” and “language” learning objectives. By adopting the 4C (Content, Cognition, Culture, and Communication) framework from CLIL, and by adapting CEFR principles, benchmarks, and Can-do statements, we propose a method and framework for developing the beginning-to-end stages in a balanced literature in language learning course design. We outline pedagogically sound steps for creating global learning objectives and activities that engage students of varying motivations and language proficiency levels. The organization of CEFR Can-do statements into the 4C framework is presented. In addition, activities for use in a literature classroom are described, including explanations of the underlying Can-do statements and aspects of the 4C framework they support. The proposed method and framework will aid instructors seeking to utilize literary texts in foreign language learning contexts.

INTRODUCTION

There is an ample and growing body of research and scholarship highlighting the multifaceted benefits of English language literature (i.e., novels, plays, poetry, and short stories) as a subject of study ideal for promoting both content and language learning objectives. This burgeoning field of research and scholarship includes full monograph books (Hall, 2015; Lazar, 1993; Naji, et al., 2019; Parkinson & Thomas, 2007; Paran & Robinson, 2016), edited books (Bredella & Delanoy, 1996; Brumfit & Benton, 1993; Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Carter & Long, 1991; Carter & McRae, 1996; Collie & Slater, 2011; Duff & Maley, 2004; Summer, 2019; Teranishi et al., 2015), and academic journal articles (Agustín Llach, 2017; Daskalovska & Dimova, 2012; Gilroy & Parkinson, 1996; Graham et al., 2021; Koutsompou, 2015; Yimwilai, 2015, to name a few of the many). While the case for literature as a subject of study optimal for meeting content and language learning objectives may not yet be *fait accompli* for its advocates, it is certainly a convincing one. Highlighting literature's unique qualities and characteristics for developing learners' cognitive abilities by enhancing critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, as well as (inter)cultural awareness and understanding, and even communication skills in the target language, this rich and diverse field of scholarly output advocating for literature in a language learning context is helping to reinvigorate the study of English language literature in tertiary education all over the world.

The movement promoting literature's benefits is particularly encouraging for those in Literary Studies who lament the field's declining prestige and popularity in university education (Barshay, 2021; Ikpe, 2015; Schmidt, 2018). Historically, literary and language studies have often been paired together in university foreign language programs worldwide, but often as discrete entities that saw little to no overlap or integration of the respective curricula (for a review of this shortcoming in foreign language programs, see MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, 2007). The difficulty of understanding, let alone discussing and analyzing, literary texts in their original form in the foreign or target language (TL) made its use problematic for low to mid-proficiency students otherwise interested in the foreign language and culture. Problems with the difficulty of, but also the declining interest in and therefore engagement with, literature as a focus of study in university foreign language programs have not disappeared; however, there has been significant progress in developing pedagogical methods, frameworks, and principles that help to better utilize literature's many strengths in classroom contexts where content and language learning are equally prioritized. It is our belief that these developments in pedagogical approaches categorized under terms like EMI (English Medium Instruction), CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), CBLT

(Content-Based Language Teaching), and CBI (Content-Based Instruction) have the potential to revitalize and reinvigorate literature as a subject of study, or at least as a content focus, in tertiary-level foreign language programs.

In particular, the methods, frameworks, and principles proposed in Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010) and Coyle and Meyer (2021) as part of the Content and Language Integrated Learning approach have gained widespread recognition in research and scholarship that focus on advancing integrated content and language pedagogy. Coyle et al.'s 4C framework (i.e., Content, Cognition, Culture, and Communication) is an especially useful pedagogical fulcrum upon which several important aspects of course design may hinge. From identifying course objectives to crafting materials, designing classroom activities, and ultimately constructing assignments and assessments, the 4C framework provides a solid foundation for developing a course or module that can engage learners in a variety of areas. The 4C foundational framework, in fact, has become so widely cited in CLIL research and course and materials design publications over the past decade that it may be considered standard (if not best) practice in developing effective content and language teaching (Ball et al., 2015; Bower et al., 2020; Ikeda, 2020; Izumi et al., 2012; Kavanagh, 2018; Meyer, 2010; Ohmori, 2014; Wiesemes, 2009, etc.).

Given how commonplace it has become to find 4C frameworks or foundations underpinning CLIL course and materials' design in various subjects, it bears asking whether this is also true of literature in language teaching research and scholarship. As mentioned, the case for why literature is ideally suited for integrated content and language learning contexts is comprehensive and convincing, but to what extent are the arguments made in its favor also premised on sound language teaching and learning pedagogy? In other words, what role do the frameworks, methods, and principles of a widely-embraced content and language teaching pedagogy, such as CLIL, play in the field of research and scholarship on literature in language learning contexts? In the following, We will first argue that language learning pedagogical frameworks, methods, and principles have been underutilized (if they are utilized at all) in most literature in language learning materials and course design publications despite the prevalence of research highlighting the learning gains and best practices of CLIL over the past decade or more (Chostelidou & Griva, 2014; Coyle, 2013; Dalton-Puffer et al., 2022; Goris et al., 2019; Graham et al., 2018; Harrop, 2012; Jiménez-Muñoz, 2014; Lasagabaster, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe & Jiménez Catalán, 2009; San Isidro-Smith, 2019). We then aim to address this shortcoming and to augment the growing body of research and scholarship on literature in language learning contexts by articulating a "principled" course design that is informed by both Content and Language Integrated Learning pedagogy, as well as the standards and principles of the

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It is our hope that the principled approach proposed in this paper, combined with a demonstration of how this approach can be implemented when designing in-class activities for teaching a short story, will serve as a replicable and transparent framework for instructors teaching literature in language learning contexts so that the beginning-to-end decisions in planning and executing a course or module may be systematic and informed by established pedagogy. Such a principled approach that is underpinned by CLIL pedagogy and CEFR descriptors and benchmarks will help ensure that both literature and language learning are being effectively integrated with the course design, and that “Assurance of Learning” (AoL) (Ellis & Hogard, 2019; Martínez Agudo, 2020) can be monitored at all stages of the course’s implementation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For Literary Studies scholars, teaching literature at the university level to students with native or near-native language proficiency presents many of the same challenges as teaching literature in a foreign language learning context; e.g., how do we engage students with the texts? How do we guide them towards their interpretations? How do we make the language and subtextual or connotative meanings more accessible to them? While traditionally the “how” of teaching literature was developed through trial and error, there is now an assortment of book publications that can aid the novice-to-experienced instructor in maximizing the potential of literary texts in the classroom. For example, works by Eagleton (2014), Scholes (1985), and Showalter (2003) provide structure, clear objectives, and scaffolded frameworks for guiding students in their interpretations. There is a recent selection of book publications (Barry, 2017; Parker, 2015; Tyson, 2011; 2015) that help instructors incorporate particularly useful literary theories (e.g., New Criticism, Reader-Response, Feminist, etc.) into the literature classroom by providing clear explanations of the key concepts and terminology, as well as activities that support students in applying the theories in literary analyses. A third type of publication that supports instructors teaching literature provides scaffolded writing support for students doing literary analysis or interpretation essays (Griffith, 2014; Headrick, 2014). All of these publications are invaluable for instructors teaching literature in tertiary education. However, they all share shortcomings when it comes to teaching literature in a language learning context, which include: 1) they do not accommodate lower-to-intermediate level English language learners; 2) they provide no support for scaffolding language learning; 3) they assume a high level of student interest in literary studies’ objectives, with little consideration of more holistic and global objectives. These shortcomings are why we suggest that an integrated language and

content learning pedagogy could prove integral in developing better teaching and learning when utilizing literature in language-learning contexts.

Proceeding under the assumption that a 4C CLIL framework can help build an integrated, holistic and global set of learning objectives and overall course design which may lead to positive gains in students' overall engagement in literature in language teaching context course, there are a few key questions that then require investigation: 1) to what extent has the 4C CLIL framework been utilized in the research and scholarship in the field?; and more broadly speaking, 2) where do we see evidence of the principles and methods from content and language learning pedagogy (e.g., CLIL) in the scholarly output on literature in language learning? Looking first at monograph book publications (Hall, 2015; Lazar, 1993; Naji et al., 2019; Parkinson & Thomas, 2007) that both advocate the benefits of using literary texts in language learning contexts, but also explore various issues, including challenges, with respect to literature and language learning, it seems that there is virtually no mention of pedagogical methods or principles from CLIL or other CBI approaches, and certainly no reference to the 4C framework. That is not to say that these books neglect to address some of the key aspects of the framework—obviously, content, cognition, and culture are explored in considerable depth and in intellectually complex and thought-provoking ways—but how language can be most effectively integrated, learned, and assessed as part of this literature focus is unclear (cf. Hall, 2015a, and Communicative Language Teaching [CLT] in literature teaching; and Hall, 2015b, and CLIL).

With respect to the edited books that address issues and effective practices in literature in language teaching (Bredella & Delanoy, 1996; Brumfit & Benton, 1993; Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Carter & McRae, 1996; Collie & Slater, 2011; Summer, 2019; Teranishi et al., 2015), some were published in the 1980s and 90s, which means they either precede the development of CLIL as a pedagogical approach or were published during its infancy, so it is logical that there is no reference to CLIL methods or principles. Teranishi et al. (2015), however, indicate a movement towards more focus on learners' language awareness and skills development in literature in language teaching. In fact, all of the monograph books and several of the chapters from the edited books provide meaningful and effective approaches to exploring the language of literature; in other words, they highlight the “literariness” (i.e., literature's unique qualities and characteristics, such as figurative language, indeterminate meanings, irony, rhyme, etc., that distinguish it from other written texts) of literary language, and discuss how this can enrich the breadth and depth of language learners' knowledge of English. It can even be argued that studying this “literary” quality of the language accounts for one of the strongest reasons to

utilize literature in a language learning context. The issue is not that the publications mentioned above fail to articulate the myriad and diverse ways that literature can be used to good effect as a subject of study in a foreign language classroom, but rather that the scope of these publications is mostly limited to three of the four 4Cs; a methodologically sound approach to language learning, especially for lower to intermediate level students, is more or less absent.

METHOD

Combining the 4C framework with CEFR-informed and aligned language learning descriptors and benchmarks helps us bridge the gap between the field of research and scholarship on literature's manifold strengths as a subject of study, and the emerging field of CLIL, which expounds solid language and content learning pedagogy. In the following sections, we illustrate a structured and integrated course design schema that supports language learning while engaging other essential academic skills and knowledge areas using the 4C framework and CEFR. Because of the limitations we encountered with respect to CEFR and the application of its descriptors to literature in language learning contexts, we also demonstrate how Pearson's Global Scale of English (GSE) Toolkit can be utilized and adapted to establish suitable learning objectives essential for students and instructors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4C CLIL Foundational Framework

In their influential book *CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning* (2010), Coyle, Hood, and Marsh provide a sound rationale and solid set of frameworks, methods, and principles for implementing a CLIL module or course from the planning, to materials and activities, to assessment stages. One key foundational component of their approach is the 4C framework, which is comprised of Content ("Progression in new knowledge, skills and understanding"), Communication ("Interaction, progression in language using and learning"), Cognition ("Engagement in higher-order thinking and understanding, problem-solving, and accepting challenges and reflecting on them"), and Culture ("Self" and 'other' awareness, identity, citizenship, and progression towards pluricultural understanding") (pp. 53-54). Designing a module or course around this framework will help meet essential criteria for quality content and language teaching.

While the 4C framework supports several aspects of quality course design for literature in language teaching contexts, there are a few points we would like to highlight. The first criterion

the framework aids is that a set of integrated, holistic, and global objectives and goals guides all decisions related to course design and implementation. The 4C goals and objectives are not discrete and siloed course components but rather feed into one another as integrated parts of the overall course plan. For example, Content and Cognition cohere when we consider that understanding, describing, summarizing, and analyzing the subject content is also very much part of higher-order cognitive skills, just as using the target language to explain certain intercultural similarities or differences in a text will combine goals from Communication and Culture within the framework. Secondly, the use of this framework not only provides the necessary structure for the instructor to establish academically robust learning objectives, design materials and activities in line with the 4C objectives, and create assignments and assessments that integrate the 4Cs but also makes these elements transparent and explicit to the learners in advance and throughout the module or course. Learners need to know where they are going in their learning and whether they have successfully met the objectives set for them; this is a key aspect of teaching and learning supported by the 4C framework. Finally, another criterion that this framework supports is that it maximizes the chance that all students, regardless of their motivation for taking the course, will find something with which they can engage (i.e., with one or more of the 4C areas), and this will lead to sustained motivation. In the context of a university foreign language program, there may be some students enrolled in the program (in our case an English program) who take a literature in language learning context course because they are genuinely interested in literary studies, but realistically the likelihood of this is diminishing. Although misperceptions of its use are widespread, some common objections to the study of literature in the target language include: it is linguistically and cognitively difficult; reading texts in English is time-consuming; the language required for discussing and analyzing literature is often beyond the majority of language learners' proficiency level; and the study of literature is often mistakenly dismissed as having little “real world” application (see Edmonson, 1997; McKay, 1982, for arguments against the use of literature in the foreign language classroom). For many language learners, such perceived challenges or shortcomings in the study of literature in the target language have led to declining interest in literature courses.

The use of a 4C framework for constructing a more holistic and global set of learning objectives and goals beyond the more traditional Literary Studies approach will increase the probability that students of varying motivations (e.g., an interest in studying abroad, or in the cultures of English speaking countries, or in developing critical or analytical thinking skills, or in improving English speaking, reading, writing and listening skills, or in taking a high-stakes

proficiency test such as TOEIC or TOEFL, etc.) will find some aspects of the course engaging and stimulating. Motivation and engagement are crucial factors not only in ensuring successful learning outcomes (see Hiver et al., 2021; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; see Coyle and Meyer, 2021; Pinner, 2021, for motivation and engagement within CLIL) but also in attracting and then retaining students in a literature course. A 4C integrated, holistic, and global framework that equally balances language learning with other essential learning objectives will help ensure that students with a range of motivations are being engaged.

The Role of CEFR

As discussed above, CLIL provides a promising framework for developing a principled course or module in the area of literature in language teaching. Using or adapting an established framework can help to meet the needs of Quality Assurance in tertiary education and other educational settings (see Kiddle & Dudeney, 2020, p. 255). Maintaining the common goals of a language course requires clarity about what those goals are at the macro and micro levels (Liddicoat, 2014; Nagai et al., 2020). A related challenge is maintaining quality in terms of content and evaluation practices (Shimo et al., 2017). As previously mentioned, the use of a framework is invaluable to develop course objectives, materials, and assessments in a principled and systematic way, and to evaluate the learning outcomes of a particular course or module. Since students registering for literature courses are oftentimes motivated by the desire to develop their knowledge and proficiency in the target language, we determined to evaluate the extent to which CEFR descriptors could be used within a CLIL framework, specifically the aforementioned 4C model.

Similar to CLIL and other CBI pedagogies, employing a CEFR framework in curriculum development and review can provide several benefits. One of the chief advantages of using the CEFR framework is making the course objectives visible (i.e., transparent) to instructors and learners alike (Shimo et al., 2017). The basic building blocks of CEFR are its descriptors of different ability levels (A1-C2). These descriptors take the form of “Can-do” statements, such as (within the speaking context of “Describing experiences”): “Can describe plans and arrangements, habits and routines, past activities and personal experiences” (A2) or “Can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions” (B1). Combined, these Can-do statements explicate the course objectives in terms of different language skills and associated abilities at different proficiency levels. When used effectively, learners can demonstrably be shown how the course materials, tasks, and assessments lead towards achieving those objectives (North, 2014), and learners can be trained to refer to them to self-evaluate their progress across the different

domains of the course (Nagai et al., 2020). Since we are interested in whether CEFR descriptors can usefully be incorporated into a 4C model for literature in a language teaching context, our primary concern here is with the four domains: Culture, Cognition, Communication, and Content. More specifically, our goal was to identify extant CEFR Can-do statements that could be adopted or adapted to fit the four domains for use as course objectives.

A backward design curriculum (Richards, 2013) is one approach to incorporating the CEFR into a course. This approach is action-oriented and begins with the specification of learning outcomes. Once the learning outcomes have been established, relevant content and an appropriate teaching methodology can be identified, followed by creating compatible activity types and incorporating goal-oriented assessment (Nagai et al., 2020).

While the use of CEFR is prevalent in language curricula worldwide, its use in literature-based language courses and CLIL courses is less common (however, see cf. Diehr & Suhrkamp, 2015; Gonzalez Rodriguez & Borham Puyal, 2012; Jiménez-Muñoz, 2014). Since only relatively few CEFR descriptors with a literature focus have been developed, there was some uncertainty as to whether currently available descriptors would provide us with the range of objectives required to reflect the desired learning outcomes of our courses. Given this potential difficulty, we were aware that it could be necessary to modify our Can-do descriptors in certain ways to accommodate our particular students and learning context. Such modifications might, for instance, be necessary to tailor the Can-do framework to the specific level of our students and to ensure the comprehensibility and practicability of the Can-do statements. Hence, when developing a Can-do framework it is useful to:

- a) create a framework that accommodates our students' levels and backgrounds;
- b) make Can-do descriptors as concrete as possible so that both students and teachers are able to use them without excessive difficulty or confusion (Shimo et al., 2017, p. 120).

The search for CEFR descriptors that would provide an adequate set of objectives related to the learning outcomes of our literature courses was extended beyond extant CEFR Can-do statements to maximize the range and specificity of objectives. Pearson's GSE Teacher Toolkit (<https://www.english.com/gse/teacher-toolkit/user/lo>) is comprised of an extensive list of Can-do statements, including those developed for the CEFR framework, and others developed in-house by Pearson with the assistance of educators worldwide (de Jong et al., 2016). The Global Scale of English to which GSE refers, provides a more granular scale than CEFR. This is useful for mapping the learning outcomes for courses aimed at learners with different language proficiencies and the commensurate abilities to perform certain tasks in the target language. One of its strengths is that it focuses only on the English language and incorporates feedback

from multiple professional reviewers worldwide, not just within Europe. Taking into consideration the learning outcomes of a course with a dual literature and language focus, we listed a series of key search terms for use with Pearson’s Teacher Toolkit. These search terms and the Can-do statements that were retrieved can be categorized by the four macro-level domains, namely, Content (literature), Culture, Cognition, and Communication. The search terms are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. 4C Framework for a Literature in Language Learning Context

Content	Culture	Cognition	Communication
Characters, Setting, and Plot	Culturally specific content	Inferencing Creativity	Expressing opinions Asking questions
Figurative language	Intercultural understanding	Critical thinking	Discussing in pairs or small groups
Literary devices	Social issues related to power and oppression	Argumentation that utilizes textual evidence	Giving presentations
Narrative and Dialogue	Identity issues	Interpretation	Utilizing language specific to discussing literature
Theme		Weighing different viewpoints	
Literary terminology			

The fundamental principles upon which the CEFR was developed are broadly compatible with the 4C model. For instance, it encourages a learner-centered classroom where students can experience hands-on intercultural exchanges even among classmates of the same first language (Reid, 2015; Shimo et al., 2017). This is closely related to the domains of both Communication and Culture. Since it encourages deeper learning, it is also related to Cognition. For instance, Coyle and Meyer argue that language is the primary evidence for learning and that students need opportunities to “*language* their learning in appropriate styles using appropriate genres and genre moves that shape knowledge and experience” (Coyle & Meyer, 2020, p. 164; see also Coyle & Meyer, 2021). Among the opportunities for deeper learning and engagement they claim CLIL promotes, the following are directly or indirectly related to language learning, and could potentially serve as the basis of searches for relevant CEFR descriptors with a literature association: (a) Highlighting the personal and practical relevance of the content; (b) Promoting abstraction, contextualization, relational transfer, and schema building; (c) Providing opportunities for students to actively build knowledge through doing, organizing, explaining, and arguing their understanding; (d) Providing task-specific scaffolding and feedback and language support that is commensurate with the conventions of the disciplines; (e) Using assessments for deeper learning strategies (Coyle & Meyer, 2020, p. 166; Coyle & Meyer, 2021).

Table 2 provides an illustrative sample of Can-do statements that we retrieved for the purposes of mapping our courses. The table shows the search term, the Can-do descriptor, its CEFR band, and GSE score, e.g. B1/44, where B1 denotes the CEFR band and 44 is its location on the GSE. Modifications to descriptors to tailor them to the learning context are indicated in bold text.

Table 2. Organization of Can-do Statements in the 4C Framework

Content	Cognition
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can identify basic factual information in short, simple dialogues or narratives in a literary text (A2/35) 2. Can describe the emotions he/she experienced at a certain point in a story, e.g. the point(s) in a story when he/she became anxious for a character, and explain why (B1/43-50) 3. Can identify and understand simple metaphors in a literary text (B2/59-66) 4. Can understand the plot of extended narratives written in a standard, non-literary language (B2/59-66) 5. Can understand long and linguistically complex literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style (C2/85-90) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can make basic inferences from simple information in a short literary text. (A2+/36-42) 2. Can make basic inferences about the attitudes and feelings of characters based on evidence in the text (B1+/51-58) 3. Can make inferences about the attitudes and feelings of characters based on evidence in the text (B2/59-66) 4. Can infer meaning in a linguistically complex literary text (C1/76-84) 5. Can utilize concepts and vocabulary from a literary or stylistics theory to interpret a literary text (C2/85-90)*
Culture	Communication
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can relate culturally or socially significant content from the literary text to similarities/differences in their home culture (B1+)* 2. Can demonstrate awareness across cultures by showing empathy and understanding of social and/or cultural issues in a literary text that may be less prevalent in the home culture (B1+/51-58)* 3. Can, in intercultural encounters, demonstrate an appreciation of perspectives other than that of his/her worldview, and express himself/herself in a way appropriate to the context. (B2+/67-75) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can discuss opinions or reactions to a literary text, if given guided questions and language prompts (B1)* 2. Can summarize the plot details of a literary text in their own words, if guided with prompts (B1+)* 3. Can initiate, and then continue, a discussion with peers about responses and reactions to a literary text (B1+)* 4. Can properly use “hedging” language to discuss non-literal and/or implicit meanings in a text (C1)*

Among the example Can-do statements in Table 2, some are used without modification, such as Content (2), while we have minimally revised others to better fit our teaching context; illustrated by Cognition (4) in which “academic” is replaced by “literary.” Other Can-do statements were developed to fill a contextual gap and/or gap in the objectives. In these cases, the CEFR level was based on one or more extant descriptors, and they have been marked with an asterisk to denote their tentative status. Naturally, these statements would require testing

with a significant number of learners by a range of language practitioners in order for the CEFR level to be established with sufficient confidence.

Implementing the 4C Framework and CEFR Principles in the Classroom

While there is a strong probability that simply reading and discussing literary texts leads to learning related to the 4Cs, in order to facilitate and evaluate students' learning in as transparent and empirical a way as possible, careful consideration of task design is necessary. In this section, we model how the above-described CLIL principles and framework, as well as the CEFR-adapted descriptors and benchmarks, can be utilized to create integrated and balanced classroom activities that allow learners to make diverse demonstrations of language and content learning. For example, synopsis writing enables the instructor and the student to determine the level of content comprehension, analysis writing allows for an evaluation of the student's cognitive and cultural engagement with the text, while presentations provide an alternative method to discussion for evaluating communication skills and deeper learning by requiring learners to explain their understanding and argue for their interpretations. Another less formal and more personalized approach to evaluating students' learning through the 4Cs that we have utilized is called individual response. The individual response consists of three categories and a choice of six activities. Students must complete one activity from each of the categories (a-c). The categories are: (a) Creative Language; (b) Personal Response; and (c) Final Reflections on the Story. The activities included under each category were adapted from Collie and Slater (2011). Each section of the individual response will be described in turn, outlining the ways each activity contributes to learning as it is understood within the 4C framework. Reference is made to selected Can-do statements to illustrate their usefulness in the elaboration of the course objectives. Learners complete the set of activities below in response to the short story *On the Road at Eighteen* by the Chinese writer, Yu Hua.

Creative language

Language Style (50-100 words)

Pick out three uses of language in the story that you liked. Explain why you like them.

Language Play (50-100 words)

Imagine the conversation between the boy and the driver and create a short dialogue.

The "Language Style" activity has the potential to engage students in all the 4Cs. For instance, it requires learners to demonstrate the ability to identify uses of creative, new language and potential use to the learner and provide a brief explanation or appraisal of the selected word, phrase, or sentence. This involves Content and Cognition in that the learner

must appreciate how the language is used in the context of the story, and evaluate its communicative and stylistic effects. Moreover, learners might comment on how the language identified is relevant to their own lives and how it could enhance their communicative competence. As with each of the activities, completion of the task requires the learner to demonstrate a relatively sophisticated level of proficiency in the target language which therefore supports development in the Communication domain. The language may also be directly or indirectly related to certain aspects of the culture represented in the story; hence, an appreciation of, and potentially awareness and understanding of, Culture is practiced through this activity. Through this activity, and in alignment with CEFR's proficiency descriptors, learners demonstrate competence in the following objectives taken from Table 2: "Can identify and understand simple metaphors in a literary text" and "Can understand long and linguistically complex literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style."

"Language Play" involves all four 4Cs. Creation of an adjunct dialogue that could be inserted into the story requires creative use of language for communicative purposes (Communication), and an appreciation of the story in order to convey characteristics of the characters involved in the dialogue, including their communication style. Creation of dialogues is based on descriptions of characters' main personalities and other traits, the basis and status of relationships among characters involved in the dialogue, and other examples in the story of dialogues in which they participate, all of which are related to Content. Cognition is involved in the interpretation of the underlying motives and potential conflicts, both internal and between characters, that should inform the development of the dialogue creation, while there is also scope to incorporate reference to cultural objects and reflect certain cultural features of communication style (Culture). Completion of this activity requires the following competence adapted from CEFR's proficiency benchmarks (from Table 2): "Can demonstrate awareness across cultures by showing empathy and understanding of social and/or cultural issues in a literary text which may be less prevalent in the home culture."

Personal Response

Cultural Switch (50-100 words max)

If this story was written from the perspective of someone in your country, what cultural aspects would you change and why?

My Experience (50-100 words)

Write a short description of one event in your life that signified an important change.

As the name of the activity suggests, “Cultural Switch” involves the 4C, Culture, as students must replace certain cultural characteristics with equivalent cultural features from their own country. Content is involved since learners must notice both the explicit and implicit cultural references in the story. Cognition is demonstrated through the process of explaining the inappropriateness of certain cultural references, the relevance of their substitutes, and the extent to which these might alter the story. Communication is practiced through the use of the TL to describe the cultural substitutions concisely and with clarity. Naturally, Communication is practiced in the activity, “My Experience,” in the form of a narrative. Given that it is a personal narrative, aspects of the learner’s culture could be included in it (Culture). It is possible for the narrative to draw on comparisons with the experience of the protagonist or another character in the story (Content) and critical thinking skills, which fall under Cognition, are employed to reflect on any notable points of similarity and difference. These activities are well-suited to understanding, for instance, learners’ competence in respect of the following CEFR-adapted descriptor: “Can relate culturally or socially significant content from the literary text to similarities/differences in their home culture.”

Final Reflections on the Story with Review

Rating

What rating would you give the story out of 5 stars (delete as appropriate)? ★★★★★

Give your reasons (50 words max)

Changing interpretations (50 words max)

How did your interpretation of the story change from the first reading to the final presentation?

Content is central to “Rating” and “Changing Interpretations” since comprehension is crucial to evaluating and reinterpreting the story. Both activities also depend on the language learner’s ability to concisely express clear reasons and causes for their evaluation or reinterpretation (Communication). The rating provides scope for Cognition to be practiced at a range of levels, including deeper learning, especially if the reviewer focuses on abstract concepts or technical features of the story. In the case of Changing Interpretations, a basic theoretical apparatus for engaging in stylistic analysis of the stories is used, which, by encouraging a more careful reading, can lead to modifications to the reader’s initial interpretation. Reflection on this process involves the 4C of Cognition. Culture may also be explored through these activities, with new cultural insights forming the basis of a positive review, or the citing of deeper cultural knowledge as a reason for the reader’s revised interpretation of the story. These activities provide ample scope for learners to demonstrate

competence with “Can discuss opinions or reactions to a literary text, if given guided questions and language prompts” and “Can describe the emotions he/she experienced at a certain point in a story, e.g., the point(s) in a story when he/she became anxious for a character, and explain why.”

The main rationale for the tasks described above is to practice language, encourage interaction with the text from different perspectives (personal and cultural), and allow students to share their evaluation of the text and their interpretations of it. As these descriptions show, it is relatively easy to develop classroom activities that enable learners to demonstrate their competence in the 4Cs and to reflect on and evaluate their ability in the four domains. This self-evaluation and the instructor’s evaluation of students’ learning are aligned with CEFR’s proficiency descriptors and benchmarks. This pedagogical foundation helps instructors make better choices in their task design and enables learners to better understand where they are going in their learning trajectory. Moreover, providing a range of activities that offer opportunities for academic and more personalized practice enables students to exercise some autonomy, which has been shown to have a positive effect on engagement (Flowerday & Shraw, 2003; Phung et al., 2021, etc.). Using pre-existing and adapted Can-do statements to elucidate the four domains increases the transparency of the course objectives and facilitates the process of assessing the success of the course in developing abilities related to the 4Cs. This principled approach based on CLIL pedagogy and informed by CEFR educational guidelines supports practitioners in developing effective tasks for students to demonstrate language and content learning in a literature course.

CONCLUSION

For instructors in literature in foreign language learning educational contexts, to maintain “Assurance of Learning” (AoL), it is essential to set achievable learning goals and objectives for students. In this paper, we have emphasized several factors that should be considered when designing such a course or module. One fundamental point is that students can reflect on, and instructors are able to evaluate, whether learning and progress have been achieved based on the set learning goals and objectives. Secondly, given the significance of their role for both educators and learners, it is imperative that these goals and objectives be premised on sound pedagogy and with student engagement at the forefront of all decisions regarding course materials and teaching pedagogy. Thirdly, it is important to develop holistic and globally-oriented learning objectives that equally prioritize content and language learning so as to maximize student engagement in multiple areas. In today’s literature in language learning

contexts, educators must take into account variations in students' motivations for enrolling in literature in a foreign language course, and the possibility that a keen interest in reading and interpreting literary texts may not be their primary reason. Finally, we proposed the use of a 4C framework populated with Can-do statements adapted from CEFR and Pearson's GSE proficiency benchmarks and descriptors to aid instructors in creating a systematic and principled approach to developing literature in foreign language learning courses or modules. To aid instructors, we presented a tabular representation of a combined 4C and CEFR framework and demonstrated how certain objectives can be realized through activities developed within this framework.

While we believe that this principled approach to designing an integrated content and language course that utilizes literature as a subject of study can lead to positive results for educators and learners, it is also clear that the effectiveness of this approach needs to be rigorously examined through quantitative and qualitative methods. To identify the extent to which the approach facilitates gains in students' learning and engagement with the 4Cs in a literature course context, our next step will be to examine student feedback from questionnaires and self-reflection tasks as a means of better understanding: 1) whether the Can-do statements are effective in making their learning progress visible; 2) whether the 4C objectives and goals promote higher and more sustained engagement with the study of literature in a foreign language learning context. There is a growing number of studies in CLIL that seek to better understand student learning by using empirical research methods (Chostelidou & Griva, 2014; Coyle, 2013; Jiménez-Muñoz, 2014; Kaowiwattanakul, 2020; Lasagabaster, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe & Jiménez Catalán, 2009), but few studies in literature in content and language integrated learning context that do so (however, see Bloemert et al., 2019; Bloemert et al., 2022; Paran, 2008; Teranishi et al., 2015, for examples of how this has been done successfully). Ideally, we aim to have a comprehensive set of 4C and CEFR-informed Can-do statements specific to the study of literature that have been tried, tested, and optimized so that they can be shared with and utilized by instructors in the field of literature in language teaching. Moving forward we hope to see more research conducted on the effective and pedagogically sound implementation of literature in language learning contexts complemented by studies focusing on methodologically rigorous measurements of student learning and engagement in this field.

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