Content and Language Integrated Learning

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Evidence from Research in Europe

Edited by
Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe and
Rosa María Jiménez Catalán

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Foreword

Like Antarctica, the field of teaching and learning in a second, or otherwise additional language, is claimed by many and yet still in the stages of exploration and discovery. From 1984 to 1994 increasing interest had been shown in the potential of forms of 'bilingual educational practice' in Europe and beyond. This was often cross-disciplinary. For some it was a matter of identifying 'coping strategies' for situations in which young people were required to study in a language that was unfamiliar to them. For others, interest was driven by the desire to improve the learning of languages. There had already been much discussion and debate on issues of language policy in different parts of the world, but this was alongside a serious lack of attention given to the methodologies by which to implement such policies.

In 1994, after a long period of analysis and negotiation, a group of experts working under the remit of European Commission funding, agreed on launching the term Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). This term was adopted to articulate shared understanding of the commonalities of methodological practice found in diverse global 'bilingual' educational experiences. CLIL was defined as a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language.

CLIL was, therefore, introduced as a generic 'umbrella' term to describe those features of operational practice common to a wide range of variants of bilingual education. Crucially, this term was to move away from focus on what we do in our teaching towards the methodological constructs of how we do this in our teaching. And at this time three things happened. First, the work of Jerome Bruner, Jean Piaget, Burrhus Skinner and Lev Vygotsky came under the spotlight in an effort to conceptualize the theoretical constructs involved. Second, available research evidence, the bulk of which came from Canada, was scrutinized in an attempt to find research-driven outcomes on methodological practice that could be applicable to different educational contexts. Third, anecdotal reporting of world-wide practice and outcomes from teachers and others was examined.

Globally, CLIL practice has often preceded research. The socio-economic and political forces that have driven the adoption of a second language as medium of instruction differ across countries according to development needs. However, they are frequently similar in relation to intended outcomes. After around 2000, one new development need frequently surfaced. It went beyond content learning and language learning, towards the modernizing of education to better suit the challenges of the Knowledge Society. This has involved shifting from fragmentation towards integration, and the subsequent creation of new approaches for teaching and learning. CLIL has been increasingly viewed as one type of such innovation.

Integration often means challenging the status quo. It means breaking former boundaries, inviting controversy, and especially in the case of CLIL, re-examining discipline-specific territories in education. This latter process has firmly put the spotlight on integration within the curriculum and placed demands on researchers and educators to show evidence of the outcomes expected from variants of CLIL practice. *Content and Language Integrated Learning: Evidence from Research in Europe* is a step in establishing an evidence-base for CLIL. In this book, the authors examine the processes and outcomes of CLIL practice through a predominantly languages perspective.

The chapters reflect shared current concerns in the language teaching sphere about the potential of CLIL in supporting, or otherwise challenging, language learning practice. These involve examining teacher capacity building, and evidence of specific instances of language development such as morphology, pronunciation and syntax, alongside types of pragmatic competence. These are real issues facing the languages profession during this period. Although there is 'no CLIL blueprint ready for export', the contexts described here, and the findings of research and enquiry, are relevant to those working in other settings where language and authentic content are combined in the curriculum.

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Introduction

YOLANDA RUIZ DE ZAROBE and
ROSA MARÍA JIMÉNEZ CATALÁN

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an approach to foreign language learning that requires the use of a second language[1] to practise content. In recent decades, CLIL has begun to be used extensively in a variety of language learning contexts in Europe, although in the past number of years increasing attention has been given to integrating language and content, partly due to the need to promote language development in different language educational programmes. Yet, CLIL is hardly a new phenomenon. Content-based approaches[2] to L2 instruction were first introduced in French immersion education in Canada and in North American bilingual language teaching programmes in the mid-1960s. In these immersion environments it has long been established that content-based language instruction works. The benefits of the Canadian immersion programmes have been extensively reported (see Navés, this volume, for an account of these programmes) and have stimulated interest in a method that addresses content and language learning as part of an integrated approach.

Since the early 1990s European Union (EU) language policies have shown a growing need to adopt an educational model to account for the diversity of European programmes and to ensure that everyone can become proficient in several languages. As CLIL appears to comply with EU policies for multilingualism, it has been rapidly adopted as an umbrella term by the European Network of Administrators, Researchers and Practitioners. Their aim is to create a label for different European approaches to bilingual education. This has been reflected in the adoption of CLIL by EU institutions and the support given to a number of CLIL projects, studies and experimental initiatives as an integral part of foreign language teaching. Among these is the 2006 Eurydice Report that describes the state of the art in 30 European CLIL experiences. Nevertheless, the Eurydice Report also identifies questions that need to be addressed to consolidate CLIL as a coherent theoretical approach to language learning that can be applied in different educational conditions. One of the fundamental questions is whether CLIL can lead to ultimate attainment in the foreign

language faster and in a more articulated way than more traditional educational models. In this process, applied linguistic research on CLIL is necessary to account for the effectiveness of CLIL in the mastery of the foreign language.

This volume is intended to provide applied linguistic insight into CLIL, which has been somewhat scarce in Europe. The chapters in this volume have been conceived, first, to account for some theoretical and implementation issues of CLIL and, second, to offer current empirical research on CLIL in Europe.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part, *Theoretical and Implementation Issues of Content and Language Integrated Learning*, is devoted to theoretical and implementation issues related to CLIL.

In Chapter 1, 'Spanish CLIL: Research and Official Actions' Almudena Fernández presents the current state of research on CLIL both in bilingual and monolingual communities in Spain. She also examines the number and type of CLIL official initiatives being carried out at present mainly in Spanish monolingual communities at non-university levels. She concludes that applied linguistic research is needed to further explore the effectiveness of CLIL in terms of learners' L2 proficiency.

In the next chapter, 'Effective CLIL Programmes', Teresa Navés concentrates on common grounds in CLIL classroom methodology based on recent research evaluating CLIL programmes, along with research on the latest developments in language acquisition research and classroom teaching methodology. The author suggests that, as important as CLIL teaching methodology may be, it is just one among many other features efficient CLIL programmes have in common. The one feature that all efficient CLIL programmes share is that they provide greater and better exposure to the target language.

In Chapter 3, 'Developing Theories of Practices in CLIL: CLIL as Postmethod Pedagogies?', Rolf Wiesemes analyses CLIL within a framework that links postmethod pedagogies (adapted from Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2006) and the development of theories of practices (van Lier, 1996; Wiesemes, 2002), combined with a wide range of data drawn from the evaluation of the Content and Language Integration Project (CLIP) run at the University of Nottingham's School of Education. His discussion reveals that it is fundamental to the development of CLIL that theories and practices are jointly developed as part of a learned, non-dogmatic dialogue between CLIL participants, that is, learners, teachers, researchers and stakeholders.

Part 2: *Studies in Content and Language Integrated Learning* assembles nine analytical and empirical studies on CLIL, probing a wide array of applied linguistic issues.

Chapter 4, 'Testing the Effectiveness of CLIL in Foreign Language Contexts: The Assessment of English Pronunciation' by Francisco Gallardo

del Puerto, Esther Gómez Lacabex and María Luisa García Lecumberri focuses on the acquisition of pronunciation, comparing a group of students who follow a CLIL methodology (CLIL) and another group of English as a Foreign Language (non-CLIL) students by means of judgements made by individual listeners. The results generally show that CLIL students, who have received a more intensive exposure by means of the use of English as a vehicular language, are considered to have a more intelligible and less irritating foreign accent than regular students. However, in the case of degree of foreign accent, the authors do not find statistical differences between the two groups.

The next four chapters examine CLIL in relation to vocabulary knowledge and use. In Chapter 5, 'The Receptive Vocabulary of EFL Learners in Two Instructional Contexts: CLIL versus non-CLIL Instruction', Rosa María Jiménez Catalán and Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe investigate the relation of the type of language instruction (CLIL versus non-CLIL) to receptive vocabulary in English as a foreign language by two communities with similar sociolinguistic characteristics but different language combinations. The results show a significantly better performance on the cloze and receptive tests of CLIL students over non-CLIL students, which not only point to a higher level on receptive vocabulary but also to a higher language level on the part of CLIL students. However, care should be taken in the interpretation of these results as the exposure to the language is more intensive in the CLIL group.

Chapter 6, 'Young Learners' L2 Word Association Responses in Two Different Learning Contexts' by Soraya Moreno Espinosa, describes the characteristics of the productive lexical profile of a group of Spanish learners of English at the end of primary education in two different learning contexts: CLIL versus non-CLIL. Results suggest that, although the kind of instruction seems to have a bearing on the type of responses elicited (lexical sophistication and richness), the differences between both groups of informants are less clear-cut than might have been expected. The author suggests that the method of instruction seems to have had a major effect on lexical depth, rather than on breadth of vocabulary. Hence, empirical evidence seems to demonstrate that the type of language instruction is positively related to vocabulary knowledge.

In her contribution, 'The Role of Spanish L1 in the Vocabulary Use of CLIL and non-CLIL EFL Learners', María del Pilar Agustín Llach identifies episodes in learners with different proficiency, amount of exposure and instructional approach to account for lexical transfer. The results indicate that non-CLIL learners produce significantly more lexical transfer errors than their CLIL peers. The most notable difference between CLIL and non-CLIL learners regarding types of lexical transfer errors is borrowing production. On the other hand, calques and coinages are more frequent in relative terms in the written production of CLIL learners. These findings

suggest that the lexicon of lower-level learners (non-CLIL learners in this case) is organized following formal, orthographic and phonetic principles, whereas more advanced learners tend to store words in the lexicon according to semantic associations. Routes of lexical access seem to be, therefore, influenced by the level of proficiency.

In her study, 'Themes, and Vocabulary in CLIL and non-CLIL Instruction', Julieta Ojeda compares the lexical choices made by students instructed in English by means of two different approaches: English as a vehicular language (CLIL) and English as a subject (non-CLIL). After identifying the most frequently used lexical fields (the four top positions correspond to identical lexical fields: school, sports, food and family), and the specific vocabulary implemented in each one of them, she postulates that variables such as the socioeconomic context may also have a fundamental influence on the acquisition of students' lexical competence.

Chapter 9, 'Tense and Agreement Morphology in the Interlanguage of Basque/Spanish Bilinguals: CLIL versus non-CLIL' by Izaskun Villareal Olaizola and María del Pilar García Mayo analyses the oral production of bilingual (Basque/Spanish) English learners distributed in a CLIL and a non-CLIL programme with regard to their production of tense and agreement markers. Their findings show that the participants do not have impaired categories or features, but, rather, a problem realizing them overtly or a problem with the acquisition of the language-specific rules governing the morphological marking of covertly moved elements. Regarding the overall performance of the two groups, the CLIL group outperforms the non-CLIL group in the production of affixal morphemes. Suppletive forms, however, are supplied in a parallel fashion, as expected if we assume that suppletion itself is UG-guided.

The next contribution, 'The Acquisition of English Syntax by CLIL Learners in the Basque Country', by María Martínez Adrián and M. Junkal Gutierrez Mangado also examines morphosyntactic data from Spanish/Basque bilingual learners of L3 English in two different types of exposure contexts: CLIL and non-CLIL. The results show that CLIL learners significantly outperform non-CLIL learners only in the use of placeholders. With respect to the other features investigated, namely the use of null subjects, null objects and negation, the authors find no statistically significant differences between both groups. Nevertheless, there is a tendency to minimize L1 effects in the CLIL group, given their higher tendency to avoid null arguments in general.

In Chapter 11, 'Communicative Competence and the CLIL Lesson', Christiane Dalton-Puffer analyses how communicative competence is embodied in CLIL classrooms. Her contribution examines how the different dimensions of communicative competence are actually found to be enacted in real CLIL classrooms. To do so, the four components of the Canale and Swain (1980) model – grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse

and strategic competence – are discussed in the light of the overall results of a discourse analysis of 40 CLIL lessons taught in Austrian secondary schools in the years 2001–2003. The discussion shows that language learning and language use in CLIL settings takes place under the specific conditions of institutional educational discourse. The conditions of classroom talk necessarily impose restrictions on all aspects of communicative competence acquired and practiced in CLIL. The positive side of this restrictedness is that CLIL students can rehearse participation in L2-talk-in-interaction under simplified conditions because of their high familiarity with the context and its discourse rules. According to the author, this may in fact account for the commonly observed lack of speaking-angst in CLIL students.

Finally in Chapter 12, 'CLIL in Social Science Classrooms: Analysis of Spoken and Written Productions', Rachel Whittaker and Ana Llinares present an analysis of the spoken and written language produced by secondary school students and their teachers in CLIL social science classes. After studying several classes where students are just beginning their secondary education, the productions of the students can be seen to be moving towards the features of the language they need for success in the discipline. Furthermore, at least in fluency, these young students' written production is similar to that found in English language classes in the final years of schooling. The authors conclude that the efforts made by pupils and their teachers are giving them a good start on the road to improved achievement. This, according to the authors, justifies the CLIL approach.

The book is addressed to professionals, researchers, scholars and students interested in the field of second and third language acquisition in classroom contexts. It will also be of interest to language teachers, language planners, stakeholders and those involved in education departments. The volume focuses on research on CLIL in Europe with the aim of showing how the learning of foreign languages can be more efficient in formal contexts.

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