

**Propuesta de Comunicación:  
CIEB 2017**

## **Thinking Routines in CLIL Classrooms: A Preliminary Exploration**

Alfonso López Hernández  
Universidad Pontificia Comillas  
[alhernandez@comillas.edu](mailto:alhernandez@comillas.edu)  
[alfonsolopezhernandez.com](http://alfonsolopezhernandez.com)

In the last few years, many schools and teachers have developed a strong interest in applying thinking-based instructional strategies in their Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary school classes. As a result, it is now quite common to see training courses offered on strategies and resources such as Thinking-Based Learning (R. Schwartz), graphic organizers, metacognitive strategies or Thinking Routines (Perkins).

Considering that Cognition is considered to be one of the guiding principles of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and that many of the teachers who are being trained in the said instructional strategies will apply them in CLIL classrooms, an important question for researchers and practitioners alike is **to what extent these strategies can contribute to CLIL instruction**, not only as regards students' cognitive engagement, but also as effecting the development of the other "C's" of CLIL, namely, content, communication and culture.

This paper focuses on thinking routines, a part of the broader Visible Thinking (VT) methodology, which originated in Harvard University's Project Zero. Thinking Routines have been defined as "simple patterns of thinking that can be used over and over again and folded easily into learning in the subject areas. They have a public nature, so that they make thinking visible, and students quickly get used to them". (Ritchhart, 2002; Perkins, 2003). Popular examples of some of these routines are "See-Think-Wonder", "Think-Puzzle-Explore" or "Headlines".

More specifically, we were interested in analyzing the **specific applicability of the core thinking routines in a variety of CLIL subjects and scenarios**, especially in the subjects, *Social Science* and *Natural Science*. A related significant question was, **what adaptations have to be made to the core thinking routines to allow for the fact that students are working in a foreign language?**

The study was preliminary in the sense that it was meant to generate more research hypotheses and research questions that would guide future research. Hence, data was obtained non-systematically by implementing and evaluating the routines in both Primary classrooms but also with teacher training students.

The main conclusion obtained is that thinking routines seem to be indeed, aligned with CLIL's claim to facilitate cognitively rich environments. In what regards

communication, the routine's relatively fixed format and controlled output facilitates that everyone in the class get a chance to speak. While not a substitute of more ambitious communicative speaking tasks, TRs can serve as excellent, inclusive tasks, especially in lead-in and review stages.