


## Chapter 10

# Methodological Training for Global Competence: Blending Global Learning and EFL Within COIL

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter delves into a virtual exchange project that took place between the Faculty of Education at the Albacete Campus of the University of Castilla-La Mancha (UCLM), Spain, and the Faculty of Education at Providence College in Rhode Island, United States. This initiative followed the action lines and objectives established for collaborative online international learning (COIL) by UCLM as part of its internationalization mission according to the institutional proposal. In alignment with COIL, a global learning approach was implemented with the aim of promoting participant engagement in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and creating meaningful and relevant learning environments that lead to the use of foreign languages in real-life contexts and the development of intercultural competence (ICC).*

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## **COLLABORATIVE ONLINE INTERNATIONAL LEARNING (COIL)**

In the present international context, universities are increasingly recognizing the importance of global and intercultural competence in their graduates, given the need for a higher level of flexibility and the ability to adapt to diverse cultural contexts and address global issues. In this regard, International Online Collaborative Learning (COIL) has proven to be beneficial for the development of the mentioned skills, as well as digital, linguistic, and intercultural competence.

COIL is defined as a curriculum internationalization model proposed as a pedagogical approach under a virtual format. It aims to transform educational practices by incorporating an international dimension into study programs through the connection between students and professors in different parts of the world. In these virtual scenarios, students collaboratively discuss and learn, mobilizing higher-order cognitive skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection, along with intercultural relationships (Avello & Duarte, 2016). Professors design activities together, and students execute them, integrating COIL into the classroom in such a way that everyone has a meaningful intercultural learning experience (Vahed & Rodríguez, 2020).

COIL is a relatively recent methodology that originated at the State University of New York in 2004. However, it is increasingly expanding its network among universities in different countries worldwide to establish collaborative online learning experiences. It is seen as a strategic action that contributes to fostering sustainable internationalization, shaping global citizens, promoting adaptability to various environments, and developing skills in establishing intercultural interactions, enabling an international experience for all students without the need for travel.

As described in the internationalization webpage of the University of Castilla-La Mancha (UCLM) “Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is a learning methodology based on the interaction and collaboration between two classes from two countries that develop an activity in unison. It is an approach that, as part of a classroom, connects students and teachers from different cultures to learn, discuss and collaborate with each other. COIL becomes part of the classroom, allowing all students to have a meaningful intercultural experience within their course of study... The overall objective of COIL is to generate an experience similar to that of international interpersonal learning but based on online interaction. Likewise, the COIL methodology aims to: 1) promote internationalization in a sustainable way, 2) empower global citizens, 3) Increase collaborative links and flexibility, 4) use web-based tools.” (<https://www.uclm.es/en/Misiones/Internacional/Oferta-internacional/Iencasa/COIL>). In addition, it builds bridges between distant locations and cultures by means of engaging teamwork to perform tasks that develop digital, intercultural, and global skills. One of the distinctive characteristics of this courses is that they are designed for the specific curriculum of each subject, in this sense it is differentiated from other online proposals such as webinars, MOOCs, and online courses.

UCLM encourage staff to enhance the number of COIL exchanges because, in accordance with the COIL exchange institutional agreement, “1- Both institutions, within the framework of the teaching internationalization process, ... promote the Collaborative Online International Learning, through the creation of COIL units that allow the virtual exchange of academic content between the subjects and their respective education and research staff. 2- That the establishment of this procedure brings unquestionable benefits for all the involved parties, and greatly promotes the internationalization of both the teaching staff and the academic curriculum, as well as contributing to an increase in the students’ interest in mobility programs. It also incorporates an innovative teaching method that enhances students’ acquisition of transversal linguistic and intercultural competences. 3- That the implementation of the use

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