INTRODUCTION

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It is an uncontested fact that we are currently being confronted with a "language challenge" (Tudor, 2008, pp. 42) in our increasingly multilingual and multicultural society. Language education is in turmoil (Lorenzo, 2010) as a result of the new forces at work in our post-modern world: globalization, mobility, integration, and fusion (Mehisto et al., 2008; Coyle et al., 2010). We are living what Mehisto (2008) terms a period of disjuncture, characterized by the tension between the previous order and a new approach which changes the *status quo*. The demands of this new global order resonate directly through to the curriculum (Marsh, 2006) and the need for what Aronin & Hufeisen (2009, pp. 105) denominate "a new linguistic dispensation" arises, where a suffusive, complex, and liminal multilingualism comes to the fore. In response to the demands posed by these powerful forces, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) emerges in the 1990s as a timely solution in harmony with broader social perspectives and fast becomes a "European solution to a European need" (Marsh, 2002, pp. 11). As Ball & Lindsay (2010, pp. 163) put it, "The current ubiquity of the acronym and the practice that it allegedly comprises are a testament to the perception that it could form a new 'explosion' (Kuhn, 1992) in educational practice, arriving to satisfy a thirst of a post-modern multilingual world whose key words are *fusion* and *flexibility*."

However, this new global order is not the sole driving force behind CLIL; it has dovetailed with the need to upgrade foreign language proficiency in Europe and to achieve sustainable learning outcomes (Marsh & Langé, 2000b; de Graaff, Koopman, Anikina & Westhoff, 2007). Indeed, the European Commission's White Paper on *Teaching and Learning. Towards the Learning Society* (1995) established the need for EU citizens to be proficient in three European languages (the mother tongue + 2 objective). In order to attain this goal, language teaching measures need to be stepped up, since the demolinguistics of Europe have consistently evinced that the resources and efforts invested in language learning have failed to deliver the goods, rendering FL education unresponsive to idealized competence standards. It is what Marsh (2002, pp. 9) terms the "delivery gap" between FL curricula and foreign language attainment: "There is a broad consensus within the European Union that a delivery gap exists between what is provided in foreign language education, and outcomes in terms of learner performance. Targets for requisite foreign language competencies are not yet being reached".

This clearly transpires from the 2006 Eurobarometer, a macro-survey on Europeans and their languages conducted by the European Commission, which revealed particularly alarming results for Spain: our country appears as "the bottom rung of the foreign-language knowledge ladder" (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009, pp. 7), with 56% of its citizens admitting to being monolingual and only 17% being capable of holding a conversation in two other languages. This unsuccessful, deficient, or dismal situation of language proficiency is Spain and the dissatisfaction it has spawned are vastly documented in the specialized literature (Agustín Llach, 2009; Cenoz & Jessner, 2009; Fernández Fontech,a 2009; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2009; Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010). In Hornillo Estrella's words (2009): "La enseñanza-aprendizaje de idiomas en España tiene una historia de fracasos, de complejos y de malos vicios [...] Nuestra sociedad es analfabeta en lo que a idiomas se refiere y, además, es consciente de ello y está acomplejada, lo cual tampoco ayuda a mejorar las cosas". Against this backdrop of attested shortcomings, CLIL has been embraced as a possible lever for change and success: "[...] the CLIL approach has become an important tool in supporting the achievement of the European Commission's objective of improving the foreign language proficiency of its citizens" (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009, pp. 15).

A further cause which has contributed to its gathering of momentum stems from the solid empirical groundwork laid by studies on age and foreign language learning. A sizeable literature, particulary in Catalonia and the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) (Muñoz, 2002; Muñoz, 2006; Cenoz & Jessner, 2009; Martínez Adrián & Gutiérrez Mangado, 2009; Navés & Victori, 2010), has evinced through both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies that findings from naturalistic settings which confirm "the younger, the better" hypothesis do not bear out in FL instructed settings. Here, neither starting language instruction early nor increasing the amount of exposure result in significant language gains. Other types of language programs thus need to be considered, where increased contact hours are compounded with meaningful exposure in order to push language learning forward. CLIL comes to prominence as a stepping stone to achieve this.

This recent approach to language teaching has also burgeoned as a response to Europe's desire to become the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world (Marsh, 2002). It helps prepare learners to be flexible and adaptable professionals who can adapt to the varied, unforeseeable, and complex situations they will encounter throughout their personal, social, and professional lives (Jäppinen, 2006), thus forming successful citizens with a substantial contribution to make to society (Cummins, 2000): "We are all involved in the rapid growth of the 'knowledge society' with its far-reaching implications not only for the 'here-and-now', but for our future workforce and appropriately educated citizens" (Coyle 2009a, pp. 172).

In this sense, CLIL is coming to the fore as the pre-tertiary equivalent of the European Higher Education Area. In Pérez-Vidal's (2007, pp. 50) terms, it is "an innovative [...] approach to education which is gaining ground in the European Bologna era". It is held to be modernizing education and methodology (Coyle, 2002, de Bot 2002; Marsh, 2008; Coyle, 2010); fostering didactic innovation (Coonan, 2007; Van de Craen et al., 2007); breathing new life into experiential, student-centered methodologies like task-based approaches, while making language teaching more authentic (Lorenzo, 2007); and, all in all, creating a learning environment better suited to modern pedagogical principles than traditional ones (Wolff, 2002). In this sense, CLIL accommodates the "learn as you use, use as you learn" adage and the preference for hands-on experiential learning which characterizes the cyber generation born after 2001 (Mehisto et

al., 2008; Coyle et al., 2010). CLIL is thus acting as a catalyst for the diversification of methodologies (Marsh, 2002; Gimeno Sanz, 2009) and the supercession of the teacher-controlled banking model of education, giving way to a more social-constructivist, interactive, and student-led learning where teachers pull back from being donors of knowledge to become facilitators. It is therefore exerting the power to "change our encrusted educational structures", as Wolff (2002, pp. 48) undercores.

Fuelled by the afore-mentioned circumstances, CLIL has had an exponential uptake across Europe over the past two decades, gradually becoming an established teaching approach (Järvinen, 2006). Numerous authors testify to this rapid and widespread adoption of CLIL in the European arena (Marsh, 2002; Coonan, 2005; Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006; Lorenzo et al., 2007; Smit, 2007; Coyle et al., 2010), assimilating it to a veritable "explosion of interest" (Coyle, 2006, pp. 2). It has furthermore embedded itself in mainstream education from pre-school to vocational education (Marsh, 2002, 2005) rather swiftly, no longer being the prerogative of the academic elite (Coyle 2009a). In fact, several authors (Lorenzo, 2007; Vez, 2009) go as far as to claim that traditional non-CLIL "drip-feed education" (Vez, 2009, pp. 8) involves moving on the slow track to language learning and that "CLIL is bilingual education at a time when teaching through one single language is seen as second rate education" (Lorenzo, 2007, pp. 35). CLIL, it thus seems, is "spreading fast and here to stay" (Deller, 2005, pp. 29).

This approach, which is thus becoming a buzz considered to be "finger-snappingly with it" (New York Times 1998, in Richards & Rodgers 2001, pp. 204), is used to refer to "a dual-focussed education approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Marsh & Langé, 2000a, pp. 2). The *dual-focused component* underscores the fact that CLIL has two aims: one subject- or theme-related, and the other, language-focused. The *additional language*, in turn, is normally not the most widely used one of the environment (Marsh & Langé 2000a). Finally, the emphasis on both *teaching and content* points to the very hallmark of CLIL: the fact that it straddles these two aspects of learning, involving the fusion of previously fragmented elements of the curriculum and requiring teachers to forego their respective mindsets grounded on a single subject and to pool their skills and knowledge (Coyle et al., 2010). It thus involves a "two for one" approach

(Lightbown & Spada, in Lyster, 2007, pp. 2), where subject matter teaching is used at least some of the time (a minimum of 20%, according to Järvinen, 2006) as a means of increased meaningful exposure to the target language. Therein lies its distinctiveness and innovative and ground-breaking character (Coyle et al., 2010). What separates it from other bilingual education initiatives is its "planned pedagogic integration of contextualized content, cognition, communication and culture into teaching and learning practice" (Coyle et al., 2010, pp. 6).

The purported benefits of CLIL are profuse (Marsh & Langé, 2000a; Madrid & García Sánchez, 2001; Coyle, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Marsh, 2002, 2008; Wolff, 2003; Brown, 2004; Coonan, 2005; Järvinen, 2005; Tejada Molina et al., 2005; Darn, 2006; Lyster, 2007; Muñoz, 2007; Van de Craen et al., 2007; Lasagabaster, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008; Tudor 2008; Gimeno Sanz, W2009; Navés 2009; Coyle et al., 2010). As Rimmer (2009, pp. 5) puts it, CLIL certainly "makes all the right noises to the various stakeholders in the curriculum".

Within the *linguistic dimension*, one of the manisfest benefits of CLIL involves the increased presence of the FL in the curriculum, with its corollary rise in the amount of relevant input and exposure to the language. In this sense, it supersedes the shortcomings of traditional language teaching by providing sufficient, authentic, and unrestricted input. This is conducive to an increase in overall language competence in the target language (TL) (particularly in communicative skills) and the enhancement of specific language terminology. What is more, this takes place without causing collateral damage to the L1, as awareness of both the mother tongue and the foreign language have been documented in CLIL classrooms by the aforementioned authors. This approach is also held to trigger higher levels of communication between the protagonists of the teaching-learning process, as well as frequent interaction via collaborative learning. Language is seen as a tool for communication from the outset of instruction and is used in uncontrived real-life situations. Learners are pushed to produce more meaningful and complex language and fluency is fostered.

In terms of *content knowledge*, just as CLIL is not detrimental for L1 learning, neither does it water down content knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 1997; Cummins, 1999). Integration safeguards the subject matter being taught and parallel development of academic competencies and domain-relevant communicative

skills is documented (Tudor, 2008). Dual-focused education thus appears to provide opportunities to study content through different perspectives, accessing subject-specific terminology in the target language.

As regards the *learning dimension*, CLIL creates the conditions for naturalistic, implicit, or incidental language learning, as it is based on acquisition rather than enforced learning. It provides a context for more meaningful language learning, as the FL is used for real communicative purposes, with more efficient learning outcomes ensuing from such authentic embedding. It equally promotes the negotiation of meaning, which enhances language acquisition, and can foster more in-depth learning by setting relevant and intellectually demanding communication tasks in the FL.

This connects directly with the *cognitive dimension*, since CLIL is heralded as providing cognitive engagement, which is a condition for increased and improved opportunities for language acquisition. It advances learners' cognitive development, broadening their conceptual mapping resources, and develops a wider range of skills: not only communicative ones, but also problem-solving, risk-taking, pragmatic, and interpersonal abilities.

On the *teaching front*, this educational approach is praised for being applicable across all educational levels, for offering teachers opportunities to refresh and hone their skills, and for contributing to build a community of practice where all stakeholders have a role to play. It also lends itself to cooperative learning, which has been shown to result in improved learning (Slavin, 1995; Crandall, 1993, 1994; Troncale, 2002), and to team or tandem teaching, which enhances the quality of FL teaching. All in all, it brings about a modernization of classroom didactics and a diversification of methodologies and forms of pedagogical practice.

In *orectic/volitional terms*, the advantages of CLIL are no less conspicuous. Motivation is enhanced and sustained, and interest is increased in both the L1 and the FL through the linking of content study and language learning. It also raises confidence and student expectations in response to the challenges it poses, and lowers the affective filter. The methodologies associated with it (task-based teaching or cooperative learning) are also more intrinsically motivating.

In turn, *socially*, CLIL affords all students, regardless of social class and economic consideration, the opportunity to learn additional languages in a

meaningful way. It thus promotes social inclusion and egalitarianism, as the introduction of this approach in mainstream education provides a greater range of students with opportunities for linguistic development which they were previously denied. It can also have a positive impact on at-risk learner types.

The merits of CLIL within the *cultural dimension* have also been frequently voiced. It builds intercultural knowledge and understanding, develops intercultural communication skills, and promotes intercultural communicative competence. It equally raises awareness of cultures and the global citizenship agenda. In sum, it offers powerful opportunities for intercultural learning which go beyond those provided by traditional language learning settings.

Finally, on a *pragmatic level*, dual-focused education prepares students for internationalization and EU integration, for future studies and/or working life, and for lifelong learning. It results in increased employability and better equips individuals for the linguistic and cultural demands of an increasingly integrated and mobile Europe.

Though not voiced as forcefully as these advantages, a potentially large downside to CLIL practice has also been identified (Hellekjaer & Wilkinson, 2001; Brown, 2004; Dickey, 2004; Smith, 2005; Darn, 2006; Mehisto et al., 2008; Lasagabaster, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008; Tudor, 2008). If CLIL assets were primarily held to affect students, its possible hurdles are primarily faced by *teachers*. Nonetheless, they also have a bearing on *learners* and on the general *curriculum*, in terms of, inter alia, the *syllabus*, *materials*, *methodology*, and *evaluation*.

Following the aforementioned authors, the potential barriers which *teachers* may encounter on the road to good CLIL practice involve the relative novelty of the project: teachers who embark on this difficult enterprise can apply little of others' navigational knowledge. Their attitudes furthermore stem from their prior personal experience in compartmentalized learning and might thus give way to certain misgivings, misconstrued perceptions, or false myths about the CLIL endeavor which need to be dispelled. For instance, they might harbor misguided beliefs about content and L1 learning lagging behind as a result of integrated educational practices or regarding their suitability only for the most academically gifted students or those with a particular learning style.

A further oft-cited problem which needs to be circumvented is the qualification of teachers: their insufficient mastery of the target language has

surfaced as a major concern, together with the lack of support they receive from educational authorities and the shortage of teacher training programs. Indeed, the demands which CLIL places on teachers are considerable: they must not only be content specialists, but should also have received training in second language pedagogy and need to be capable of providing adequate language input paramount to attaining success in these types of programs. It is thus not surprising that the shortage of CLIL teachers is documented in the official literature: the implementation of this approach is outpacing teacher education provision. A further issue which is highlighted as a possible pitfall is the increased workload which CLIL entails for instructors: it requires a great deal of initiative and effort on their part, as well as learning to collaborate and liaise with other content and/or language colleagues in order to guarantee integration.

For the *student*, however, this educational approach is no less daunting. It poses a greater cognitive challenge which may cause the learner to feel confused, overwhelmed, or even frustrated. The difficulty lies especially in the study of complex academic subject matter through an L2/FL, which may make the task of assimilating such content more intimidating. The more difficult one factor -the language- is, as Dickey (2004) concurs, the less attention can be dedicated to another -the content-. Smith (2005) assimilates this to studying the content in "misty" rather than "clear" weather, something which may well lead to a feeling of inferiority and may negatively impinge on students' confidence.

This circumstance bears directly on the *syllabus* or *content*, which some authors (e.g. Smith, 2005; Darn, 2006) contend can be severely hampered or reduced. Or, alternatively, the opposite may occur: too much concern with area teaching may favor the neglection of formal language teaching and may also lead to L1 attrition (Brown, 2004).

Yet another obstacle which is frequently underscored in the literature involves *materials*. There is a deficient development of content materials and instructional resources, and teachers can easily be deterred by the intimidating task of having to prepare their own materials.

A further attested shortcoming affects *methodology*: CLIL brings with it considerable pedagogical investment in innovative pedagogical practices with which teachers may well not be acquainted, not having experienced them first-hand as students. Another issue which comes to the fore concerns whether this quest to use an FL/L2 as a medium of instruction is an attempt to make the

unnatural natural. Smith (2005), to take a case in point, contends that an Italian teacher teaching Italian children world history in English might come off as artificial.

Finally, the question of *evaluation* is also complicated. How can content and language be evaluated simultaneously? Should the focus be primarily on one or the other? To what extent? And with what instruments?

Further research is clearly called for to answer these questions and keep myths in check. Rimmer (2009, pp. 4) is particularly adamant in sounding a note of caution in this sense: "... my chief concern with CLIL as a methodology is the fact that many, often outlandish, claims made for it are simply unsubstantiated". The afore-mentioned problems will not abate until a solid empirical groundwork can guide CLIL implementation. To date, it remains embryonic (Madrid Fernández, 2006; Langé, 2007; Lyster, 2007; Pérez-Vidal, 2007; Lasagabaster, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008; Lorenzo, Casal & Moore, 2009; Rimmer 2009): "Neither optimistic nor alarming viewpoints should be accepted unless they are supported by empirical evidence. Therefore, the more research data there is available, the more theoretically sound the decision will be" (Lasagabaster, 2008, pp. 40).

This is precisely the remit of the present monograph: to contribute empirically sound data to continue pushing CLIL development forward. It pools the insights of a set of international practitioners and investigators who report on classroom- and research-based experiences which have integrated CLIL implementation within the language education arena. The experiences and studies comprised in this volume will hopefully help us nudge the field forward and open a window into the many possibilities which CLIL has to offer for language learning at all educational levels.

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