

Foreword

In Spain, the origin of the CLIL methodology began at the Primary education level thanks to two programmes. The former, known as the “MEC/BC Bilingual Project,” was an agreement signed between the Spanish Ministry of Education (MEC) and the British Council (BC) in 1996. The latter, known as the “CAM Bilingual Project,” was launched by the Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid (CAM) in the academic year 2004-2005. Two decades have passed since the implementation of the “MEC/BC Bilingual Project” and one decade since that of the “CAM Bilingual Project.” The editors of *CLIL for teachers: From theory to practice* firmly believe this is an excellent moment to reflect on the CLIL approach to L2 teaching.

CLIL for teachers: From theory to practice, an in-depth study of this methodology which mainly caters for Primary and Secondary CLIL teachers, is divided into 6 chapters: *Chapter 1*. A theoretical framework on second language acquisition; *Chapter 2*. Doing CLIL; *Chapter 3*. Designing a didactic unit for Primary and Secondary; *Chapter 4*. Creating materials; *Chapter 5*. New technologies and digital resources in L2 teaching; *Chapter 6*. Impact of the CLIL methodology: present and future. *Chapter 6* is followed by a section entitled “Annotated Bibliography” which gathers a number of both classic and new CLIL-related—and non CLIL-related—studies. Our volume concludes with a number of samples of templates in a section called “Annexes.”

The editors

A theoretical framework on second language acquisition¹

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1. Introduction

The current approaches to language teaching—e.g. the communicative approach, task-based teaching and the CLIL methodology, among others—have by far exceeded traditional approaches. This does not mean, however, that some of the principles or activities carried out in this kind of approaches are outdated. For this reason, bearing in mind what languages are, how they have been studied and what the main learning theories have been are key issues to be taken into account before analyzing what L2 teaching is.

Apart from explaining the fundamental principles that underlie these contents, in this introductory chapter we will outline the main characteristics of the communicative approach, of task-based teaching and of those approaches that advocate the idea of integrating L2 teaching into content teaching in several areas as in the case of the CLIL methodology.

To conclude, we will also point out a number of proposals in order to integrate content into the curriculum, to arrange them with some of the most important methodological resources, materials and activities.

¹ This chapter, including Marcos Martín (2000) and Martín Peris (2008), has been translated by Gustavo Sánchez-Canales (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) from Spanish to English.

2. Language and second language acquisition theories. Evolution of language teaching methods

2.1. The dichotomy between language as a system and language in use

Traditionally, there has been an opposition between those who consider that the study of language should be approached as if it was a system and those who place an emphasis on its use.

A language as a sign system

In his *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916)—*Course in General Linguistics* (1959)—Ferdinand de Saussure introduces the idea that a language is a sign system. According to him, a language should be viewed as a structure and this structure is what he calls “langue”—“the system of a language.” Understanding a language as a system means that it is composed of a set of units interrelated in some sort of systematic way. These units are interrelated because they are defined in terms of opposition to other units with which they are connected. For instance, *loved* is a verb in the past tense because the suffix *-d* is opposed to other suffixes such as *-(e)s* of the present tense. The noun *father* also has a meaning because it is opposed to *mother*, *grandfather* and *son*, among others.

The above are general ideas of what later on was known as Structuralism. The approach of Structuralism to language is based on two premises: (1) “Es un estudio inmanente, de la lengua en sí misma y por sí misma”; and (2) “Es un estudio de la lengua como sistema, como estructura, en el sentido matemático de este término, es decir, un conjunto con una operación”² (Marcos Marín, 2000).

According to Saussure, a language—“langue”—is opposed to the concept of “speech”—“parole.” According to him, “[langue] est la partie sociale du langage, extérieure à l’individu, qui à lui seul ne peut pas ni la créer ni la modifier; elle n’existe qu’en vertu d’une sorte de contrat passé entre les membres d’une communauté”³ (1995 [1916] p. 31).

2 (1) “It is an immanent study of language in itself and per se”; and (2) “It is a study of language as a system, as a structure, in a mathematical sense of the word, that is to say, a set with a calculation.”

3 “[Language] is the social side of speech, outside the individual who can never create nor modify it by himself; it exists only by virtue of a sort of contract signed by the members of a community.” Ferdinand de Saussure. *Course in General Linguistics*. Ed. Charles Bally & Albert Sechehaye. Trans. Wade Baskin. New York, Toronto & London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1958, p.14.

The opposite of “language” is then “speech,” an “individual act” for which the speaker uses the rules provided by language. Some schools or disciplines that approach the study of language taking these premises as point of departure are Structuralism and Generativism.

Language in use

While some authors make an “immanent” approach to the study of language, others consider that since the use of language is the most important thing, it is necessary to focus on the contextualization of language. In this sense, it is essential not only to analyse utterances but also statements, texts and discourse. In this way, it is possible to study the speaker’s communicative intention and the hearer’s interpretation of the statement. For instance, in a sentence like “Where is the salt?” it is desirable to know in what context the sentence is uttered, who the addressee is and whether the purpose is to know where the salt is or if the speaker is asking for something.

A number of disciplines—“Discourse Analysis,” “Text Linguistics” and “Pragmatics,” among others—place an emphasis on the use of language.

2.2. Language conceptions and second language acquisition theories

Some of the main second language acquisition theories and their connection with language conceptions are:

1. *Behaviourism*. This is a language acquisition theory that integrates the idea of language as a system. It advocates that a language is acquired through habits and the imitation and repetition of responses to specific stimuli. It is believed that Structuralism has left a lasting mark on language teaching.

“los ejercicios estructurales [...] como son los de repetición, de huecos, de transformación, están basados en la noción de que aprender una lengua es identificar y adquirir sus estructuras a base de repetirlas, y de este modo interiorizarlas”⁴ (Martín Peris, 2008).

2. Chomsky’s *Innatism* advocates the idea that the human being’s innate capacity enables them to learn the grammatical rules of a given language.

⁴ “Structure tests [...] such as drills, fill-in the gaps and rewriting are based on the notion that learning a language consists of identifying and acquiring its structures after repeating them. In this way, it is possible to internalize them.”

3. *Cognitivism*, which focuses on how the mind interprets, processes and stores information, considers that L2 acquisition is different from L1 acquisition. In order to learn a second language, it is necessary to integrate, automate and organise a number of skills. Practice is crucial.
4. According to Vigotsky's *Interactionist Theory of Language*, the social milieu is a key factor in language acquisition because knowledge transfers between individuals and their environment. Taking the idea of "zone of proximal development" as point of departure, the presence of native teachers or language samples play a major role in second language acquisition.

2.3. Assessment in language teaching methods

Throughout the years, the methods and approaches used in L2 teaching have varied as well as the types of classification. Based on Richards and Rogers (1998) and Martín Peris (2008), we reproduce a short list of the most well-known methods and approaches.

1. *Grammatical approach*. The basis for L2 teaching is the analysis of grammatical rules. Once rules have been learnt, reverse and direct translation exercises are made. L1 is a reference system in the process of L2 acquisition.
2. *Reform movement*. It is based on a number of principles such as the preeminence of oral language and the significance of phonetics, teaching of inductive grammar and the absence of translation. L1 is only used to clarify meaning, to check students' understanding in a text and to explain new words.
3. *Natural approach*. In this approach teachers not only make monologues but they also conduct dialogues with their students based on questions and answers in L2. Repetition, gestures, drawings and realia are used in the classroom. Once students acquire the oral language skills, they start to write.
4. *Direct approach*. Among other principles, it is based on the exclusive use of L2, the use of daily lexicon and structures and inductive grammar teaching. There is an emphasis on pronunciation and grammar.
5. *Audiolingual approach*. The basic structure of a class based on this approach consists of:

- Listening to a sample dialogue that is repeated and memorised. The teacher focuses on pronunciation and intonation.
- A number of structures in the dialogue that are chosen and repeated. These structures are included in substitution tables.
- Structure tests that are done on the basis of substitution tables.

Other alternative methods or approaches in language teaching methods are the *total physical response*, the *silent way*, *cooperative learning*, *suggestopedia*, *total language* and the *lexical approach*. Although all these account for the wide range of methods and approaches existing throughout the 20th century, communicative approaches are the most widely used nowadays.

3. Current approaches

3.1. Communicative approaches

Communicative approaches are also known as functional or notional-functional approaches. As their names indicate, the purpose of these approaches is to enable students to understand and produce authentic oral and written conversations. For this reason, the resources used are “genuine” and the proposed activities attempt to reproduce different situations outside the classroom context.

Communicative approaches foster the use of language—this is regarded as a system that expresses meanings—and consider that mastering a language is not only a question of commanding grammatical rules but also of adapting a given message to a specific context. In order to achieve a good command of communicative competence, students have to be able to use their L2 in real situations where it is not an end in itself but a mean to achieve something. It is possible to carry out actions through language—i.e. through words by asking, begging, suggesting, etc. A language is not only something to be studied but a resource to be used for communicative purposes in the classroom. For this reason, teachers and students generally interact with one another.

The main characteristics, principles or activities used in communicative approaches include:

- Considering meaning as the most important element.

- The use of role-plays.
- Project-based learning.
- Focusing on discourse, not only on utterances.
- Fostering the use of L2 at all times.
- Using L1 in very specific cases.
- Making an inductive approach to grammar.
- Considering the coursebook as a complement, not as the main resource.
- Using “authentic” materials such as newspapers, webpages, magazines, brochures, manuals, etc.
- Making a balanced assessment of accuracy and fluency.

Communicative approaches were very successful throughout the 1980s and 1990s, but task-based learning—considered their heir at present—replaced them some two decades ago.

3.2. Task-based learning

Task-based learning, which started in the 1990s as a complement to communicative approaches, fosters second language acquisition through an authentic use of language, not through the use of activities of syntactic structures or of notions and functions. These are typical of communicative approaches.

Task-based learning is a specific response to curriculum design in which objectives, contents, activities, resources, assessment, teachers and students come into play. The design of the course is task-based. Thus, lesson plans, organisation, implementation and assessment are necessary.

A task should be:

- Representative of the communicative processes in real life.
- Identifiable as an activity unit in the classroom.
- Intended to improve language learning.

- Designed with an objective and with a work structure and sequence (Zanón, 1990).

Tasks should be presented at three different stages:

1. In the pre-task teachers, who show the activity and its difficulty, provide students with linguistic resources. These will have to work in groups and follow a specific objective.
2. In the task students try to carry out the proposed activity.
3. Feedback is part of the assessment. This is assessed if the objective/s set by teachers has/have been achieved. At this stage, students explain what difficulties they have encountered in completing the assigned task.

4. Acquiring a language while contents in other areas are learnt

4.1. A definition of CLIL

Learning an L2 while contents in other areas are learnt—i.e. integrating curriculum-linked contents of a course and L2 acquisition in the same course—has been very well received in a number of educational systems across the world.

The integration of language and content has been approached in different ways. L2 teaching in specific courses may alternate with courses included in the curriculum taught in the L2. Likewise, one is likely to come across a course only taught with those characteristics or that over half of the courses of the curriculum are taught in the L2. These are known as “immersion programmes.” At present, the existing criteria to decide whether a curriculum is bilingual are actually heterogeneous.

Nowadays, the most widely used method is known as the CLIL project, which stands for *Content and Language Integrated Learning*. This project started in the mid-1990s in several European universities. Needless to say, apart from the integration of content through the L2, CLIL focuses on:

- New second language acquisition-related aspects.
- The intercultural aspect in communication.

- European integration.
- The development of learning strategies (Martín Peris, 2008).

According to Marsh (2008), CLIL is a tool that can be used to teach and learn content and language. The basic element in the CLIL methodology is integration with a dual focus approach. Firstly, language learning is included in—or integrated into—a number of courses such as mathematics, history, geography, science, etc. This means that information should be arranged in such a way that understanding contents should be easier to achieve. For instance, the creation of outlines, graphs, diagrams, drawings and concept maps—conceptual diagrams—are typical strategies used in the CLIL methodology.

Secondly, content is used in L2 classrooms. L2 teachers work with teachers who are responsible for other (content-based) courses. They include in their L2 classes vocabulary, terminology and texts used in other classes. Students learn the language they need to understand and use content.

This being said, it is advisable to clear up a couple of CLIL-related issues. On the one hand, it is not an approach that only aims to L2 teaching. Rather, this approach attempts to attend to both content and language. In this sense, it provides a balanced combination of language and content instruction. On the other hand, it is not a question of simply teaching content through an L2.

4.2. CLIL: Principles and characteristics

The main principles on which the CLIL methodology is based are:

- The language is simultaneously used to learn and to communicate.
- The studied subject determines the kind of language that needs learning.
- Fluency in language use is more important than accuracy (Pérez, 2008).

In the CLIL methodology it is very common to talk about the so-called “4Cs” (Coyle, 2002; in García, 2009):

- *Content*. This is at the core of the learning process and it enables students to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding of what is closely connected with the subject.
- *Communication*. Students learn to use the language while they are using the language to learn.

- *Cognition*. Knowledge, concepts and language are integrated while cognitive skills are being developed.
- *Culture*. Students are offered a chance to get by in different cultural settings. Learning content through an L2 not only develops awareness of others but also self-awareness. According to Coyle, Hood & Marsh, this element plays a fundamental role in the existence of real European citizenship (2010, pp. 153-154).

4.3. Advantages of the CLIL methodology

Positive CLIL-related aspects include:

- Approaching education as a responsibility shared by all teachers. In this sense, this kind of teaching fosters cooperative work between teachers.
- The idea that CLIL is not only an opportunity to learn languages but also to learn through them. We human beings are born with the capacity to use language. Therefore, the most important thing is to take the opportunities we are offered to learn languages.
- Favouring language acquisition through real situations. In this way, language is contextualised.
- Teaching and learning relevant, meaningful content.
- Instilling in students a higher degree of motivation.
- Fostering more methodological teaching.
- Facilitating conceptualisation.

5. Fundamentals of content integration

5.1. Curriculum organization: tasks, content and projects

In order to be able to integrate contents in a lesson plan, it is necessary to take three contexts into consideration:

- The official curriculum, which in this case appears in the Spanish Royal Decree for English.

- The school: its characteristics and objectives.
- Students' specific needs.

According to Areizaga (2000), language teaching-oriented curricula may basically be arranged in three ways:

- *Task-based* curricula. The class is prepared according to a number of tasks carried out by students. The steps taken when designing a lesson plan are as follows:
 1. Choosing an engaging topic for students such as “describing people.”
 2. Specifying communicative objectives. For instance, understanding and acknowledging information, and asking for and giving information orally and in written form in connection with the topic “describing people.”
 3. Planning final tasks that will demonstrate that the objectives have been achieved. On the second last day students may write a description of a person and attach an illustration such as a picture or a photograph. Students swap their descriptions with a peer, they read them and identify them accordingly. On the last day all the students could do a fill-in-the-gaps task in which they have to exchange information about a relative or a person close to them by asking and answering questions. The aim of this task could be to find one or more persons whose descriptions are similar to that of the student who is asking and answering. Students complete the task in order to show characteristics of the description.
 4. Specifying the thematic—e.g. height, weight, etc.—and linguistic—i.e. lexicon and grammar—components that are necessary or required in order to do the final tasks.
 5. Planning the process that entails sequencing the steps to follow through tasks. For instance, making a simple physical description of a person including their height, weight and colour.
 6. Assessing as part of the learning process. (See Staire, S. and Zanón, J., 1990; in Areizaga, 2000).
- *Content-based* curricula. In this case, the contents of the thematic areas are the point of departure in each lesson plan. This is used in L2 immersion programmes in which (1) all the subjects and areas are contexts of linguistic learning; and (2) in Language for Specific Purposes.