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REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLIL IN SPAIN

by M^a Teresa Navés and Carmen Muñoz

University of Barcelona, Spain

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Introduction

The foreign language teaching situation in Spain is currently under change due to the new proposals included in the new Education Law for Primary and Secondary Education established in the mid 90's. Among the most important changes appear the advancement of the starting age for a foreign language to Primary Education, that is, from the age of 11 to the age of 8, and - for our purposes here - the proposal of adopting a content-based approach within the foreign language subject. The implementation of CLIL in Spain, particularly in the bilingual communities, would have clear advantages. On the one hand, in these communities there exists the tradition of language immersion approaches, methodologies, and teacher training, while on the other hand, the teaching of two languages already limits the number of hours that can be allotted to the foreign language subject (see Muñoz and Nussbaum, 1998). The low number of instruction hours in the foreign language and, particularly, the low intensity of foreign language teaching is common to the whole of Spain, moreover; for example, in Post-Compulsory Secondary Education only two hours per week of foreign language instruction are commonly offered.

The new Education Law establishes the general education framework for the whole territory, but the education system in present-day Spain is extremely decentralised. This new curriculum is known as the *Reforma*. Each Autonomous Community (Catalonia, the Basque Country, Navarra, etc) is in charge of developing and implementing the new curriculum according to their own educational policy, on the one hand, and according to the general guidelines of the *Reforma*, on the other. For example, Catalonia and the Basque Country, the first Autonomous Communities to be given full responsibility for the education system in their own territories, share 45 % of the whole curriculum with other communities. The other 55 % of it is for them to design and develop.

The *Reforma* encourages a bilingual programme regarding the four languages spoken in Spain (Catalan, Basque, Galician and Spanish). For example, in Catalonia an immersion programme is followed which means that Catalan is the language of instruction. Then Spanish is introduced little by little. It is taken for granted that Spanish is the most frequently used language by the mass media and it is largely spoken in the community. When children finish compulsory education at the age of sixteen they are expected to be fluent balanced bilinguals both in Catalan and Spanish, and both in written and oral communication.

Describing the state of the art regarding CLIL experiences in Europe, was one of the goals of our project. Every partner representing a different country or region was asked to write an addendum to previously published reports (see, for example, Fruhauf et al., 1996). In the case of Spain there existed a previous report on *Language Teacher Training and Bilingual Education* (Pérez-Vidal, in press), which gave a very accurate and general view of the linguistic situation in Spain, but in which only two CLIL programmes were included (Quincanon et al., 1999; and Cenoz, 1998; see below). The present report focuses exclusively on CLIL experiences in Spain and attempts to be as comprehensive as it can be at the moment, although it almost starts from scratch. While every effort has been made to enquire in the different Autonomous Education Departments, the absence of answer in some cases, together with the lack of previous published information, may have resulted in the unplanned exclusion of unknown-to-us recent CLIL experiences (particularly in areas other than Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Navarra).

1. CLIL Experiences within the State Educational System:

1.1. Infant School (3-5) in the State Educational System

Compulsory education starts at the age of six in Spain, yet infant state-run schools start from the age of three. Although English is introduced at the age of eight by law, a few state-run schools start teaching English earlier.

The teachers of infant school are Primary teachers, who - as a result of their training programme - can be either infant specialists or foreign language specialists, but not both. (Other specialities for Primary teachers include Music, Physical Education, Handicrafts, etc.)

The Ministry of Education has recently signed an agreement with the British Council in Spain in order to have a British native speaker in 43 schools for infants ranging from 3 to 5 (see www.clic.net/bulletin5).

1.2. Compulsory Primary School (6-12) in the State Educational System

English is the most frequently chosen (first) foreign language both in Primary and Secondary Education. A second foreign language can be chosen in Secondary Education, and under special circumstances in some Primary schools.

In Primary Education the foreign language is introduced at the age of eight (3rd grade) by law. There is a strong tradition in our country to teach the foreign language to children following approaches very closely related to content-based teaching such as topic-centred units, and an increasing implementation of task-based teaching. Primary teachers tend to integrate subjects rather than divide their teaching in isolated subjects. Therefore, most of the teaching taking place at Primary Education can be best described as holistic, integrative and interdisciplinary. Primary teachers, however, do not tend to use the foreign language extensively in class as the means of communication.¹ This is probably partly due to their training, a three-year degree in Primary Education conducted in their mother tongue, with the sole exception of the foreign language classes.

In Catalonia, the Department of Education conducted a content-based teaching experience for four years (since 1988 until 1990) in 24 Primary schools as a pilot experience to be generalized to further schools, if possible. Either English or French were chosen as the language of instruction. Handicrafts was the content subject, and it was taught twice a week by a non-native Primary teacher, with a degree in the subject-matter, and a high proficiency in the foreign language. Although the project assessment reveals that some Primary teachers, not directly involved in the CLIL experience, were afraid the quality of the subject-matter could be neglected since it was being taught in a foreign language, the subject-matter specialists were satisfied that its content had been introduced and practised properly. The study concluded that, first, it had been an extremely positive experience for the students, who enjoyed themselves very much, felt at ease, and got involved from the very beginning; and second, that most parents were pleased with the experience.

In the Basque Country, a few Basque schools started the introduction of English in the second grade some years before the earlier introduction of the foreign language by law took place. This initiative was geared towards preparing students for following a few content subjects through the medium of English in Secondary school. These schools are exceptional within the state-run schools in their pursuit of trilingualism: Basque, Spanish and English.

1.3. Compulsory Secondary School (12-16) in the State Educational System

At Secondary school foreign languages are usually taught by specialists who have a five-

(now four-) year University degree in the foreign language, in which most subjects have been taught in the target language (a very long CLIL tradition at some Universities), plus a one-year degree in foreign language teaching methodology.²

In Catalonia, for example, the foreign language is taught twice a week as a core subject, but most schools offer optional credits of three hours per week (30 hour credits). All students must take at least one of these courses, and some take more. It is within these optional foreign language credits that content and language are more easily integrated. Teachers are given a lot of freedom in designing and implementing them, and the courses are often interdisciplinary, and tend to integrate cultural and social elements from the target language speaking communities. In English, for example, the range varies from more theme-based courses in English or American music, food, or sports, to more content-based courses which integrate content such as Geography, History, Non-metric American / English Measure System, Art, etc. In the latter type, final assessment focuses on the content that has been taught as well, following the *Reforma* guidelines, which encourage communicative language teaching, as well as the integration and recycling of content-matters.

One example that illustrates the emphasis on integrating content-matter subjects is the compulsory project that all Secondary school students have to take every two years, usually at the end of the teaching period. They are known as 'synthesis credits'. At the end of each cycle in which the Secondary school is divided, students working cooperatively in teams develop an interdisciplinary project which is evaluated holistically by the team of teachers. Students gather information in different languages, edit and compile the sources, and use and transfer this information. In the final presentation session they are expected to use the foreign language/s as well as the national language/s.

In 1994 the Catalan Department of Education devised a pilot plan to evaluate the advantages and difficulties of implementing a content-based programme in Compulsory Secondary School (12-16) both in core foreign language courses in English and French, and in optional credits. Language and Physical education were chosen for the former, and two credits in Science for the latter. A group of Secondary school teachers and teacher trainers were in charge of designing and adapting the materials needed, coordinated by M^a T. Navés. The group had two Science advisors and one Physical Education advisor as well as the assistance of material writers, and experienced English and French language teachers. The experience lasted four years, during which different teaching strategies were examined, and it took place in six schools from Metropolitan Barcelona. Mixed teaching teams, language teachers and subject-matter teachers, were chosen to teach those subjects, to overcome the difficulties of not having native-like Science or Physical Education trainers, nor foreign language instructors with a degree in the subject-matter. Students were at the same time attending ordinary foreign language classes, and the evaluation of the content-based course focused on content and meaning rather than on forms.

For example, in one of the content-based Science courses, students were trained to design, plan and carefully conduct their own investigation to test which type of detergent, a biological or a non-biological one, removed each of the following type of stains better: coffee, orange juice, and oil. A wide variety of techniques and strategies (Brinton and Snow, 1990; Mohan, 1986; Padilla et al., 1990) were used to facilitate input comprehension. Among others, pie diagrams, organizers, charts, code and mode transformation diagrams, were used to present new input or to help students to process it. As part of their formative evaluation, they were assessed while using the science laboratory equipment, and as part of their summative evaluation, they had to plan and design the steps of an investigation to solve another everyday life problem. The materials used can be

accessed via Internet in the following web page: www.xtec.es (see also Quincannon et al., 1999).

In Tudela (Navarra), a state school, which has been regarded as of high standards for a long time, has conducted a very encouraging experience thanks to the personal effort of the team of teachers involved. The school had been very popular among parents because of its students' high level of success at passing the State Entry Exams for the university. Things started to change, however, and the school was losing students as a result of the increasing number of cultural minority students attending the school. Offering CLIL was seen by the teachers as a good incentive for larger enrolment. They did also benefit from the fact that five teachers were about to retire and could be replaced by teachers who could meet the expected profile to teach in a CLIL programme: specialists in a content subject with a high command of the foreign language. For the last six years they have been teaching Physical Education in French, and Music in English, in Primary school, and will continue by teaching different subjects, first in French and then in English, both in Primary and Secondary school.

The same type of continuity is offered by a few state-run Basque Schools that have implemented CLIL (see 1.2). One illustration is provided by the *Lauro Ikastola*, in which Secondary students are regrouped according to their proficiency in English, and are taught some of the content subjects in this language, particularly the Arts courses (see Cenoz 1998).

Finally, in 2000 it has been announced that the Catalan Department of Education will start offering Secondary school teachers some financial support to implement CLIL, as part of either an optional, or a core subject being taught in a foreign language. The plan will fund up to 24 schools in either of two ways: by having a native speaker student, from an exchange Erasmus programme, to help setting up the CLIL experience; or by receiving some funds to develop, buy or adapt teaching materials.

1.4. Post-compulsory Education in the State Educational System: *Bachillerato* (17-18) and Vocational Training courses (19-20)

Besides the above mentioned experiences, which tend to extend to the period 17-18 (Post-compulsory Education), there exist a few high schools around the country which offer the new "International Baccalauréat", and a few more are getting ready to offer it. This two-year course includes the teaching of two foreign languages, mostly English and French, as well as the teaching of some subjects through the medium of the foreign languages. Most of the instructors are non-native Secondary school teachers with both a high command of the foreign language, and with a degree in the subject-matter. Native speaking assistants are expected to help them.

Students in post-compulsory education may choose vocational courses (business, secretary work, foreign trade officers, etc.). Foreign languages play a strong role in those courses, and approaches such as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and student-centred approaches with the use of self-access facilities are very popular among teachers. At the end of the vocational course students have to develop an integrative and holistic project that usually lasts for a month. There are a few schools that would even teach one of the subjects in a foreign language.

1.5. State Universities

Modern language undergraduate courses are usually taught in the target language. Thus, in English Philology at the University of Barcelona, for example, those subjects offered by the English Department are English-medium. Students have to take subjects from other Departments as well, in which case they are Catalan- or Spanish-medium.

Most graduate courses such as master courses and doctorate courses in Applied Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition and Language Teaching Methodology are also taught and evaluated in the foreign language. Furthermore, most of the Master Thesis and PhD Thesis in modern languages departments are written in the target language.

In graduate courses other than those in modern languages, a foreign language as the medium of instruction is only very exceptionally used. A few examples are found in Economics and Engineering, where ordinary or Language for Special Purposes courses are usually provided.

2. CLIL Experiences within Semi-private Schools: *Escuelas Concertadas*

These type of schools are private but partially funded by the State (now by the corresponding Autonomous Government of each Community). They are supposed to be ruled by the same principles that rule state-run schools, but in practice there are important differences between them. For example, semi-private schools have a longer school time per week both in Primary and Secondary Education, and tend to be very concerned with parents' expectations regarding education standards, since parents partly support the tuition of their children. Furthermore, some of them have their own traditions in teaching from the time in which they received no state funding.

Among these traditions appears the provision of some degree of CLIL both at Secondary and Primary level. In Catalonia, the Basque Country and Navarra, just to mention a few of the experiences we have gathered information from, CLIL instruction is introduced very early in just one language and in just either one or a couple of content-matter areas, but it ends up including two to three languages in about four to five different subjects. Examples of this type of school are *San Cernin* and *Irabia* in Pamplona (Navarra), and *John Talabot* (Barcelona) and *La Vall* (Bellaterra, Barcelona). The last two are, furthermore, trilingual, and present distinct characteristics.

For example, in *John Talabot* English is used 50% of the time at kindergarten; the other 50% being shared by Catalan and Spanish. At Primary school English is taught as a language subject and is used as the language of instruction of Science; Catalan is taught as a language subject and is used as the language of instruction of Social Sciences, and Spanish is taught as a language subject and is used as the language of instruction of Mathematics. At Secondary school English is taught as a language subject for 5 hours each week; English is used as the language of instruction of credits in History, Geography and Science (2 hours per week); Spanish is taught as a language subject and is used to teach mathematics, and the remaining subjects are taught in Catalan.

A different model is followed in *La Vall*, a school in which the implementation of CLIL is very recent. At kindergarten English is used in five modules of 30 minutes each every day from the age of 2. In Primary Education English is used in 7 modules (of 45 to 60 minutes each), 4 for Natural Sciences and 3 for English Language. Spanish is used for Maths and Catalan for Social Sciences. In Secondary Education English is used during the first two years still for Natural Sciences, and for Social Sciences the next two years. They are now considering

the extension of CLIL teaching into the last two years of Secondary Education.

Apart from these trilingual schools, most CLIL experiences have some features in common, which appear in the following sections.

2.1. Infant Education (3-5) in Semi-private schools

- They start using the foreign language as a means of instruction from the kindergarten (age 4-5).
- During the first period of implementation, less than 30' sessions are chosen twice to three times a week.
- The content-subject area allows a lot of learning by doing, responding with non-verbal communication, and TPR practices.
- The most common content-subject areas chosen before Primary Education starts are Physical Education, Handicrafts, etc.
- The language of instruction is introduced orally. No written support is provided.
- The instructors of CLIL classes vary a great deal from native Primary teachers to Primary teachers with a degree in the subject matter and a high command of the foreign language.
- Ordinary foreign language classes are sometimes introduced besides CLIL classes for short periods of time that may vary from 5' to 30', twice or three times a week, and they are sometimes taught by native speakers of the target language

2.2. Primary Education (6-11) in Semi-private Schools

- During the first four years of Primary school, the foreign language is still used orally, and it is only in the last two to three years of Primary Education, that foreign language writing is introduced.
- Besides CLIL classes, most schools would provide regular foreign language courses that are taught by specialists, either native or non-native foreign language instructors, not necessarily the same instructors of the CLIL courses.
- Most schools choose to introduce the second foreign language by the time students start writing in the first foreign language.
- Two to four subject-matter areas are taught in the first foreign language: Physical Education, Handicrafts, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, etc.
- The second foreign language is introduced both as a means of instruction in the CLIL classes and as the means of communication in communicative-oriented regular language courses.
- The evaluation of CLIL classes tends to focus on the extent to which the content-subject objectives are fulfilled.
- Most students from these type of schools are expected to pass either an internal or an international certificate in the foreign language before they finish Primary Education.
- Content-subject instructors tend to be Primary school teachers with a degree in the subject-matter with enough command of the language. Some of them are native speakers.

2.3. Secondary Compulsory Education (12-16) and Post-Secondary Education: *Bachillerato* (17-18) and Vocational Studies (19-20) in Semi-private Schools

- Students are expected to pass internal as well as external foreign language exams in the two or three foreign languages, such as Trinity College exams, First Certificate or Proficiency exams.
- Accuracy as well as fluency is expected in ordinary and external language

examinations.

- Before entering the university, students are expected to have a high command of both the first and second foreign language both in oral and written communication.
- Additional content subjects are taught using the two or three foreign languages.
- Besides instrumental type of subjects, History or Science are taught in one or two foreign languages.
- The teachers tend to be native or native-like speakers with a degree in the content-subject matter.

3. CLIL Experiences within Private Schools in Catalonia

3.1. Foreign Private Schools

There are some private schools that follow a bilingual or content-based curriculum that involve not only the teaching of Spanish and the community language (Catalan, Basque, Galician) but also the teaching of either one or more foreign languages (English, French and German usually). There are some English, French and German schools that would follow a British, French, German curriculum such as *Saint Peter's*, *Le Lycee Franais*, *Deutsche Schule*, etc., which usually involve the use of those languages as the ordinary means of communication between students and teachers, among students themselves, and as the means of instruction. The population of those schools include both children from native speaker families as well as children from the local community.

3.2 National Private Schools in Metropolitan Barcelona

There are several privately-owned schools in Metropolitan Barcelona which implement CLIL, and include pre-Primary school (3-5 years), Primary school (6-12 years), and Secondary school (12-16 years), such as "Arcoiris" in Alella, or "Aula". A brief report on the latter follows as an illustration.

-*"Aula"* follows a content-based curriculum in which two foreign languages are taught. They are first introduced in ordinary foreign language classes, first orally only and they are gradually integrated into other content-matter subjects and written work. When students have enough command of the foreign language two subjects are taught in those languages. Students learn mathematics, and human geography both in French and in English

3.3. Private Universities and International Universities in Spain

It is very common for these type of universities to offer part of the curriculum in one or two foreign languages.

4. CLIL Experiences in both State and Private Schools Associated to UNESCO: the Project "Linguapax":

Originally it was an initiative to link the teaching of foreign languages with the promotion of international understanding, co-operation and solidarity. In Catalonia it was extended so that the objectives were shared by other teaching areas, particularly the languages of the participating countries and the social sciences.

The initial proposal was made by M. Siguan, president of the Linguapax International

Committee, and Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of Barcelona. In the academic year 1991-92 the project was launched with the joint collaboration of Unesco-Catalonia, the Jaume Bofill Foundation and the Catalan Autonomous Government's Department of Education.

For a period of 8 years the materials were experimented in 42 schools, both state and private, associated to UNESCO, of which 18 were in Catalonia. The pupils involved were in the last stage of compulsory schooling, that is, 12-16 year olds. Apart from the particular cognitive content, the project aimed at fomenting values, attitudes, habits and behaviour patterns, and to employ a socio-affective approach. The foreign languages involved were English and French. Different units involved different content areas (from Mathematics to Music), the main ones being the first language and the social sciences.

In octubre 1998, 5 didactic units plus a general introduction were finally published. They contain the teaching units that have been experimented, revised and modified in agreement with the teachers who participated in the experience.

5. Conclusions.

5.1. Teachers

- **Teachers' profile**

From what we have described, it may be seen that not many Primary teachers may have enough communicative competence in the target language so as to teach a content subject in it. Second, foreign language Secondary school teachers may be very competent in the foreign language but have no training in any other content subject. Third, very few content subject Secondary school teachers have a native-like command of the foreign language. Finally, none of them have had any training in CLIL.

Up to now, only private and partially private schools seem to have been able to afford either native speaker teachers with a degree in the content subject, or teachers with two degrees, one in the content subject area and one in a foreign language. Yet they have not had any training in CLIL either.

- **CLIL-specific training**

The fact that the Teacher Training system in Spain does not include dual qualifications makes it very difficult to find teachers to implement CLIL. In fact, most of the teachers in this report had not had any previous specific training, and their projects were planned and designed on the basis of intuition and common sense. It is, therefore, highly recommended that both undergraduate and graduate courses for teachers should include some CLIL training.

- **Stability of teacher teams**

Most of the school administrators we interviewed were convinced that the future of those experiences depended mostly on teachers' availability and willingness to keep trying. However, in the state school system, it is not uncommon for teachers to change from one school to the next, depending on the score obtained in the public examinations. And as a

result, it can take them up to 10 years to be settled down in a given school. On the contrary, in most private and semi-private schools staff remains the same for longer periods of time.

- **Need of coordination**

The second most common concern among school teachers was how to guarantee coordination between the foreign language department and each of the content-subject areas or departments. Some private and semi-private schools have already included CLIL programs as part of the School Linguistic Project, and, consequently, they are able to plan their schedules and staff meetings, so as to make possible this necessary coordination between the different teachers. In state-run schools, since CLIL experiences have not yet become part of the School Linguistic Project, coordination is up to volunteer work on the part of the teachers involved.

5.2. Involvement of Administration and Schools

- **Continuity of CLIL Projects: State-run vs. Private Schools**

The vast majority of CLIL projects in state-run schools tend to be *short-term* projects for optional subjects with very limited lasting effects, whereas CLIL projects in private or semi-private schools tend to be *long-lasting* projects. The latter, more coherent, include more than one language, and more than a couple of core (not optional) courses. They also allow to plan students' curricula as regards which content subjects will be conducted in the first foreign language and which in the second or third foreign language. The teaching staff can take part in the project by designing and implementing the CLIL projects, and evaluating and including the necessary changes. Finally, parents in these schools can know in advance the school language policy regarding content subjects.

- **School Linguistic Project: The guarantee for long-lasting CLIL projects**

Nowadays, the future of CLIL projects still depends mostly on teacher's availability and willingness to keep trying on their own. If some form of CLIL is not included in the School Linguistic Project, teachers will be left with the responsibility of designing and planning a CLIL project, of adapting or designing course materials and the evaluation for the course, of persuading their Head of Studies or Principal to facilitate the necessary changes in schedules, of guaranteeing the coordination with other departments, and also of finding the necessary funds. They can soon feel frustrated and exhausted by the amount of work and the difficulties they will encounter.

- **A Joint Effort by All Parties**

Designing and implementing a CLIL project is not an easy task. It requires the joint effort of Educational Authorities, school board coordinators, and CLIL teachers. We have already mentioned the lack of specific training for CLIL teachers, how different the ideal profile of a CLIL teacher seems to be from that of ordinary Primary and Secondary school teachers, and how unstable school staff is due to teachers' high mobility. In addition to this, we saw the need of long-lasting CLIL projects, in which to plan coherently which content subjects will be taught in which languages. Therefore, for successful and long-lasting CLIL projects to occur, the Educational Authorities must provide the necessary teaching conditions under which school teachers can work.

5.3. Further Needs

- **Materials design**

It is not by chance that most of the self-made CLIL materials used in the projects reported above are still unpublished. It is an extremely time-consuming task to gather, adapt and design teaching materials, a type of task for which, on the other hand, most teachers are not responsible in their regular courses. An extremely great effort needs to be made so as to provide CLIL teaching materials that can be used by as many teachers and learners as possible. Again, the support of the Educational Authorities is needed to provide expert teams that can undertake specific materials design.

- **Theoretical Foundations**

A very common concern among those who have been involved in CLIL projects is to gather enough and solid theoretical background on CLIL projects to support and inspire their own decision making process, and to inform the School Linguistic Project. The lack of CLIL teacher training courses leaves up to the administrators and teaching staff the task of identifying the theoretical foundations for CLIL projects. Besides, in Spain the rationale for implementing a CLIL project cannot explicitly be found in the present Curriculum Reform Guidelines, nor in most undergraduate and graduate teacher training courses, either. This explains that many teachers report not being familiar enough with the rationale for CLIL, ignoring most of the teaching techniques and strategies generally associated with content-based teaching, and not knowing how to cope with the evaluation procedures (focusing on meaning rather than on form?).

- **Teachers' Qualifications**

Besides not having enough theoretical foundation information, most teachers feel they do not qualify for a CLIL job. Indeed, this is a major concern among teachers since they seem to fear invading other teacher's field. Moreover, most of them feel as if they were somehow intruders, trespassing the reasonable limits of their discipline. This is an extremely serious problem that Educational Authorities should address and answer by finding ways to train CLIL teachers who can master their own domain, that of teaching subject matter through the medium of a foreign language.

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