The Routledge Handbook of English Language Teaching

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Content and language integrated learning

Publication details

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Published online on: 24 May 2016

How to cite :- Tom Morton. 24 May 2016, Content and language integrated learning from: The Routledge Handbook of English Language Teaching Routledge Accessed on: 31 Oct 2023

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Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) which aims to enable readers to assess for themselves its relevance to the field of ELT. The chapter is organised into four main sections, focusing respectively on the ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘who’ and ‘how’ of this approach to language education. The ‘what’ of CLIL takes in its origins and history and defines its key characteristics in relation to similar approaches, such as immersion, content-based instruction (CBI) and English-medium instruction (EMI); CLIL is used as an umbrella term to identify a variety of pedagogical approaches to integrating content and language rather than a label for identifying particular programmes or a single approach. The ‘why’ of CLIL covers a range of current theoretical issues and debates: the focus on ‘pluriliteracies’; arguments for CLIL based on second language acquisition (SLA) research and communicative language teaching (CLT); the balance between language and content outcomes in CLIL research; methodological issues in CLIL research and the dangers of elitism; and multilingual approaches to CLIL. The ‘who’ focuses on CLIL teachers. Then, moving on to the ‘how’ of CLIL, practical issues of classroom teaching, assessment, resources and materials are addressed. The chapter concludes with implications and challenges for ELT raised by the issues and debates surrounding CLIL.

What is CLIL? Historical overview and defining terms

Historical developments

CLIL, in its origins, was a specifically European phenomenon. Although related to, and drawing inspiration from, other approaches to bilingual education such as immersion in Canada, the development of CLIL can be seen against the backdrop of European language policies which promoted multilingualism as a way of both celebrating diversity and building a common European identity. According to Dalton-Puffer et al. (2014), when the acronym was coined by participants in transnational European projects in the mid-1990s, the fact that it was seen as new, a-historical and value-free was seen as advantageous in encouraging policy makers to expand multilingual education. It was hoped that bringing together content and language learning would introduce fresh approaches to ‘traditional’ foreign language teaching (i.e. foreign languages
as a ‘subject’, often with a focus on grammar) and stimulate pedagogical innovation in other subject areas (ibid.: 214). Around this time, there was also an increase in grass-roots classroom activity, with enthusiasts at the local level starting to teach curricular content through foreign languages on a small scale. For example, in the UK, a geography teacher with good French skills might volunteer to teach the whole subject, or a few topics, in French.

By the early 2000s, CLIL was attracting policy makers’ attention, with EU policy documents mentioning it as a way of promoting language learning and language diversity. However, CLIL provision in Europe remains very uneven and variable, with some countries taking it up as a matter of national education policy and others leaving it more to local initiative. For example, Sylvén (2013), points out that Spain and Finland have more structured CLIL provision, more developed teacher education programmes and more research activity than Germany and Sweden. In Spain, many regional governments have well-developed bilingual education programmes, in which the subjects taught, the curriculum time devoted to content taught in foreign and regional languages, and the language requirements of teachers are stipulated by official policy. In Sweden, as Sylvén (2013) points out, CLIL is not mentioned in any official policy documents at national level, and no specific level of language proficiency for teachers is required.

Interest in CLIL has recently been gathering pace outside Europe, and it is thus becoming a global phenomenon. In Asia, CLIL initiatives have been reported from primary to tertiary level in such countries as Japan (Yamano, 2013), Taiwan (Yang and Gosling, 2014) and Turkey (Bozdoğan and Karlıdağ, 2013). In Latin America, CLIL sections are being included in ELT textbooks for use in secondary schools in Argentina (Banegas, 2014). However, some researchers, such as Turner (2013) in Australia, point out the need to subject CLIL to similar levels of scrutiny as in Europe before introducing it to non-European contexts. Yang and Gosling (2014) suggest that, in Asian contexts, there should be cross-cultural comparison studies to investigate students’ expectations and attitudes towards CLIL and whether educational authorities have to deal with universal or local difficulties in implementing CLIL in their respective settings.

**Defining CLIL**

Coyle et al. (2010: 1) define CLIL as “a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (italics in original). Georgiou (2012) claims that it is the “dual focus” that distinguishes CLIL from other approaches, which either use content to support language learning or simply use a foreign language as a medium of instruction, with no focus on language. However, debates about CLIL have been bedeviled by confusion about its essential characteristics and the extent to which it is the same as or different from other approaches to content and language integration, and even to language teaching in general. For example, Mehisto et al. (2008: 12) claim that CLIL can include ‘language showers’ (i.e. short bursts of exposure to L2 for children, often through songs, games etc.), student exchanges, camps, local projects, work-study abroad and a range of types of immersion. As Cenoz et al. (2014: 4) point out, such a broad definition is problematic, as “…the possible forms that CLIL can take are so inclusive that it is difficult to think of any teaching or learning activity in which an L2/foreign language would be used that could not be considered CLIL”.

Thus, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2010), for example, argue that there are clear differences between CLIL and immersion programmes, whether in the Canadian context or for the teaching of minority languages in Europe. These differences relate to the role of the language of instruction (which is a foreign language in CLIL, but a second language in immersion); teachers (‘native’ in immersion, ‘non-native’ in CLIL – see Llurda, this volume, for discussion of these complicated terms); learners (CLIL learners start later); materials (the same as those for native
speakers in immersion, but adapted in CLIL); language outcomes (native speaker competence as the target in immersion, whilst this is not an expectation in CLIL); immigrant students (who may be excluded from CLIL programmes); and research (more research has been undertaken in immersion contexts than in CLIL) (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2010: 4–7).

However, Cenoz et al. (2014) and Somers and Surmont (2012) argue that there may in fact be more similarities than differences between what are labelled ‘CLIL’ and ‘immersion’ programmes. For example, Somers and Surmont point out that immersion students, like CLIL students, may not have much contact with the language of instruction (for example, in Canada, English speakers may not interact much with speakers of French). Additionally, in terms of language outcomes, Cenoz et al. show that some European CLIL programmes (for example, in Sweden and the Netherlands) set very high standards for achievement, while some immersion programmes for majority language students in Canada (French), the USA (Spanish) and Japan (English) do not aim for native-like proficiency but expect students to attain advanced levels of functional proficiency (Cenoz et al., 2014: 7). Llinares and Lyster (2014), in a comparative study of corrective feedback in two immersion contexts (French and Japanese immersion) and one European CLIL context, found that the Japanese immersion classrooms had more in common with the CLIL classrooms than with the French immersion contexts.

Similar arguments can also be made regarding another commonly-used label for programmes which integrate content and language, content-based instruction (CBI). CBI has a long tradition in the United States and can be applied to a wide range of programme types, such as sheltered ESL classes (in which content is delivered to English language learners in ways that is more accessible to them), various types of bilingual programmes in which learners receive instruction in their primary language (see Carroll and Combs, this volume), immersion programmes and theme-based foreign language teaching (Tedick and Wesely, 2015). Cenoz (2015a) proposes that CBI and CLIL programmes are essentially the same as each other in terms of the use of an L2 as a medium of instruction, their linguistic, social and educational aims, and the types of learners. She argues that preferring one term over another is a question of contextual or accidental considerations.

Another commonly used term is English-medium instruction (EMI), which is often associated with the use of English as the language of schooling in Outer Circle countries such as Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore, where English is a second language (see Seargeant, this volume, for further discussion of the Inner, Outer and Expanding Circle terminology). It is also frequently used to refer to the use of English as a medium of instruction in tertiary education worldwide (Smit and Dafouz, 2012). In primary and secondary education in Expanding Circle countries (i.e. where English is a foreign language), the preferred term is CLIL, as in the studies cited above in Japan, Taiwan and Turkey. CLIL can be distinguished from EMI in that EMI refers solely to the teaching of content through the medium of English, without implying that there is any ‘dual focus’ on content and language. However, EMI is relevant to CLIL in that English is by far the language most used in CLIL programmes globally, with Dalton-Puffer et al. (2010) suggesting that CEIL (content and English integrated learning) might be a more appropriate acronym. Graddol (2006) identified CLIL (along with teaching English to young learners and English as an international language) as one of the key future trends for the teaching and learning of English throughout the world.

It can be seen, then, that there are many overlapping features of approaches which are labelled in different ways. Thus, as Dalton-Puffer (2011) points out, whether a specific programme is labelled ‘immersion’ or ‘CLIL’ is often more dependent on cultural and political issues than on any of its actual features. Cenoz et al. (2014) highlight the dangers of erecting boundaries between CLIL and other approaches such as immersion and CBI, as this may lead
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CLIL to cut itself off from the possibility of learning from and exchanging ideas with other approaches. They propose that, rather than attempting to isolate CLIL, it may be better to see it as an umbrella term which covers a wide range of approaches in which language and content teaching are combined. This would suggest avoiding the use of the acronym CLIL to refer to programme types, or, as Paran (2013) argues, to refrain from seeing CLIL as a policy and to see it as a pedagogy. In this view, CLIL would be seen as a set of pedagogical approaches and options for combining content and second/foreign language instruction which could inform, and be descriptive of, the range of specific programme types discussed in this section and throughout the chapter. This is the approach taken in this chapter, with the discussion focusing on theoretical and pedagogical issues relating to the integration of content and language, with examples being drawn from a range of contexts, irrespective of whether they label themselves as CLIL, immersion, CBI or EMI.

Why (not) CLIL? Current critical issues and debates

This section examines current critical issues and topics in CLIL theory and research. These are: subject-specific literacies and SLA-informed approaches to CLIL; CLIL research on language and content learning outcomes; methodological shortcomings in some CLIL research and the danger of elitism; and the ‘multilingual turn’ in CLIL.

Subject-specific literacies and SLA-informed approaches

Recent work in CLIL has focused on the need to take into account the specificities of developing literacy across languages in different academic subjects and schooling in general. Meyer et al. (2015) argue that CLIL needs to develop a sound theory for integrating content and language. They propose a ‘pluriliteracies’ approach, which refers to learners’ ability to use language in combination with other modes of communication (e.g. visual, graphic) to think, write and talk about subject-specific concepts and knowledge in ways that conform to the expected purposes and organisation of communication in these subjects. In this view, ‘language’ cannot be seen as separate from literacy skills across languages (hence pluriliteracies) through which learners consume and produce the written and spoken texts through which subject knowledge and skills are construed. A pluriliteracies approach builds on and refines earlier distinctions between ‘everyday’ types of communication and more specialised types required for academic study, particularly Cummins’ (1979) distinction between BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills) and CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency; see also Carroll and Combs, this volume). Rather than seeing these as separate and sequential, this approach highlights the need to support learners in making connections between everyday and academic oral and written language (and other modes) in both their primary language(s) and the CLIL language of instruction.

Researchers taking this subject-literacies perspective often draw on systemic functional linguistics (SFL – Halliday and Matthiessen, 2013), which, rather than seeing language as an abstract formal system, links grammar, vocabulary and text type to the content activities learners and teachers are involved in. A key concept in SFL is that of genre – broadly, the text-types through which academic knowledge is expressed and accessed. Llinares et al. (2012) provide descriptions of key genres used in commonly taught subjects in CLIL, such as science and history, with guidance on how CLIL teachers and learners can be made more aware of their characteristics. Also within this ‘integrative’ perspective, Dalton-Puffer (2013) identifies ‘cognitive discourse functions’ (CDFs), which refer to verbalisations of cognitive processes such as defining, classifying and explaining as recurring linguistic patterns during classroom interaction. Identifying and
teaching these patterns enables the integration of linguistic objectives in CLIL with the cognitive processes at the heart of knowledge construction across academic subjects.

Turning to approaches based on SLA research, two main issues can be discerned: the extent to which interaction in CLIL classrooms provides an environment for the development of communicative competence and the need to include focus on form in meaning-focused interaction. Dalton-Puffer (2007: 3) points out that CLIL is considered by enthusiastic advocates as the ‘ultimate dream’ of communicative language teaching (see Thornbury, this volume) and task-based learning (see Van den Branden, this volume) ‘rolled into one’, as the tasks are provided by the content activities and texts and content learning provides the context for meaning-focused language use. However, Dalton-Puffer’s own research on Austrian CLIL classrooms does not paint such a rosy picture. In these classrooms, there was dominance of the IRF pattern (Initiation-Response-Feedback, in which teachers ask known-answer questions, students respond, teacher gives feedback on the answer), which led to a rather impoverished environment for the students to produce language. Dalton-Puffer (2009) suggests the need for a ‘reality check’ regarding the benefits of CLIL classrooms for developing communicative competence, arguing that, in most respects, CLIL classrooms are just like EFL or any other type of classroom, with relatively limited affordances for the expression and development of a broad range of communicative functions.

Turning to ‘focus on form’, there is a broad consensus that meaning-focused communication around academic content alone is not sufficient to move learners towards target-like performance. Furthermore, much research on CLIL contexts suggests that a language focus, where it exists, tends to be brief and incidental to the main business of working with content-related meanings. For example, Pérez-Vidal (2007), in a study of primary and secondary CLIL classrooms in Catalonia, found virtually no focus on language forms in the teachers’ input to the learners. When form-focused instruction does appear, it is often limited to lexis or pronunciation, with little or no focus on grammar. For example, in a higher education context, Costa (2012) found that the focus was almost always on lexis, and even this was dealt with superficially. In order to redress this imbalance, Lyster (2007) proposes a ‘counterbalanced’ approach in which learners have their attention directed to linguistic features that they might not otherwise notice while they are engaged in content-learning activities.

**Language and content outcomes in CLIL research**

Despite the reservations outlined above, in terms of L2 learning outcomes, CLIL research has generally reported positive findings. Lorenzo et al.’s (2010) evaluation of a large CLIL programme in Andalusia found that primary and secondary pupils outperformed their non-CLIL peers in speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as showing gains in the structural variety of language use and discourse features typical of academic language. Ruiz de Zarobe’s (2011) review of research on CLIL learners’ L2 proficiency outcomes suggests that CLIL benefits reading, listening, receptive vocabulary, oral fluency, fluency and complexity in writing, some areas of morphology and affective outcomes. However, the findings are less positive on syntactical development, productive vocabulary, informal (non-technical) language, accuracy and discourse skills in writing and pronunciation (degree of foreign accent).

However, CLIL research’s emphasis on L2 as opposed to content learning outcomes has been criticised by Cenoz et al. (2014), who argue that the focus on ESL/EFL results leads to a neglect of outcomes in subject domains such as maths and science. In one of the relatively few studies on content learning outcomes in CLIL, Jäppinen (2005) found that Finnish science and mathematics students taught through English, French or Swedish achieved levels of thinking and content learning similar to those taught in L1 Finnish, with the 10–14 age group showing, at times, even
faster development than those taught in L1. However, in a Spanish context, Anghel et al. (2012) provide evidence that primary pupils studying content in English, and whose parents were not educated to upper secondary level, performed worse in content learning than peers with similar characteristics who studied in Spanish. The picture regarding content learning through CLIL thus remains unclear.

**Methodological issues in CLIL research and the danger of elitism**

Research into CLIL, however, has been criticised by Bruton (2011), who identifies methodological and design problems which, he argues, compromise the positive results claimed. He reinterprets the results of studies which reported positive outcomes for CLIL students, highlighting four problematic areas: (1) researcher interest may bias the interpretation of results; (2) some studies are very limited, with results questionable in terms of pretesting, sampling and (lack of) observation data on actual instruction; (3) in most of the studies, the non-CLIL groups start out as less proficient, and possibly less motivated, with the CLIL groups attracting the ‘best’ students; (4) thus, the rather narrow advantages reported for CLIL students are not very promising, given that the CLIL students typically start off with higher levels of attainment and motivation. In relation to point (3), Bruton raises the important issue of the possibility of elitism in CLIL, particularly in the selection of pupils for bilingual streams. In a later paper (Bruton, 2013), he points out that, in spite of claims about egalitarianism in CLIL, there is evidence that there is selection of pupils into CLIL programmes who are more motivated and from families with a higher socio-economic status than students who remain in ‘mainstream’ ELT classes.

**The ‘multilingual turn’ and CLIL**

According to May (2014), the field of ELT has been marked by a ‘monolingual bias’, which treats the acquisition of an additional language as “an ideally hermetic process uncontaminated by knowledge and use of one’s other languages” (p. 2). This has also been the case in some CLIL programmes in English, in which there has been a separation of languages at both curriculum and classroom levels through an ‘English-only’ policy. However, there are clear signs that CLIL, at least at the research level, is becoming more and more a part of what May calls ‘the multilingual turn’. In a discussion of content-based education in Hong Kong, Cenoz (2015b) argues that there has been a paradigm shift away from a monolingual perspective which isolates the target language, sees the aim of language learning as emulating the native speaker and pays very little attention to language learners’ existing linguistic repertoires.

A key concept in the new multilingual paradigm is that of ‘translanguaging’, which “refers both to pedagogical strategies that use two or more languages and to spontaneous discursive practices with shifting boundaries between languages” (Cenoz, 2015b: 348; see also Carroll and Combs, Pennycook, and Simpson, this volume). CLIL teachers can use translanguaging deliberately as a pedagogic strategy, such as having students read a text in one language and write/talk about it in another, and/or they can encourage/allow students to express multilingual identities through spontaneous use of the resources they have available to them. An example of the former approach is that of Lin (2015), who advocates an approach to CLIL which “allows for the planning of systematic and functional use of L1 and L2 in different stages and phases of the learning process” (p. 83). She proposes a “Multimodalities/Entextualization Cycle” consisting of three stages, each involving use of L1 and L2, and communication in a range of non-language modes. In the first stage, learners are provided with a rich experience in various modes (video, demonstrations, discovery activities) and encouraged to think, talk, inquire and read about the
topic using everyday (non-academic) language in L1 and L2. In the second stage, the students read an L2 academic text on the topic and are encouraged to ‘unpack’ it by using everyday language in their L1 and L2, combined with other modes, for example by producing mind maps, visuals, description, story-boards or comics. In the third stage, learners are asked to ‘entextualise’ the experience by producing L1 or L2 academic genres relating to the topic (e.g. explanation, experimental design, description of procedure) and scaffolded with language support such as writing frames, prompts etc.

The ‘who’ of CLIL: characteristics and needs of teachers

While a focus on CLIL learners and learning may be implicit in the preceding discussions, it is only relatively recently that there has been an explicit focus on CLIL teachers, with an increase in studies investigating the identities, beliefs, knowledge and training needs of teachers who teach academic content in L2. In a secondary CLIL vocational education programme in Austria, Hüttner et al. (2013) found that the content teachers saw themselves as experts in their subjects but as co-learners with their students of the language used for teaching the subject, English. Tan (2011) found that Malaysian maths and science teachers who taught their subjects in English held beliefs about the roles of language in their subject teaching which often prevented them from focusing productively on language in their classes. And Cammarata and Tedick (2012), in a North American immersion context, describe how content teachers struggle to balance content and language, arguing that achieving such a balance entails a transformation from seeing oneself as purely a content teacher to embracing an identity as a teacher responsible for students’ content and language learning.

Cammarata and Tedick point out that content teachers struggle to balance content and language because they lack sufficient knowledge about language and its roles in content teaching and learning, and they claim that current teacher training provision fails to equip them with this knowledge. One study in a US content-based teacher training context (Baecher et al., 2014) found that trainee teachers were able to write clear content objectives in their lesson plans but were less successful in identifying appropriate language objectives, which were often too broad and general and not focused at the level of individual lessons. This resonates with a survey of CLIL teachers’ training needs in Europe, in which Pérez-Cañado (2014) found that the most pressing needs were not for the development of their linguistic or intercultural competence but for improved understanding of theoretical underpinnings of CLIL and ongoing professional development and, to a lesser extent, training in methodology and access to materials and resources.

The ‘how’ of CLIL: teaching, assessment and materials

Having dealt with aspects of the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘who’ of CLIL, this section now turns to the ‘how’ and examines a range of practical issues and options. These are: methodological guidelines for teaching in CLIL, approaches to assessment, and materials and resources.

Methodological options in CLIL

As Coyle et al. (2010: 86) point out, there is “no single CLIL pedagogy”, and it is the “effective-practice pedagogies associated with individual subjects” that should guide CLIL teachers. This means that the main task for CLIL subject teachers is to adapt their subject teaching pedagogies to the reality of using a second/foreign language as a medium of instruction. Coyle and her
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colleagues have developed the ‘4Cs framework’, in which the Cs stand for content (subject matter), communication (language learning and using), cognition (learning and thinking processes) and culture (developing intercultural understanding and global citizenship) (Coyle et al., 2010: 41). They point out that, while content should drive the overall planning of a teaching unit, there should be an integration of all 4Cs.

Within ‘communication’ in the 4Cs approach, there is a ‘language triptych’, consisting of the ‘language of learning’, ‘language for learning’ and ‘language through learning’ (Coyle et al., 2010: 36). The ‘language of learning’ is the language needed for the expression of content-related concepts and knowledge, including subject-specific terminology. ‘Language for learning’ is used by learners to participate in classroom activity, for example by asking questions, giving opinions, explaining or defining. ‘Language through learning’ emerges during the learning process as learners engage in cognitively demanding activities and explore new areas of meaning and is thus by definition unlikely to be predictable in advance. This framework enables content teachers to think about the language involved in teaching content topics.

An important construct underpinning CLIL pedagogy is that of ‘scaffolding’, that is, the actions taken by more expert others (often teachers) to provide temporary support for learners in carrying out tasks which may be just beyond them so that they can later do them on their own. A scaffolding approach to CLIL, then, entails not watering down the academic content but providing support for learners to access this content through the target language. An example of this approach is that of Dale and Tanner (2012), who provide a structure for implementing CLIL which supports teachers with activities divided into six different areas: activating, guiding understanding, focus on language, focus on speaking, focus on writing, and assessment, review and feedback. While respecting the pedagogic aims and cultures of different subjects (their book includes specific sections on subjects such as art, design and technology, business studies, geography, history and ICT), the activities have in common an emphasis on an imaginative, engaging and hands-on approach.

A scaffolding approach to CLIL pedagogy emphasises providing graphic and visual support for learners in dealing with new concepts in an unfamiliar language. Guerrini (2009) suggests that such scaffolding can be provided by the use of illustrations with labels and captions; explicit teaching about content area text types (genres), vocabulary and language; the use of graphic organisers such as charts, tables and diagrams; and the use of ICT. Bentley (2010), in a course for CLIL teachers, also emphasises the use of multi-media and visual organisers in supporting learners with the language demands of CLIL activities. Another aspect of scaffolding is providing learners with explicit support for the language demands of specific activities, particularly with texts that they may have to read and/or produce. Chadwick (2012) offers tools to help teachers develop language awareness to enable them to support their learners in meeting the language demands of content learning in subjects such as history, geography and science. For example, one activity helps teachers to distinguish between vocabulary items which require explicit teaching and those which learners can cope with by themselves, or can be safely ignored.

Assessment in CLIL

As in any educational context, three main questions arise in considering assessment in CLIL: the ‘what’ (i.e. content and/or language), the ‘how’ (i.e. which assessment methods are most suitable for CLIL contexts) and the ‘when’ (i.e. during and/or at the end of a teaching unit). In terms of the ‘what’, CLIL teachers are often uncertain about whether they should assess language as well as content, what aspects of language should be assessed and whether learners can be assessed in their L1 on content learned through an L2. Bentley (2010) suggests that CLIL teachers and
Curriculum planners need to decide which learning outcomes they want to focus on, and these can include not only content and language but communicative and cognitive skills (three of the 4Cs in Coyle et al.’s framework) and attitudes to learning. One way to ensure clarity of focus in assessment is to design rubrics, which are grids or matrices which include the criteria for content and language assessment (or any other areas that are the focus of assessment). These can be produced at the beginning of the teaching/learning process and used as guides to monitor progress and as tools for assessing learning outcomes at the end. Dale and Tanner (2012: 236) propose that CLIL learners themselves can be involved in brainstorming criteria to include in a rubric. They give an example of a rubric for assessing an oral presentation on a history topic divided into three columns: subject-specific criteria (e.g. correct information on dates and events), language criteria for speaking (e.g. intonation, word stress, correct grammar and fluency) and task-specific (presentation) criteria (visual support, eye contact, audience involvement).

Turning to the ‘how’ of assessment in CLIL, Coyle et al. (2010: 130) argue that “content knowledge should be assessed using the simplest form of language which is appropriate for that purpose”. Generally, the key principle is that a wide range of assessment tools should be used to prevent language issues from becoming a barrier to the expression of content skills and understanding. Assessment in CLIL should align with the teaching, in that the types of scaffolding used to support CLIL learners in accessing content learning (e.g. visual organisers, a wide range of hands-on activities) should be reflected in the assessment tools used. Dale and Tanner (2012) suggest that, in addition to written assignments, other forms of assessment such as oral presentations or drawings can be used to show understanding.

As for the ‘when’ of assessment in CLIL, there is increasing interest in assessment for learning (assessment which is intended to boost performance during learning), as opposed to assessment of learning (the measurement of what learners know and can do at the end of a learning experience) (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Dale and Tanner (2012) point out that assessment for learning is particularly important in CLIL, in that teachers can develop both formal and informal assessments that develop both content and language, for example by asking learners to make authentic products such as brochures and posters. Such activities provide opportunities to both introduce the content and language objectives identified at the beginning of the unit and to assess the extent to which learners are able to cope with both.

**Materials in CLIL**

Moore and Lorenzo (2007) observed that there was a ‘dearth’ of commercially produced CLIL textbooks, and Coyle et al. (2010) report CLIL teachers mentioning the lack of readily available resources and therefore the need to find and create their own materials. However, the situation may be changing, at least for CLIL in English, as more and more CLIL materials for specific subjects are appearing. However, in spite of the growing availability of CLIL-specific textbooks and resources in some contexts, CLIL teachers do express a number of concerns about finding, using and creating materials. Morton (2013), in a study of European CLIL teachers’ perceptions about materials, found that the most frequently mentioned concern was their appropriateness for learners, in terms of both cognitive and linguistic content. The second concern was the design of the materials, with many teachers expressing a desire for more graphic and visual support. Other concerns were the increased workload involved in finding, selecting and designing materials, and the suitability and match of the materials with the local educational context and its curricular aims.

Another related trend is the inclusion of ‘CLIL’ sections in commercially produced ELT coursebooks. Banegas (2014) looks at how CLIL is included in ELT coursebooks for school students in Argentina. Worryingly, he found that the content was over-simplified and had no
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relationship with the topics in the school curricula, and the activities, rather than engaging students with the content, mainly focused on reading and lower-order thinking skills. He concludes that the CLIL sections in the ELT coursebooks he analysed are little more than superficial add-ons that do not promote a genuinely bilingual form of education. Studies like this are a warning for ELT in how it conceives of its relationship with CLIL. It would be a disservice to both types of language education if CLIL were to appear in ELT materials as watered-down ‘content’ which merely acts as a disguise for language structures and skills exercises.

Conclusion and implications for ELT

This concluding section brings together some of the key topics and issues discussed in the chapter and looks at how they may be relevant to the broader field of ELT. The issues are treated tentatively and formulated more as prompts for reflection than as concrete suggestions and recommendations.

Turning again to the ‘what’ of CLIL, we can problematise the links and overlaps between CLIL and ELT. Dalton-Puffer et al. (2014) point out that CLIL is timetabled in schools as subject lessons, not as language lessons, so it seems clear that CLIL is not primarily considered a form of L2 pedagogy. However, a ‘soft’ version of CLIL may be incorporated into language classes, with content topics included as part of the language syllabus. Whether or not everyone would want to call this ‘CLIL’ is another question, however. As CLIL provision continues to grow, questions may be raised about the role of ELT in schools – is English necessary as a specific and separate subject? Will it have a ‘supporting role’ helping learners with the (academic) language they need to study other subjects? Graddol (2006) predicted that English will become a ‘basic skill’ facilitating access to other parts of the curriculum. This could have implications for the integrity of English language as a subject in itself in many institutions.

Revisiting the ‘whys’ of CLIL, we can ask to what extent ELT is or should be concerned with the development of academic literacy. There may be an overlap with English for academic purposes (EAP; see Basturkmen and Wette, this volume), and some EAP specialists have experimented with CLIL-like approaches (e.g. Garner and Borg, 2005). In some CLIL contexts, for example in bilingual programmes in Spain, English language lessons have shifted from an EFL approach to a focus on the kinds of literacy issues dealt with in language arts classes in students’ L1 contexts. The focus on academic skills also raises questions about the appropriateness of assessment frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which, some researchers (e.g. Little, 2007) have pointed out, is inadequate for CLIL. A further reflection is that the emphasis on CLIL as a context for meaningful communicative interaction could possibly release ELT lessons from the burden of providing massive amounts of input and practice and would free up space for more explicit approaches to language teaching, of the types described in Leow (2015).

As for the ‘who’ of CLIL, i.e. the teachers, we can ask if CLIL and ELT can be taught by the same people. At primary level, in fact, this is often the case – individual teachers often teach both CLIL and ELT; however, it is less common at higher levels of education, except in contexts where teachers have a double subject teaching qualification. Clearly, however, a key role for ELT teachers in CLIL contexts will be as collaborators with colleagues who teach other subjects through English. This raises issues of professional status and could either enhance the status of ELT teachers as they become across-the-curriculum language and literacy experts or could devalue them if seen as having a more subservient role.

Finally, turning to the ‘how’ of CLIL, we can reflect upon the methodological options in bringing content into English language lessons. There already is a long tradition of including
content in ELT classes, whether this be topics and themes, project work, literature or work on intercultural awareness. Does bringing in to these English language lessons content from other subjects add anything to the students’ experience? If such content is being dealt with by subject experts in CLIL classes, is there even any point in bringing it in to students’ English classes, especially if it is done in the trivial manner that Banegas (2014) criticises? Looking at the pedagogical recommendations for CLIL practice, we can see that many (if not most) of them are very recognisable to ELT practitioners. And both CLIL and ELT share an increasing interest in multilingual and multimodal approaches to teaching. Perhaps what makes CLIL distinctive, and where it raises most challenges for ELT, is in its explicit attention to links between language and cognitive development in the context of developing pluriliteracies.

Discussion questions

- To what extent do you see CLIL as a threat or an opportunity for ELT professionals?
- What, if anything, do you think ELT practitioners can learn from CLIL methodology?
- Which theoretical justifications for CLIL do you find most/least convincing?
- Do you think the resources invested in CLIL in English would be better used in support of non-content integrated English language teaching? Why/why not?

Related topics

Bilingual education in a multilingual world; Communicative language teaching in theory and practice; ELT materials; Task-based language teaching; World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca.

Further reading


Dale, L. and Tanner, R. (2012) *CLIL activities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Not only a very useful compendium of practical activities, but a good overall introduction to CLIL.)


Lyster, R. (2007) *Learning and teaching languages through content: A counterbalanced approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. (A clear argument for, and methodological guidance on, incorporating a focus on form in all forms of content-based language teaching.)

References


Cenoz, J. (2015a) ‘Content-based instruction and content and language integrated learning: The same or different?’ Language, Culture and Curriculum, 28/1. 8–24.


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