

Introduction



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Abstract This introductory chapter sets the scene for the broader volume and has a three-pronged objective. To begin with, it presents the rationale and justifies the need for a monograph of this nature. It then frames the volume against the backdrop of CLIL practice and policy in Spain. Finally, it introduces the ten chapters and four blocks into which the book is structured and illustrates how they provide updated insights into CLIL characterisation, implementation, and research from a multifaceted perspective.

1 Rationale

This monograph seeks to focus on the innovations and challenges affecting a teaching approach which has enjoyed a massive uptake over the past two decades in very diverse educational settings: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The latter has undergone a very interesting evolution since it first entered the European scene in 1994. It was initially heralded as the potential lynchpin to tackle the foreign language deficit on our continent and was embraced as a lever for change and success in language learning. However, after this period of unbridled enthusiasm, over the course of the past half a decade, a more critical attitude has emerged, calling into question some of the core underpinnings of CLIL and shaking CLIL advocates out of their complacency. As Paran (2013, p. 334) has put it, we have moved from a ‘celebratory rhetoric’ which saw CLIL as a near panacea to dwelling almost exclusively ‘on the problematic issues of CLIL’. This so-called ‘pendulum effect’ (Swan, 1985, p. 86) which has characterised language teaching history has just made itself conspicuous in the CLIL scenario, leading to CLIL controversy on different fronts (cf. Pérez Cañado, 2016a, 2017). Great debate has been sparked off and contradictory opinions have been harboured vis-à-vis pivotal aspects of CLIL characterisation,

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implementation, and research, thereby creating the need to revisit some taken-for-granted issues affecting this approach and constituting challenges to be addressed in the present and very near future of CLIL theory and praxis.

It is precisely on these innovations and challenges that this monograph seeks to focus. It will provide updated research evidence on CLIL characterisation, implementation, and research fundamentally stemming from two governmentally funded research projects (R&D projects FFI2012-32221 and P12-HUM-2348, funded by the Spanish *Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad* and the *Junta de Andalucía*, respectively).¹ Through them, a quantitative, longitudinal study has been conducted into the effects of CLIL on the English language competence, Spanish language competence, and content knowledge of those subjects taught through the foreign language (FL) of Primary (6th grade) and Secondary (4th grade of Compulsory Secondary Education) Education students in 12 different provinces of Spain, considered to be a representative microcosm of the multifaceted CLIL landscape. It has matched the CLIL and non-CLIL students of 53 Primary and Secondary schools in terms of verbal intelligence, motivation, and extramural exposure to English and worked with a total of 2,245 students, 333 teachers, and 595 parents (3,173 subjects in all). It has employed 11 different types of tests (verbal intelligence, motivation, Spanish Language and Literature, two content tests corresponding to the subjects taught through CLIL, and English grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, and speaking tests) in order to investigate the impact of CLIL on different cognitive, contextual, and affective variables: context (rural–urban), type of school (public, private, charter), educational level (Primary, Secondary, Baccalaurate), motivation, verbal intelligence, extramural exposure to English, and socioeconomic status. It has furthermore done so from a longitudinal perspective, as pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests have been administered to Primary, Compulsory Secondary, and non-compulsory Secondary Education students. Finally, factor and discriminant analyses have been performed to determine the interaction among all these variables and ascertain whether CLIL is truly responsible for the potential differences observed.

From a qualitative standpoint, it has probed students', teachers', and parents' satisfaction with all the curricular and organisational aspects of CLIL schemes and carried out a detailed SWOT analysis of the way in which they are functioning, according to the key players involved in their grassroots implementation. Three types of instruments have been designed and validated for the qualitative side of the study: questionnaires, semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, and direct behaviour observation. Multiple triangulation procedures have also been employed: data, methodological, investigator, and location triangulation.

The study has thus superseded some of the main lacunae pinpointed for prior investigations of this nature. It has, to begin with, guaranteed the homogeneity of the experimental and control groups at the outset of the study (Langé, 2007; Lasagabaster,

¹In addition, it also incorporates the findings of three additional research projects: 2018-1-ES01-KA201-050356, RTI2018-093390-B-I00, and FFI2014-54179-C2-2-P, funded by the European Union, the *Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades*, and the *Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad*, respectively.

2008; Lyster, 2007; Madrid Fernández, 2006; Pérez-Vidal, 2007; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe & Lasagabaster, 2010). It has also examined the impact of CLIL not only on the foreign language (English), but also on L1 and content knowledge, factoring in an important number of moderating variables (Cenoz et al., 2013; Dalton-Puffer et al., 2014; Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010). It has equally determined whether CLIL is truly responsible for the possible differences ascertained or whether they can be ascribed to these other variables (Cenoz et al., 2013; Dalton-Puffer et al., 2014; Pérez Cañado, 2011, 2012). Finally, it is longitudinal rather than cross-sectional (Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2010), in order to determine whether the effects of CLIL pervade when this type of programme is discontinued (cf. Pérez Cañado, 2017 for a detailed proposal of the research agenda which needs to be carved out in order to address these niches).

This book presents the key findings of the study on both these quantitative and qualitative fronts. Through them, it offers new empirically grounded insights into the current state of CLIL characterisation (through an innovative proposal to link CLIL to ELF), implementation (via the observation protocols employed and the SWOT analyses conducted), and research (by examining the effects of CLIL on the L1, FL, key competences, and content subjects taught through English). And it does so by focussing on a country which is very conspicuous on the CLIL map (Spain) and within it, on monolingual contexts, where there is a more notable ‘shortage of research in CLIL’ (Fernández-Sanjurjo et al., 2019, p. 662).

2 Backdrop: CLIL in Spain

Indeed, Spain particularly stands out within the European landscape, since, as Coyle (2010, p. viii) contends, ‘Spain is rapidly becoming one of the European leaders in CLIL practice and research’. As is the case with the broader continental ambit, this educational approach has blossomed particularly over the course of the past ten years: ‘In the last decade CLIL ... has undergone a rapid development in the Spanish scenario’ (Ruiz de Zarobe & Lasagabaster, 2010, p. ix).

This expansion of CLIL is often attributed to the deficient language proficiency levels generally attained in Spain: ‘The dismal foreign language proficiency usually obtained through its conventional teaching as a school subject has led many primary, secondary and tertiary institutions to put CLIL programmes into practice’ (Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010, pp. 290–291). Indeed, the unsuccessful foreign language learning experiences in the Spanish context have been documented by a notable number of scholars: ‘dissatisfaction is the common denominator when the proficiency in English of Spanish students is scrutinized, despite many having spent quite a few years trying to learn the language’ (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009, p. 7).

These lacunae in language learning can be traced to the lack of teaching tradition and social concern for language education, which have been clearly reflected in the official legislation guiding foreign language instruction. Indeed, for most of the

twentieth century, the latter was restricted to Bacalaureate and mainly involved the teaching of French, which was not taught following communicative principles. The general tendency since the *Ley General de Educación de 1970* was passed has been to push foreign language teaching to increasingly earlier stages of the education ladder: from the age of 11–12 with the aforementioned Law, to 6 with the 1990 *Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo* (LOGSE) and the 2002 *Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación* (LOCE), to the second cycle of Infant Education with the 2006 *Ley Orgánica de Educación* (LOE). An optional second foreign language has also been introduced since 2006 in the third cycle of Primary Education. Furthermore, under the auspices of the 2006 LOE, which rewards instruction in the foreign language in bilingual centres, an increasing number of CLIL projects and programmes fostering innovative education methods have been incorporated across the country.

Indeed, all regional education authorities are now endorsing plurilingual policies. The most outstanding official CLIL initiatives include:

The Spanish Ministry and British Council Project: It began in 1996–1997 with a view to providing children from ages 3 to 16 with bilingual and bicultural education. Aragón, Asturias, the Balearic Islands, Cantabria, Castilla y León, Castilla-La Mancha, Ceuta, Extremadura, Madrid, Melilla, Murcia, and Navarra are all involved in this initiative.

Programa de Inmersión Lingüística: Supported by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science, it offers summer courses for students in the last cycle of Primary Education and the first grade of Compulsory Secondary Education.

PALE (Programa de Apoyo a la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras): It has involved 13 autonomous communities (Andalusia, Aragón, the Canary Islands, Castilla-La Mancha, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, Murcia, La Rioja, Asturias, Castilla y León, Madrid, and Valencia) and is geared at aiding CLIL teachers to improve their FL competence via 200 hours of training and a two-week study visit abroad.

Aulas Europeas: These European classrooms are language and culture immersion programmes in France and the UK aimed at Infant, Primary, and Secondary teachers of any subject. They are based on an agreement between the Spanish MEC and the French Embassy, in collaboration with the French Institute in Madrid, and affect the entire Spanish territory.

PILC (Proyectos de Innovación Lingüística en Centros): These language innovation projects started in La Rioja in 2004–2005 and target non-university teachers of any subject willing to implement CLIL in their classrooms.

ETC (English Through Content): This initiative affects Navarre and was launched in 2001 with 36 Infant and Primary schools. Since 2003, it has been applied to all schools in this autonomous community. It involves the application of a CLIL approach organised around a series of topics through 43 lesson units adapted to the aforementioned educational levels.

Secciones Europeas / Secciones Bilingües: These sections entail CLIL instruction in Primary and Secondary schools of diverse monolingual communities (Aragón, Andalusia, Asturias, Canarias, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura or Madrid) and in certain bilingual ones (such as Galicia or the Balearic Islands).

Proyecto Bilingüe: This is the official name which the bilingual project of the community of Madrid receives. It was initially set up in 26 public Infant and Primary schools in 2003–2004 and has since then been extended to 147. Here, the CLIL model can be applied to any subject except Spanish and Mathematics and is taught through English, French, or German. It includes its own specific teacher training programme.

Plan de Fomento del Plurilingüismo: This is the denomination of the ambitious CLIL plan which has been set in motion in Andalusia since 2005. It is based on five pillars and 74 official actions and has been updated by the *Plan Estratégico de Desarrollo de las Lenguas* (PEDLA) in 2017.

As can be observed, these specific CLIL actions are geared at Primary and Secondary level. At these stages, they seek to foster a more communicative, participative, active, and motivating approach to the teaching of languages. Thus, the foreign language teaching situation in Spain is currently under change and CLIL is sparking increased interest and attention in our educational panorama. In our country, this approach is distinctive on two counts. First, it encompasses a diversity of models practically tantamount to the number of regions where it is applied, given the decentralisation of our educational system, which transfers educational powers to each autonomous community. Thus, in our context, the gap between EU policy and CLIL grassroots action is bridged via regional rather than national educational initiatives and no single blueprint exists: ‘Spain is a mixture of heterogeneous language situations that lead to different ways of understanding and managing L2 education’ (Fernández Fontecha, 2009, p. 4). And second, dual-focussed education has been developed in Spain with both second (co-official) and foreign (other European) languages, and in both bilingual communities where English is the third language taught through CLIL (The Basque Country, Catalonia, Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Galicia) and in monolingual communities conspicuous for their lack of tradition in foreign language teaching (e.g. Extremadura, Castilla-La Mancha, or Andalusia). For these reasons, Spain could well serve as a model for the multiple possibilities offered by the broader CLIL spectrum and thus for other countries seeking to implement it.

3 Structure

In offering new insights into CLIL characterisation, implementation, and research in this multifaceted Spanish context,² the present volume comprises ten chapters classified into four main blocks. It begins with a chapter by *Diego Rascón Moreno* and *Antonio Vicente Casas Pedrosa* which describes the linguistic, methodological, and

²For a specific focus on contextual, cognitive, and affective variables in CLIL research (e.g. rural–urban context, socioeconomic status, amount and type of exposure), please see the special issue of *Porta Linguarum* (2018) also stemming from the two main research projects presented here. However, this volume offers a completely different perspective by focussing on the current state of CLIL characterisation, implementation, and research into the effects of CLIL on L1, L2, and content learning, from a global (and not variable-based) outlook. In addition, the effects of CLIL on key competences (such as digital competence) are also examined here, and a broader transcontinental

organisational traits of CLIL in both FL and non-linguistic area subjects taught in English with a CLIL methodology vis-à-vis the seven main fields of interest which have been canvassed: EFL use in class, discursive functions, competence development, methodology and types of groupings, materials and resources, coordination and organisation, and evaluation. The results allow the authors to paint a clearer picture of what CLIL looks like at the grassroots level and to thereby make headway in characterising its *implementation*.

María Luisa Pérez Cañado then sets forth an innovative proposal to shed light on the CLIL *characterisation* controversy by examining CLIL in connection to English as a lingua franca (ELF), two acronyms which take centre-stage in the current ELT literature. CLIL is described on a multiplicity of levels, fostering the connection to ELF, unpacking ten main fronts on which both concepts conflate, and showcasing the view that they are in fact compatible, parallel, and can be incorporated in the language classroom concomitantly to the benefit of the stakeholders involved.

The remaining chapters go on to focus on the effects of CLIL *research*. *Daniel Madrid Fernández*, *Antonio Bueno González*, and *Juan Ráez Padilla* walk the reader through the double-fold pilot process which has been painstakingly followed to draw up a batch of tests to measure the effects of CLIL on English language competence and then provide the actual instruments³ for their application in further iterations of this type of research. *Esther Nieto Moreno de Diezmas* empirically examines the impact of CLIL on the acquisition of digital competence, while *Elvira Barrios* explores its effects on L1 competence development and *Juan de Dios Martínez Agudo* centres on how it impinges on subject matter learning (specifically, on Science in Primary and Secondary Education). *Macarena Navarro-Pablo* and *María del Mar Gálvez Gómez* finish by determining the effects of CLIL on FL competence, in terms of linguistic components (grammar and vocabulary) and skills (reading, listening, and speaking), respectively.

The book draws to a close with a wrap-up piece by *Cristian Aquino-Sterling*, who, based on all these findings, expounds on future challenges and ways forward for CLIL characterisation, implementation, and research. The ultimate aim is to provide an updated picture of where we stand in the CLIL arena, to identify the chief hurdles which need to be tackled in the very near future, and to signpost possible ways of overcoming them in order to continue advancing smoothly into the next decade of CLIL development.

perspective on CLIL is offered in the final chapter. In this sense, this monograph also incorporates the findings of three additional research projects: 2018-1-ES01-KA201-050356, RTI2018-093390-B-I00, and FFI2014-54179-C2-2-P, funded by the European Union, the *Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades*, and the *Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad*, respectively.

³For the remaining qualitative instruments designed, validated, and applied in the projects, please see Pérez Cañado (2016a) (observation protocols), Pérez Cañado (2016b) (questionnaires) and Pérez Cañado (2018) (interview protocols).

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