

Juan-Garau, M., & Salazar-Noguera, J. (Eds.) (2015).

Content-Based Language Learning in Multilingual Educational Environments.

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In their introduction to *Content-Based Language Learning in Multilingual Educational Environments*, the editors present the synergy that has developed between content learning and language learning as overwhelmingly positive, identifying many benefits that arise directly or indirectly out of such programmes. However, they also suggest that the full potential of such approaches may still not have been reached, particularly because each national or regional education system provides a unique setting with its own special characteristics in terms of institutional frameworks, exposure to different language outside and inside the classroom, adaptation to different age groups, and approaches to teacher training. This book goes some way to addressing the issue of adapting content and language integrated learning (CLIL) to local contexts, providing useful examples that illustrate how research can be conducted in this area.

The volume is divided into two parts, the first of which is dedicated to explaining the role of CLIL in encouraging multilingualism, while the second presents empirical research results from the Combination of Contexts for Learning project (COLE) conducted in Catalan-speaking areas to compare the outcomes of formal instruction (FI) and CLIL programmes in secondary school. The chapters in part one thus go some way towards situating current CLIL programmes in a broad historical and geographical context. David Lasagabaster's chapter brings out the complexity of the current linguistic situation in many countries, and draws attention to the fundamental role played by attitudes to languages, and the controversy surrounding bi- and multilingual programmes in some areas. He concludes that there is still a need to debunk the "monolingual is better" myth, and to work to make multilingual approaches better understood. Carmen Pérez-Vidal's chapter focuses particularly on the context of internationalisation in higher education, and reviews research on the neglected area of study-abroad programmes.

Of course, the huge number of variables present in educational situations makes comparative research notoriously difficult. On this point, Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe's chapter contributes to the debate by explaining the difficulty of comparing learning outcomes in CLIL and non-CLIL settings, and discusses some interesting empirical results from different European countries regarding subject-matter learning, language competences and pedagogical practices. Although the results are somewhat contradictory, most studies seem to indicate that CLIL enhances some aspects of language learning without having negative consequences

for content learning, and that the pedagogical challenges of CLIL have actually produced positive responses from teachers, leading to closer interdepartmental coordination and more communicative teaching methodology. Approaching the issue from a different angle, Scott Jarvis's chapter considers the important, but often neglected issue of how previously learned languages influence the learning and use of additional languages. Although research evidence is scarce, the naturalistic environment of CLIL classrooms appears to aid positive transfer in the acquisition of a third or subsequent language. Nonetheless, Jarvis concludes that CLIL programmes should be accompanied by form-focused language instruction that raises learners' metalinguistic awareness and helps them to develop greater accuracy. Finally, Carmen Muñoz's chapter rounds off part one with a review of research concerning the effects of exposure time and age on language learning in different multilingual settings. Although there are many inherent difficulties when measuring attainment differences in younger learners, the research appears to show that learners aged 8 or older obtain greater benefits from CLIL than younger pupils do, possibly because of their more highly developed cognitive skills.

The second part of the volume contains reports on studies carried out in secondary schools in the Balearic Islands and Catalonia within the framework of the COLE project. After an overview of the background to the project and the data collection process, the various authors involved in the study explain different aspects of the results and discuss them in the light of what is already known. Evidence is produced showing that the CLIL students in this particular sample generally outperformed their non-CLIL peers in terms of reading comprehension skills, vocabulary knowledge, and writing skills (complexity, accuracy, fluency). However, an interesting study of oral fluency and pronunciation conducted by Lucrecia Rallo and Karen Jacob yielded similar outcomes for both CLIL and non-CLIL groups, which calls into question the effectiveness of CLIL programmes for enhancing learners' oral skills in the target language. Although these results may have been swayed by task type (the researchers used picture-based narrative, presumably because the non-CLIL groups had not been exposed to content-related task types), they point to possible limitations concerning spoken input and output in the content classrooms. Lexico-grammatical accuracy is another area that has sometimes been identified as problematic in immersion and CLIL contexts. María Juan-Garau, José Igor Prieto-Arranz and Joana Salazar-Noguera provide an overview of recent literature in this area, and then report findings which point to greater gains for CLIL students over three years of secondary school for both vocabulary and grammar. However, when this result was adjusted for hours of exposure, the differences proved not to be significant. In their view, combining CLIL with formal

instruction enables students to improve in terms of lexico-grammar more swiftly than their peers who only received formal instruction, although the differences are mainly due to increased hours of exposure to the target language.

Affective factors add a further dimension to the (already complex) picture in multilingual settings. In an interesting chapter on affective factors in CLIL, Marian Amengual and José-Igor Prieto-Arranz find no statistically significant differences between CLIL and non-CLIL students regarding their attitude and motivation for L3 learning. Both their groups of students were aware of the importance of English as a major tool for communication on an international level, and their motivation to learn it increased over time. However, it is a matter of some concern that most students' attitudes towards their English language classes became less positive as they advanced through secondary school. CLIL students only showed a clear advantage over non-CLIL students in terms of lower anxiety levels when speaking English in the classroom. These authors conclude that CLIL seems to prove beneficial regarding the development of motivation and positive attitudes, but highlight the underlying creaming effect which may be operating here, as in so many comparative research studies on CLIL.

The penultimate chapter, by Edleide Menezes and María Juan-Garau, centres on the learners' "willingness to communicate" (WTC), which encompasses psychological, educational, and cultural factors as well as being heavily influenced by the specific social situation. WTC inevitably has an impact on language learning, and like other immersion-type programmes, CLIL may be identified as potentially useful for boosting students' WTC, since it tends to reduce anxiety and build students' confidence (Cummins, 2013). These authors used questionnaires to measure students' WTC in both CLIL and non-CLIL contexts. CLIL students (who received twice as many class hours in English) generally had higher WTC than their non-CLIL peers. They also found that the WTC score correlated significantly with achievement in both cases (students who are willing to communicate obtain better grades, or viceversa, whether they are in CLIL programmes or not). In these authors' view, CLIL provides learners with more intensive exposure to the target language and gives them more opportunities to contribute meaningfully than in the foreign language classroom. In particular, communicative language use, interactive tasks and collaborative work help students to build confidence and motivation, generating an upward spiral that is conducive to language learning.

The final chapter by Carmen Pérez-Vidal and Helena Roquet summarises the results of the CLIL programmes under scrutiny, reaching the conclusion that the gains are not uniform across all skills. The findings of this project differ from previous research (such as Dalton-Puffer, 2008) in that the greatest gains were made

in reading, writing and lexico-grammar, whereas listening skills did not improve significantly among the CLIL groups.

Taken together, the chapters in this volume provide useful evidence as to how CLIL is working in one European context today, and open up interesting avenues for future research, because although the gains are considerable, there is still room for improvement. While CLIL in one form or another seems to be here to stay, the interface between CLIL and formal language instruction, on the one hand, and CLIL and teacher training, on the other, still presents many challenges. Projects such as this go some way towards clarifying where practitioners and researchers should be concentrating their efforts.

Cummins, J. (2013). Bilingual education and Content and Language Integrated learning (CLIL): Research and its classroom implications. *Padres y Maestros*, 349, 6-10.

Dalton-Puffer, C. (2008). Outcomes and processes in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): current research from Europe. In W. Delanoy, & L. Volkmann (Eds.), *Future perspectives for English language teaching* (pp. 139-157). Heidelberg: Winter.

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Rich, S. (Ed.) (2014).

International Perspectives on Teaching English to Young Learners.

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This Palgrave book provides descriptions and analysis of various research-led projects from Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) educators working mainly with primary school students in different countries throughout the world. It successfully presents a range of practical and innovative experiences which model effective TEYL pedagogy for the teaching of English as a second or foreign language.

Sarah Rich introduces the book by providing an overview of several recent debates concerning the increasing importance of TEYL in view of globalizing trends in education, together with the inevitable spread of the English language as a means of communication worldwide. She brings out the key themes which are the basis of TEYL educators' research in this volume, such as: technology as a tool