

CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION FOR THE STUDENTS OF COMPUTER SCIENCES AND IT FACULTY: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In Content-Based Instruction (CBI) teachers need to provide adequate support for both language and content learning and this should be reflected in the learning objectives.

Aiming at making the course as relevant to the students' real-life professional activities as possible, the instructor takes the content as a starting point. Learning objectives enable one to envision the final destination that a student needs to reach and determine the activities and assessment.

The ABCD method specifies four characteristics contributing to effective learning objectives, namely audience, behaviour, condition, and degree (Georgia State University, 1990). The learner is expected to demonstrate measurable behaviour under some conditions and to a specific degree.

Similarly, the SMART approach necessitates making learning objectives specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

Another important consideration is scaffolding students' development of higher-order thinking skills. With this in mind, Bloom's taxonomy can be used efficiently to formulate the learning objectives. Following its principle, an instructor guides the learner in developing real-world skills.

For the language objectives, the guidelines include focusing on the key vocabulary, language skills, functions, grammar/language structures, and language learning strategies. This brings CBI close to an ESP approach where the needs of the learner are in the foreground of language teaching.

For a CBI class on startups when teaching students majoring in Computer Sciences and IT, the content and language objectives can be formulated as follows.

Content objectives for the class.

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. name the key features of an IT startup;
2. list factors essential for the success of an IT startup;
3. list the questions that an entrepreneur should ask him/herself before launching an IT startup.

Language objectives for the class.

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. describe IT startups using the startup-related terms;

2. list the questions that an entrepreneur should ask him/herself before launching an IT startup using correct word order.

The objectives are subject-specific and their achievement will enable students to discuss the topic of IT startups, which is relative to their future profession.

Specific language content will help students discuss the topic of IT startups with high/improved language proficiency.