

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Models and Practice in CLIL**

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The focus of this publication is CLIL, a new umbrella term for bilingual – content and language integrated – education, which has been spreading throughout Europe since the mid-nineties. CLIL has found an impetus both in the decades-old negative reputation which has tainted foreign language education, rendering it unresponsive to idealised competence standards, and in pan-European moves towards pluriculturalism and plurilingualism.

The adoption of CLIL in the European arena has been rapid and widespread. In 2006 there were pilot CLIL projects involving between three and thirty percent of the pupils in all European nations bar six (Denmark, Greece, Cyprus, Lichtenstein, Portugal and Iceland) according to the official European Network in Education, the 2006 Eurydice Report. This has led to official bodies like the European Council of Modern Languages voicing concern that “the implementation of CLIL is outpacing a measured debate about the impact on students and teachers of using an L2 as the medium of instruction” (ECML 2007: 11)<sup>1</sup>. It is clear then that the need is now for consideration, study and observation of how CLIL is working, which is precisely the goal of this collection.

Studies like the ones in this volume are of interest in the international arena, as CLIL is an international phenomenon. But the question is of even more import in the Spanish scenario, where the approach is especially common. In Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country, alongside other areas in Spain with their own national tongues, the potential for immersion education was realised at an early stage. Now, other markedly

monolingual areas have recognised that CLIL arrangements could meet their educational challenges regarding plurilingualism. The *Plan de Fomento del Plurilingüismo* in Andalusia and the Bilingual network in the Comunidad de Madrid encompass meaningful instances of the emergence of foreign languages as vehicles of instruction in state education. Many other territories in the State are following suit.

This volume is intended to be a contribution to the study of contemporary CLIL. In their capacity as advisors, educators and teacher trainers, the editors have become increasingly aware of a need for printed materials focusing on the implementation of CLIL. Questions range from the theoretical to the practical, and may be generalised or localised. This publication has been conceived as an attempt to reflect upon some of the most common questions. We hope that it will be of use to a wide audience in the sector: administrators, teacher trainers, practising teachers and teachers in training in both content and language areas.

The book is divided into two sections. The initial part looks at learning theory in CLIL. The reader will identify an initial preoccupation with the linguistic side of things which is largely justified by the opening chapter in which Carmen Muñoz discusses some of the shortcomings of the traditional (North American) immersion model and ways in which European bilingual models, exemplified by CLIL, are seeking to redress the content-language balance. In his chapter, Francisco Lorenzo reflects upon the sociolinguistic implications of CLIL, exploring why and how the new teaching approach responds to the dire need for 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe to meet its standards in the terrain of language learning and social cohesion. Carmen Pérez Vidal continues with the theme, discussing the role of Focus-on-Form in CLIL classrooms with an exploratory study of teachers' practices in Catalan classrooms. Next the focus shifts to learning theories in general as Sonia Casal Madinabeitia outlines the basic tenets of a constructivist approach, suggesting that an understanding of constructivism is vital to an appreciation of the aims of integrated curricula and CLIL. The next chapter of this section turns its attention to teachers' production as Emma Dafouz discusses a series of university lectures given by non-native speakers, illustrating ways in which they go beyond the transmission of factual information and use language to encode multifaceted interpersonal relations which also play a significant role in the learning process. In the final chapter, reporting on part of a Madrid-based longitudinal study into the linguistic needs of bilingual students in the Social Sciences, Ana Llinares and Rachel Whittaker outline the adoption of an SFL approach to analyse a corpus of students' oral and written production in comparison with the language used in their textbooks.

The second part of the book focuses on more practical questions. In discussions relating to bilingual education in Europe, Germany is frequently held up as a model. Graciela Vázquez's chapter provides a retrospective overview of bilingual teaching and research in Germany over the last forty years which emphasises the diversity of praxis at grassroots levels and outlines factors which the German experience suggests can contribute to successful CLIL.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the goals of this publication was to produce something which might be instrumental in offering solutions to teachers. Much troubleshooting is needed in CLIL scenarios. Teachers have found themselves exploring new terrains and en-route they have made the discovery that their itineraries and maps are outmoded. In homage to those who believe that the change is worth it, the final part of the book addresses the didactics of CLIL in the hope that teachers may find inspiration and solutions. John Clegg deals with the language demands of CLIL, outlining categories which teachers can employ in their analysis of content-related language demands. Switching the focus to students, Kay Bentley then outlines practical ways by which teachers can both increase STT (student talking time) and communicative efficiency. In the final chapter Pat Moore explores the potential for content teachers to enhance the language in their classrooms both through modelling and encouraging a wider lexical range.

In closing, the editors want to thank the contributors for their work and their willingness to collaborate. Everyone on our initial wish list agreed to participate and we have been very lucky in managing to gather a well-balanced selection of expertise and *savoir faire* from in and out of the country. In a more institutional vein, we would also like to thank the Consejería de Educación de la Junta de Andalucía both for funding bilingual research over the years (one of the major outcomes of which is this publication) and also for tasking us with INSET training for state bilingual school staff. At their behest, we are able to expand and develop our research into the interface of language and content in education.

## NOTES

1. See European Council of Modern Language *Help Files* at <http://www.ecml.at/help/detail.asp?i=168>