



MEMORY RETENTION & MAINTAINING ATTENTION

This seminar gives general information on Memory Retention and Maintaining Attention.

It is not specific to CLIL, but it is relevant to the CLIL classroom as students may struggle more with learning and paying attention when being taught another subject in the L2. We must bear in mind that they are not only learning the subject, but also another language. In language learning they are mostly used to being 'taught' grammar, vocabulary, etc. but this is not how CLIL works. Therefore it is, perhaps, more important to apply these concepts in CLIL lessons than in L1 teaching.



MEMORY RETENTION



*I see and I forget,
I hear and I remember,
I do and I understand.*

- Confucius

This quote is generally attributed to Confucius and is borne out by many scholars and theorists.

The idea is that reading alone is not good enough for learning.



1 6 5 8 2

People are much more likely to remember if they are physically involved or act out the process.

Many people even find that writing down what they read helps with memory retention.

Tell the group that they are going to see a series of numbers. They need to remember them in the correct order.

Divide the class into 3.


Group A will only look at the numbers for 60 seconds.

Group B will write them down – give them 60 seconds.

Group C will draw something that starts with the same sound and of that quantity (e.g. 1 – one **w**indow, 2 – two **t**urtles, 3 – three **f**oot etc..) – give them 60 seconds.

Then ask those who have written/drawn to put their papers away. They must not look at them again.

We will check their memory retention at the end.



Memory Retention and *Maintaining Attention* skills are not specific to CLIL, but they are very useful in the CLIL classroom as students may struggle more with learning and paying attention when being taught another subject in the L2.

We must bear in mind that they are not only learning the subject, but also another language.

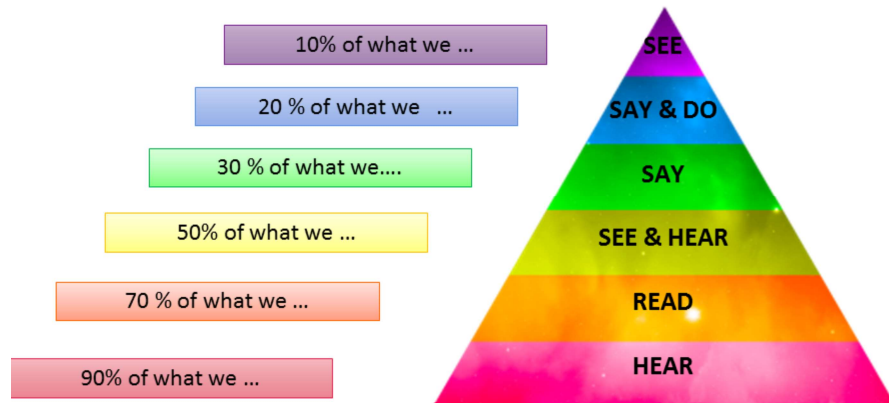
In language learning they are mostly used to being 'taught' grammar, vocabulary, etc. but this is not how CLIL works.

Therefore it is, perhaps, more important to apply these concepts in CLIL lessons than in L1 teaching.

The Cone of Learning

Put the words on the right in the correct order.

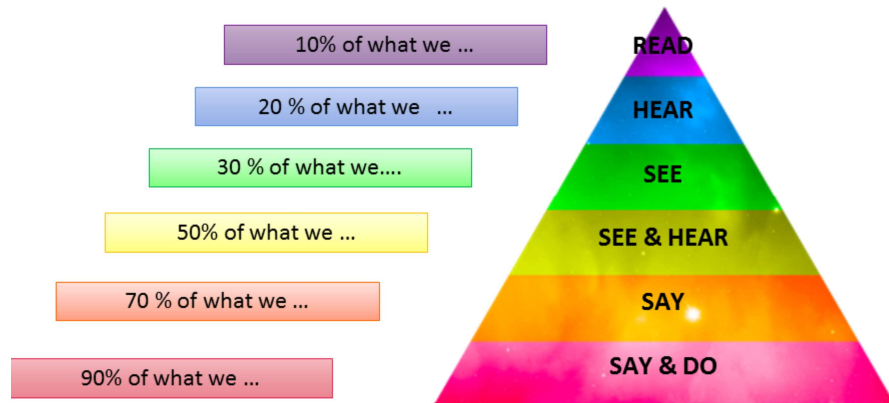
After 2 weeks we remember...



Tell participants that the words on the right are **NOT IN THE CORRECT ORDER.**
Give them a minute to put them into what they think is the correct order.

The Cone of Learning

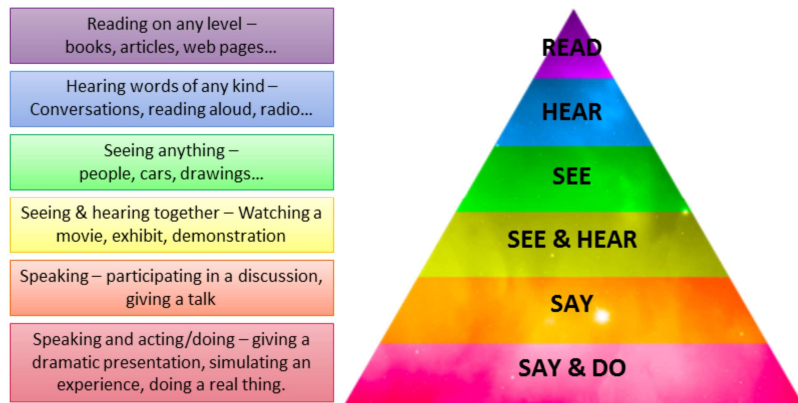
After 2 weeks we remember...



Go through the solution.
How did they do?
Did they get it right?

Source: Edgar Dale 1969. www.sparksinsight.com

The Cone of Learning - examples



Now go through examples of what it understood by each *Method of Learning*.

Ask participants what they do which in their classroom which could fit into the categories (particularly the lower ones).



1 6 5 8 2

See how many numbers the 3 groups could remember.
Was there a difference?



Boosting Memory Retention – Tips

1 - Attention

It is obvious that students should pay attention during lessons. We don't want students who are distracted and playing around. However, *Attention* is not just annoying for the teacher, it is a fundamental aid in *Memory Retention*.

- Ensure that distractions in the classroom are kept to a minimum, including noise.
- Use a range of *Thinking Skills* to engage students and keep them thinking about what they're doing.
- Discover your students' *Learner Styles* and design tasks which play to their strengths.
- Differentiate materials for weaker students and have extra tasks for fast finishers so that they don't disturb others.

Go through the slide.

NB: The following notes are based on information available at:
<https://www.verywell.com/great-ways-to-improve-your-memory-2795356>

Boosting Memory Retention – Tips

2 – Routine

Students study best when they have a routine. This is important for classwork and homework.

- Have a routine for your lesson and stick to it – students will know what is expected of them and how to work.
- Give students homework on the same night and allow the same amount of time to complete it (e.g. always set homework on a Tuesday for Friday).



Go through the slide.

Boosting Memory Retention – Tips

3 – Organisation

Organisation and structure help the brain to store information more efficiently. If students have well organised notes they will also be able to locate information more quickly when studying.

- Give your students tips on organising their notes.
- Help them to create study plans/timetables for the year and for exam revision.



Go through the slide.

Image: <https://www.verywell.com/great-ways-to-improve-your-memory-2795356>

Boosting Memory Retention – Tips

4 – Mnemonics

Mnemonic devices often rely on the creation of acronyms or phrases to help remember certain things,

e.g. **My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas**

- Help students to create mnemonics for items they are studying.
- Songs can also help and if watched on youtube, employ all of the *Memory Retention* devices...



Go through the slide.

Ask participants if they can tell you what this mnemonic represents.

The mnemonic example is for the planets in order of distance from the sun (it includes Pluto).

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9UWNBTR6_I

Boosting Memory Retention – Tips

5 – Visualise

As we discussed in the *Thinking Skills* seminars, most benefit from visualising study material.

- Highlight photographs, charts, graphs and other materials in students' books.
- Try to use one visual for each concept you are explaining in class.
- Encourage students to draw and doodle related images when taking notes.
- Use highlighters to link ideas.



Go through the slide.

The mnemonic example is for the planets in order of distance from the sun (it includes Pluto).

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Boosting Memory Retention – Tips

6 - Teach

Research suggests that teaching something increases understanding and enhances recall.

- Allocate students different information which they will have to teach to others.
- Allow adequate time for research.
- Concentrate on their presentations, just in case there are errors.
- Students could present their work in various ways, e.g. producing worksheets, presentations, videos on a class youtube channel etc.



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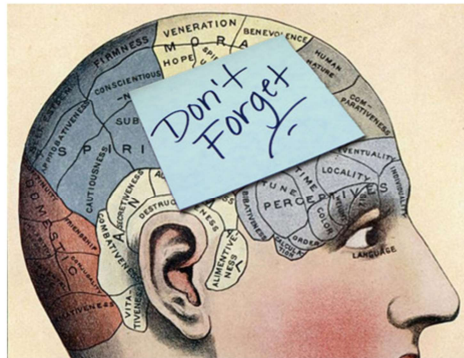
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Memory Retention - Conclusion

Can you remember the 6 tips?!

- 1 – Attention
- 2 – Routine
- 3 – Organisation
- 4 – Mnemonics
- 5 – Visualise
- 6 – Teach



Go through the slide.

Image: <http://lumiinsight.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/memory.jpg>



1 6 5 8 2

Do this again!
See how many numbers the 3 groups could remember.
Was there a difference?



MAINTAINING ATTENTION



Maintaining Attention

The easiest way to maintain attention is to engage students in their learning. Students who want to learn will continue to concentrate.

The *Thinking Skills* and assessment of *Learner Styles* that we have discussed in previous seminars are fundamental in *Maintaining Attention*.

However, here are a few extra tips which should help to engage students...

Go through the slide.

The mnemonic example is for the planets in order of distance from the sun (it includes Pluto).

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9UWNBTR6_I

Maintaining Attention – Tips

1 - Timer

Set a timer on the IWB when students are working.

Use either a countdown timer or a stopwatch.

Give students short, but adequate, timescales for completing tasks.

Towards the end of the lesson give shorter timescales to maintain momentum.

Let one student secretly choose the alarm sound so that it is a surprise for others.



Go through the slide.

Image: <https://lh5.ggpht.com/OP71MLZm2p8jeKla9wPMP711fSNuRpRsVXRK-jQBmN5arkIE4gP5pTlkrdfFq-JZ6p3=w300>

Maintaining Attention – Tips 2 – Spot Checks

Use *Spot Checks* on long tasks.

Tell the class that this is a *Spot Check Task*.

At periodic intervals call out '*Spot Check*'.

Either one person from each group has to stand up or 5 individual volunteers. (These people are not selected again).

They each give a brief progress report of where they are in their work.



Go through the slide.

Image: <http://www.adweek.com/prnewser/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2016/04/roll-call-minion-megaphone-862x809.jpg>

Maintaining Attention – Tips

3 - Humour

Experience shows that humour maintains attention.

Tell students humorous stories related to what they are studying.

Encourage them to find humour in what they are doing.

Find parodies of historic periods/characters etc. to liven up classes.



Go through the slide.

Image: Blackadder the Elizabethan series – Historical comedy:

http://www.herdudeness.com/uploads/2/1/3/8/21389164/4333514_orig.jpg



Maintaining Attention – Tips

4 - Differentiate

In the UK teachers must have differentiated materials available in each lesson.

Differentiate for weaker students to enable them to engage.

Differentiate for stronger students to ensure that they are challenged.

Have extra tasks available for students who finish quickly (these will not just be strong students). These tasks do not need to be specific.

Allow students to choose their activities (either for *Learner Styles*) or from a series of tasks with a similar focus.

Go through the slide.



Maintaining Attention – Tips

5 – Rewards

Tell students that working well will be rewarded with some phone or chat time at some point in the lesson.

By working well they can accrue seconds/minutes.

When most students have completed the task you wanted them to do, allow them a little downtime.

Offer music as a reward for the last 5 minutes. A student who has worked well should be allowed to choose the music that will play the class out of the lesson.

Go through the slide.

Maintaining Attention – Tips 6 – Get Personal

Understand your individual students.

Chat to them while they are working.

Ask them about things they have told you (hobbies, a poorly mum etc...)

If students feel you care they will want to perform well for you.



Go through the slide.

Image: <http://f.tqn.com/y/christianteens/1/W/A/2/-/-/AA017144.jpg>

Maintaining Attention - Conclusion

Can you remember the 6 tips?

- 1 – Timer
- 2 – Spot Checks
- 3 – Humour
- 4 – Differentiate
- 5 – Rewards
- 6 – Get Personal



Go through the slide.

Image: https://ds0vt0n1s74d2.cloudfront.net/video_photos/0/51/large_1380344871.jpg



Any comments?

You can brainstorm any comments/feedback here.



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING



*hopes that you have enjoyed
this series of CLIL seminars.*

*Please do not hesitate to contact us
should you require any further information.*

SPACE HAS BEEN LEFT FOR YOU
TO INSERT THE NAME OF YOUR
SCHOOL ON THIS SLIDE.