Bilingual Education in The Netherlands

The 4 S’s of CLIL

Anglia and Bilingual Education

Four ways to EIOfy a CLIL lesson

CLIL Column

Bilingual Education at Junior Vocational Secondary Level

CLIL in Higher Education: A Happy Learning Experience

CLIL Conference Ede
Sixth national CLIL conference ‘CLIL Broadens Your Horizons’

The sixth national CLIL conference will be held on November 8, 2013, at conference centre De Reehorst in Ede. We expect up to 600 CLIL teachers and school managers from up to 120 CLIL schools all over the country.

This year’s theme is CLIL Broadens Your Horizons. The purpose of bilingual education is to prepare pupils for a future in an international environment. To this end, pupils study English at a high level. European and International Orientation is at the core of the curriculum. But how to put the international dimension of bilingual education into practice? And how to bring the world into the classroom? Bilingual education broadens the horizon of pupils. Apart from focusing on language acquisition and CLIL didactics, workshop leaders will discuss the international dimension of CLIL as well. Participants will come away from the conference with a stronger sense of internationalization and with a number of concrete ideas to put into practice. This year’s opening keynote will be delivered by professor Tanya Byron, a clinician, journalist, author and broadcaster specialising in child and adolescent mental health.

This conference is a must see for all CLIL teachers in The Netherlands, and although the conference will be over by the time this magazine is published, I’ll be sure to have an article on this day in the next issue of CLIL Magazine. It is one of the main event and belongs in CLIL magazine somehow!

Have you been to the conference? Let me know what you learned! Contact me through www.clilmagazine.com and who knows, your response might just be published next time!
From the editor

A combination of in-depth articles and practical tips and tricks. That’s what I had in mind when I first thought of creating a CLIL Magazine. This is only the third edition and already a great mix of both types of articles is present in this issue. Moreover, the initial focus on the Netherlands has changed into a more worldly approach as quite a few articles talk about things happening in the world, something I am extremely proud of.

Nevertheless, this issue was very close to never being published as the financial needs were only barely met. As you know, this magazine can only be published thanks to advertisers and it proved difficult to find advertisements for this issue. Therefore, I hope you like this issue and would be willing to buy a subscription for only €40,- per year. This subscription includes thirty magazines of both the Spring and Fall editions and you’ll receive the magazine as soon as it’s published. Furthermore, it eliminates the hassle with invoices. This way, CLIL Magazine will be able to enjoy more financial security allowing for additional publications. So, please visit www.clilmagazine.com to order your subscription and give feedback on the magazine.

The theme of this issue is Internationalization. You will find an interview with Arnold Koot, headmaster of Wolfert Bilingual, who talks about the way bilingual education helps develop students who are world oriented. To exemplify, two articles in this magazine have been written by international teachers: Melissa Yu, from Southampton, and Ling Jie, Xi Hongmei, Jiang Xiujuan and Dai Jiaqi from China. Arnold Koot also discusses the way bilingual education in the Netherlands has been developing TVMBO. Research on this has been done by Jenny Denman who generously contributed an article.

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An interview with Sander van Haarlem and the Wartburg College shows the practical application of the Anglia materials. You will also find practical lesson ideas in articles written by Rosie Tanner (The Four S’s of CLIL), Jason Skeet (EIO) and Liz Dale (Lesson Observations).

I believe this magazine provides a wide variety of articles and something everyone can relate to. Have fun reading this issue of CLIL Magazine and don’t forget to visit www.clilmagazine.com to subscribe!

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Colophon

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Bilingual education in the The Netherlands

By Arnold Koot

What school do you work for and what is your function within the school?
My name is Arnold Koot and I work at Wolfert Bilingual, part of the Wolfert van Borselen School community. I have been a location manager since 2003 and have been involved with bilingual education since 1992: first as a teacher in physical education, then as tutor and team leader, and eventually as a location manager with the responsibility for bilingual education. Our school location offers education to about 900 students on both havo and vwo level. Thanks to our collaboration with the Rotterdam International Secondary School we can offer all IB levels in the upper-level classes.

Bilingual Education has been around for about 25 years and we were one of the first ones to start in 1992.

Does your experience explain your involvement in the committee of bilingual schools?
In the past there was a network of schools called ‘Bilingual Education Network,’ but this network was managed with a lot of people and, in my opinion, was not quite decisive. A couple of years ago the size of management involved was reduced and the goals were clarified. That was the moment I became more involved with the network and eventually responded to the vacancy that opened up.

What is the current stand of the committee concerning Bilingual Education in The Netherlands?
CLIL has been an important part of bilingual education throughout the years as well as the notion that we are part of a diverse international community. In the past decisions and policies were ad hoc, these days we focus more on the long term. As an example, we’ll be meeting in November to decide on the policies and goals for 2025. Part of the focus will be about the teaching materials we want to use as well as the expansion of bilingual education to vmbo (see “CLIL at vmbo” further in the magazine, red.). These are clear objectives that we want to work on for the future. With these goals in mind we can be a lot more concrete about activities than the occasional ‘you have to go to England,’ which was more or less the way it worked in the past.

We are also working on a collaboration with the teachers’ schools to work together on topics with both the European Platform and the Bilingual Committee.

The European Platform and the Committee are separate organisations despite the fact that they work together a lot.
Can you explain some of the differences?
As committee and EPF we work together and make up the management. We also organise network meetings for all bilingual schools, as well as director meetings every 1.5-2 years. In those meetings, decisions are made about the quality of bilingual education.

An example of the way the committee works is the way we can stress certain areas of bilingual education. At first, we wanted to focus on CLIL didactics, followed by the expansion of bilingual education to the havo level. After that we focused on Europe and soon after on the world as a whole. We are already working together with a school in China and are hoping more of the BRIC countries will be involved in our education soon.

You mention the expansion to vmbo. Is that just starting?
No, it has already started a couple of years ago but its popularity is increasing. There about 30 to 40 schools working on bilingual programs for all levels of vmbo.

What are your responsibilities within the committee?
That used to be bilingual havo and internationalization. However, that will probably change soon as we are rearranging our responsibilities within the committee. I will probably be more involved with politics as a subject within bilingual education instead of bilingual havo, as that is a well organised concept by now.

There are standards for safekeeping the quality of bilingual education. Can you tell more about this and the way the visitations work?
The standards of bilingual education in the Netherlands were established years ago by the directors. Recently, many visitations
have been taking place to check if these standards are still actively complied with. With the first visitation a director is always present to check the quality and keep a close eye on the way the standard is worked on at schools. Quite a few schools were told to change some things. That was a surprise as you’d think things could only have gotten better with the international contacts and quality of the teachers. Apparently things have declined somewhat during the last few years.

**Could one of the reasons for this decline be the change of focus over the last couple of years?**

No, although the focus might be different, the standard for bilingual education never changed. There are, for example, clear rules on international travel and the level of English proficiency teachers should achieve. That somehow declined over the last few years. I have a feeling that schools have been set back on track by the first visitations and most schools are doing well again, trying hard to uphold the standard. During one of the network meetings we also presented the results of these visitations and the coordinators of the schools took these results back to their own schools. We also get more requests on helping out with explaining the standard. It seems to be more vivid these days and that is an excellent development.

The committee determines the focus of bilingual education.

**Does it also provide practical advice?**

Yes, in the network meetings we organise workshops based on questions from schools all over the country. A few topics that have been discussed this way have been EIO, Bilingual have and the collaboration with people from China in secondary education. Apart from this, the biyearly national TTO day also provides dozens of workshops for the further development of teachers and schools. (See the article about this further on in the magazine, red.)

This network can be of great help as long as people actively participate in it. If a school does not in any way do anything to stay up to date, you will eventually lose track. A way to stay sharp are international trips for teachers.

**Can you give an example of this?**

I went to a conference last year in Birmingham with a group of people and met Erik Mazur, the creator of the ‘Flipping the Classroom’ concept. I think this is a great way of using didactics. He also provided a presentation that I showed to my colleagues when I got back and noticed that students are learning to use this new way of teaching as well. Some students like it, others don’t. However, by trying out these ideas you come up with new ones and create a dynamic learning environment.

Erik Mazur will also be visiting the network next year when bilingual education celebrates its 25th anniversary in the Netherlands. To conclude: there is still much we can learn from our international colleagues.

**What do you think will happen to bilingual education over the next 10 years?**

I think bilingual education will take another leap towards internationalization and go worldwide. One disadvantage of this are the costs involved, but cultures that are further away from Europe are so different from ours that we can learn a lot from them. Because of the costs, I think we will also experience a digital revolution in education. Travelling to India is very expensive, but communication through video and Skype is cheap. A lot of people already do this on a daily basis, but somehow this is still not very common in schools. I think this will change rapidly over the years.

**Could a possible result of this international focus be the allowance of a non-physical exchange program in the standard for schools?**

That is possible, although the lower-level classes should still visit other countries in Europe like England or Spain. When students from higher-level classes visit China with a couple of students the costs are very high, so this will only be possible for a lucky few. We have noticed at school that, as soon as students know who they need to collaborate with, they get to know each other on Skype. Five or six years ago we might have been looking at the people arriving at the airfield wondering which students were our visitors, now our students already recognise their partners. It really works!

It is important that we, as the committee, as well as the bilingual network and the European Platform are ready for these changes. I do not worry about this, we are very open-minded.

**A very important aspect of bilingual education are CLIL didactics. What does your school do with this?**

We collaborate with Leiden University to train our own international teachers. This has been very successful. It actually is so successful that we have been invited to Shanghai, the partner city of Rotterdam, to train our Chinese colleagues on CLIL. We gave a presentation about this a couple of years ago and we recently got this invitation, together with the University. Obviously this is a great experience for our teachers.

Because we train our own teachers, many have been trained in the way CLIL works and everyone realizes what needs to be done in bilingual lessons. We visit classes every year to help each other and focus on CLIL didactics as well as the quality of the lessons provided. We have an open-door policy, meaning everyone can visit anyone’s lessons at any time. An example of this is the fact that a Japanese delegation of 25 people will be visiting our schools shortly. I don’t even need to tell my colleagues, they’ll just have a couple of visitors in class and no one will mind. That is the way it works at our school. We needed some time to create this sense of openness, but these days it’s a very common thing to do.
The 4S’s of CLIL

By Rosie Tanner

Complex texts: making them easier

During a workshop with teachers of first year CLIL classes, we discussed a problem that they commonly experience: the texts that the children have to read are far too difficult for them. As a result, the students can’t learn the material effectively. In this article, I present a model which can help you to solve this problem: the 4S’s of CLIL.

How can you, as a CLIL teacher, work with complex texts, so that your students understand the concepts, ideas and language that you want to teach them? It goes without saying in CLIL that if you are teaching a cognitively challenging concept, it helps if the text you are using is written in relatively simple language. And, conversely, if the concepts you want to teach are simpler, you can use more challenging input in terms of language. However, sometimes you don’t have a choice: you must cover the materials in your course book and the texts are just too difficult for your students. This article describes some ways of supporting your students to get through difficult materials.

The 4 S’s of CLIL

I have designed a model to help teachers remember ways of dealing with complex texts: the 4 S’s of CLIL. To summarize, these 4 S’s are: Shorten, Simplify, Supplement and Shape. Below, I go into each ‘S’ in more detail.

The 4 S’s of dealing with complex texts

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<th>Shorten</th>
<th>Simplify</th>
<th>Supplement</th>
<th>Shape</th>
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Figure 1: the 4 S’s of CLIL

The first S: shorten

Long texts and paragraphs are daunting for any reader, let alone first year students. The first S is simple: just shorten your text. Remove the information that your students do not need in order to understand the ideas. It is also a fact that long paragraphs and sentences make a text hard to muddle through, so it is useful to divide long, complicated paragraphs or sentences into two or more shorter pieces. Ideally, in terms of content, there should be just one idea per paragraph and one piece of information per sentence.

The second S: supplement

The S for supplement is perhaps the easiest S to put into practice. You can supplement your text in one or more of the following ways:

Find and use some extra, multimodal input

Every experienced CLIL teacher knows about the importance of multimodal input – different kinds of input which appeal to different learning styles: using multimodal input is an important characteristic of a good CLIL lesson. So supplement your text with, for example, an extra, easier text about your topic, a visual (picture, photograph, reproduction of a piece of art), an interesting video, or additional visual keys, such as data, charts or graphs. Adding visuals lightens the load of looking at a page of text. As you can see here!

Write an extra introduction

Write a brief introduction to your text. Students read this introduction first, accompanied by one or two easy tasks: this will also warm up their reading skills. Your introduction might include: a summary of the whole text, some background information, an explanation of why the text is interesting, or instructions on how they should read the text and what they should look for.

Add markers to the text

Adding linking words or phrases such as ‘on the other hand’ or ‘firstly,’ ‘lastly’ to the text helps your students to understand how the text is organised. It also supports them in an important reading strategy: predicting what information is coming next. Adding markers and paying attention to them also models for students the kinds of expressions they will need to include in their [academic] writing.

Give examples

Add some examples to clarify complex concepts. Examples help students to understand because they can link prior experiences or knowledge with new information.

Add headings and sub-headings

Think of clear, meaningful headings and sub-headings for all of the paragraphs in your text. These will guide your students through the text and provide them with clues about what information is coming next. It also makes it easier for them to find information when answering questions. With a very long text, you can also give each page a meaningful title.

Provide pre-reading tasks

Pre-reading tasks are those that you give before the students read the text itself: their aim is to activate the students’ prior knowledge, to motivate and focus them and to warm them up to the topic [Dale, van der Es and Tanner, 2010: 23-27]. Pre-reading tasks help students to develop reading strategies across the subjects, such as learning to guess the meaning of words they get stuck on or predicting what they are going to be reading. These, in turn, helps to increase reading speed in the long run.

Some examples:

1. Ask students to put pictures about the text into the right order.
2. Find and discuss or ask questions about a picture which is closely related to the text.
3. Ask students to match pictures to words.
4. Discuss what the title of the text might mean.
5. Talk about which words or ideas might appear in a text with this particular title.
6. Provide 10 words from the text and invite students to guess what the text might be about.
7. Ask students to predict the answers to true/false questions about the content. Don’t tell them the answer: they find the answers themselves while reading the text.

T.H.I.E.V.V.E.S.

T.H.I.E.V.V.E.S. is an acronym for text features that can help students to preview and get the global idea about a text before they read:

Title

Headings

Introduction

Every first sentence of sections or paragraphs

Visuals

Vocabulary, often bolded

End questions or

Every author-generated question

Summary

Figure 2: T.H.I.E.V.V.E.S.

Adapted from: Isakson, Marné B. Five Keys to Helping Students Read Difficult Texts. http://ctl.byu.edu/node/329
Pre-teach content and/or language
Pre-teaching means pointing out important language or content, before you actually go into the details of your input. It involves pointing out in advance the key concepts or words which students definitely do not know - but which they need to know to understand the material. And it helps to activate prior knowledge about language and content as well as develop the important reading strategy of prediction, or guessing.

Some ideas:
1. Write on the board, explain and illustrate the vital new keywords that students need to know in advance.
2. Ask students to guess the story or contents of the text from the pre-taught new vocabulary.
3. Put the new key words on the board: students guess their meaning.
4. After you have pre-taught the keywords, ask students to predict other words which might appear in the text.
5. Pre-teach a grammar point in the text (e.g. conditionals if the text is about a hypothesis, or comparisons if the text discusses similarities or differences between concepts).
6. Talk about cultural information which students might not be aware of.

Provide appropriate tasks at your students’ level
You can make a text easier or more difficult by providing different levels of tasks. And these tasks need to match the students, rather than the text, so create tasks at the level of your class. Why are we reading this text? What is our purpose? What are the main ideas that these students can grasp from the text? The more complex the topics, the concepts and the language in the text, the easier your tasks should be.

Provide understanding tasks while reading, not afterwards
Give students questions or tasks before they start to read your chosen text; this gives them clues to what they will be reading, as well as focussing them on the important information that you want them to learn. You can already start introducing or recycling the key words from the text in these questions. Giving tasks after students have read a text is a memory test. Giving tasks before reading gives students a reason to read (to do the task), and helps to develop reading skills and strategies like predicting, skimming, and scanning.

Provide a glossary – but not always
The disadvantage of providing a glossary is that it actually slows down reading speed; however, some materials still include texts with a glossary somewhere on the page. One advantage of a glossary is that it is much quicker and easier for you to create than actually changing the text itself.

The third S: simplify
One rule of thumb is that a text at the right level should contain no more than 15 new words per page for your students: 90% of the vocabulary should be at the right level if you want students to pick up language and ideas from the text. So if there are many new words for your students, you need to simplify them. One idea is to look in a learners’ dictionary of the same level as your students: if a word in the text is not in the dictionary and is important for overall understanding, replace it with an easier word. Another important point is that students don’t need to understand every single word in every single text: words that are not vital for understanding can stay in the text. This helps students practice in the reading strategy of ignoring words: they can learn that they can understand a text even if they do not understand every single word.

If you are simplifying or writing your own text, here are some grammar tips:
1. Use simple sentences (subject, verb, object) and verbs in the active voice rather than the passive voice. Example: use ‘monkeys eat bananas’ rather than ‘bananas are eaten by monkeys.’
2. Use positive language and avoid negatives (e.g. expressions like can’t, won’t, unable to).
3. Use simple and commonly used verb tenses such as present, past simple and simple future, rather than conditionals or the past perfect (continuous!).
4. Don’t turn verbs into nouns: for example, don’t write ‘animal protection procedure development,’ but ‘developing procedures to protect animals.’

And avoid the following, if possible:
1. Pronouns because the reader has to infer to what subject they refer.
2. Inversions between verb and subject, e.g. ‘Into the room slipped a giant crocodile.’
3. Abstract concepts (ideas or concepts that have no physical reference), e.g. freedom, justice, sexism.
4. Metaphors and figures of speech. If necessary, illustrate them with practical examples.
5. Synonyms, abbreviations and acronyms.
6. Excess words, e.g. Write ‘difficult’ instead of ‘particularly difficult.’

And the fourth S: shape
The fourth S involves looking at the shape of a text - its format and layout. One of the easiest ways of rewriting a text is to write it as a completely different genre of text. Easy forms for students to understand include notes, postcards and emails. For example, an academic article about nutrition could be rewritten as an illustrated brochure for a doctor’s waiting room.

A clear layout helps reading considerably, too. Here are some layout tips:
1. Present related points in a list rather than a long paragraph.
2. Avoid many columns on one page.
3. Use numbered lists rather than bullets.
4. Create more space between lines (1.5 to 2 times line spacing).
5. Don’t split words at the end of the line – this can slow down reading speed and rules about splitting words in English are complicated.
6. Illustrate your input. Use pictures, icons and symbols. Illustrations must be clear, precise and in colour if possible and be accompanied with a brief and simple explanatory text and title.

How familiar are the contents of your text to your students? Students can also be put off by unfamilialace names, people’s names, names of foods etc. that are not important for the comprehension of the text. Try changing these things to something more familiar such as the name of a local city.

To conclude, I hope that the 4S’s of CLIL will become as strong a part of your teaching repertoire as the 4Cs (ooh - what were they again?).

Rosie Tanner is an independent education consultant. Contact information: r.tanner@telfort.nl 06 28745670. Her website, www.rosietanner.com should be online by Christmas.

Reference
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A Research Project

Does bilingual education* at junior vocational secondary level ‘work’? In other words, do vmbo pupils who have some subject lessons in English, such as art or biology, achieve a higher level of (English) language proficiency without adverse effects to their Dutch proficiency or their subject knowledge? Additionally, are there other factors in bilingual education at this level, such as motivation and attitude, which may offer added value? What ‘good practices’ seem to contribute to successful CLIL programs for this population?

These are the main research questions of my PhD research project, begun in early 2012 and supervised by dr. Erik van Schooten (Kenniscentrum Talentontwikkelking, Instituut voor Onderwijs en Innovatie, Hogeschool Rotterdam) and Prof. dr. Rick de Graaff (Universiteit Utrecht). Although previous studies have measured the English language proficiency of vmbo pupils, this project is the first bilingual education research project in the Netherlands to specifically target vmbo pupils. From an international perspective the project is also unique, since Dutch pupils are streamed into the different secondary school levels at a relatively early age. My research has consequently produced results based on either high-achieving pupils selected especially for CLIL classes, or on heterogeneous groups which include such pupils.

This study’s population is different, which makes the research especially exciting. The CLIL situation at vmbo schools is also not comparable to that of havo/vwo programs: besides the difference in school level, the CLIL ‘Standaard’ for TTO-vmbo, as set out in the European Platform and the national network for bilingual education (Landelijk Netwerk voor tweetalig onderwijs, SNV), stipulates that 30% of the curriculum be offered in English (as opposed to 50% for TTO at havo/vwo), and the target attainment, expressed in CEFR levels, is lower. TTO-vmbo schools are required, according to the ‘Standaard’, to have at least one native speaker teaching in the program, whereas havo-vwo programs are required to have at least two. Finally, TTO-vmbo schools ask a lower parental contribution (or none at all), which means a lower school budget for extra materials and international trips.

The project is longitudinal and quasi-experimental, the data measurements will take place several times in the course of two years (2012-2014) and the participating pupils and classes were not selected randomly, but were chosen by the seven schools which volunteered to participate. In total, the twenty-seven classes chosen represent seven different combinations of vmbo levels, from ‘vmbo-basis’ to ‘mavo-havo’ in years 1, 2 and 3, split between CLIL and non-CLIL classes. There are approximately 540 pupils participating, of whom 35% have indicated that at least one parent has a non-Dutch language background – 49 different languages in all. Interestingly, the percentage of pupils with a non-Dutch, non-English language background is higher in the CLIL group than the non-CLIL group.

The data being used to answer the research questions is both quantitative and qualitative, and the instruments are designed to measure a variety of skills and constructs. There is, of course, a battery of English tests: a Peabody picture-type multiple choice test to measure vocabulary (receptive), a gap-fill test to measure grammar in context (productive), a writing task, and an individual speaking task (recorded). There is also a Dutch multiple-choice vocabulary test as well as questionnaires to measure self-esteem, attitude and ‘willingness to speak’, and pupil biodata. Small groups of pupils are also interviewed about their experiences with English at school and outside of school. To obtain the teacher perspective, there are classroom practice and biodata questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. Finally, at school level, there is a questionnaire for CLIL coordinators.

After pilot sessions with a group of non-participants, the CLIL vmbo pupils from another school, the pupil instruments were fine-tuned and used for the 0-measurement in the first half of the school year 2012-2013. This was a crucial step in determining the entry level of the pupils at the start of the project; how can we speak of language proficiency gains if we don’t know where they started? It seems like a self-evident question, yet it has been neglected in some CLIL studies, resulting in skepticism about results. I am determined to ensure that this study’s o-measurement is thorough.

As a teacher-trainer, I am fortunate to have students who are eager to learn more about CLIL and the research process. There are two teams of trainee English teachers who are helping with the transcription, holistic assessment, and more detailed analysis of the writing and speaking tasks. This is a huge job (so far, 250 pages of writing tasks and nearly 1000 minutes of speaking recordings); I am deeply grateful to them, and gratified that they report to be learning about assessment, language development, error analysis, and inter-rater reliability. I would also like to express my appreciation to the TTO coordinators and teachers at the research schools, and most of all to the 500+ pupils for their participation, cooperation and particularly for their stamina through the triple battery of tests and questionnaires. The statistical analysis of the o-measurement results is now nearly complete and the pupil group interviews are being transcribed.

The second measurement, conducted at the end of the school year 2012-2013, is now in the data entry stage. The final measurement is planned for the end of the school year 2013-2014, with the enormous analysis task continuing for quite a while after that. There are tantalizing patterns emerging, but you will have to be patient!

Significant differences are present in the interpretation and application of the CLIL approach in the schools and classrooms. Project-based learning, e-twinning, code-switching and rotating all-English/all-Dutch blocks are some of the strategies being implemented. Obviously, these differences contribute to the complexity of the researcher’s task, but they are part and parcel of the CLIL landscape.

The research project has been presented internationally at conferences in Belgium, Poland and Spain; there is great interest from CLIL stakeholders in Europe and beyond. In the Netherlands, the results will be particularly relevant as this study is a discussion about the growing role of English in primary and secondary education, and the question of its potential effect on Dutch proficiency levels – a sensitive issue at vmbo level, particularly regarding pupils with additional home languages. Do pupils who have additional subject-based English lessons become more linguistically aware, and if so, does this awareness transfer to meta-linguistic proficiency in Dutch? Do the lexical similarities between English and Dutch result in lexical gains? And – crucially, especially relevant in the Netherlands – does the added value of the CLIL experience make pupils more positive about school in general? These are some of the questions which my present and future research will attempt to answer. I look forward to sharing the research results with you in the future.

You may be interested in the article “CLIL in Junior Vocational Secondary Education: Challenges and Opportunities for Teaching and Learning” (Jenny Denman, Rosie Tanner and Rick de Graaff) which appeared in the International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, Volume 16, Issue 3, 2013 (Special Issue: Content and Language Integrated Learning: Language Policy and Pedagogical Practice).

Jenny Denman is a teacher trainer at the Instituut voor Lerarenopleidingen, Hogeschool Rotterdam. She has taught English at primary, secondary and tertiary level in the Netherlands and is a Cambridge oral examiner at FCE-CAE-CPE level for the British Council. She highly recommends the book The Lexical Approach by Michael Lewis.

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*In this article the terms ‘CLIL’ and ‘bilingual education’ are used interchangeably, even though there are some different interpretations of the definitions and a variety of applications both in the Netherlands and internationally. This research project deals only with English bilingual education, but let us not forget that German bilingual education at vmbo level is also offered in the Netherlands!
Anglia and Wartburg: A success story

An Interview with Sander van Haarlem, Network Manager of Anglia Network Europe and Lia Castro Mata and Margriet Tammel of the Wartburg College in Rotterdam on the application of Anglia at their school.

Can you tell us in what way your school applies Anglia?

Lia: We started a pilot in January 2011 offering our first years a special course of English. We expected to receive about 40-50 participants, but received 135 applications. When 133 of those students passed their exams we decided to continue with this course and soon we will have a thousand students who participated in our Strengthened Language Course (VTO), which is what we use Anglia's resources for.

In what departments of your school do you work with Anglia?

We started the pilot with first years only, but soon expanded it to all of the lower years. These days we try to convince students to try and achieve higher certificates, resulting in students doing exams for the second or even third time. We even have students who have reached the Masters level. Students of all departments can join the course at their own level at different moments in the year.

What was your motivation to start working with Anglia?

We wanted to give extra attention to the subject English at our school. Because of our identity as a ‘reformed’ school, we have students who do not watch television at home. This results in some of the students having to make up arrears. The material Anglia offers completely fits into both our objectives and our identity and is therefore well suited.

What does Anglia offer that differs from other courses that can teach English?

Every student is rewarded with a certificate at his or her own level. They understand the value of what they are doing and want to achieve an international acknowledged certificate that offers a multitude of possibilities after they leave our school. Of course, we also like the fact we can offer something extra. Students are proud and motivated to work with English the way we offer it right now.

Sander: Both Anglia, and other companies that offer international exams, are linked to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), so there is a common system of levelled English proficiency that is followed and worked within. Because of this framework, the content from one English examination company to another does not vary drastically, however, I think the Anglia difference can be found in our support efforts. The fact that we offer our materials to over 350 schools in the Netherlands—supporting and coaching them—makes a world of difference. We offer materials and courses specifically suited for both schools as well as the students. We work hard to support our Members, and customise programs to inspire and encourage English at school. We have, for example, programs where students play games that blend sports activities and English exercises, so they are immersed in English spoken by the people around them. Another thing we do is offer exam training for both Anglia exams and the ‘centraal schriftelijke examens Engels’. In response to requests from our Anglia Network, we also organise summer school courses where we bring a little bit of England into the Netherlands. Our Summer Schools are a popular and exciting venue for students seeking English at their own level. We’ve been organising our summer school programmes for 10 years now, and we are planning on holding programmes at over 50 venues next year—both within Holland and internationally. In addition to this, we also train teachers, and even bring them to England to learn more about the English language, didactics, and communicative skills.

Anglia is so much more than just the exams. As an organisation, we try to be as close to the schools as possible and of course, be very approachable. These personal contacts we build and maintain makes us unique, I think.

Lia: Indeed. Anglia comes up with ideas and helps us develop custom-made courses. Both the sporting day and the exam training they offered were of high quality.

It’s good to hear the expectations that the school has are met. You mentioned a sporting day, could you tell something more about that?

The Anglia Spring Days. This day was organised by four students of the Christian High school Ede. They came up with two day that consisted of three half days of English lessons and one part sport and games for about 180 pupils. The emphasis might have been a bit too much on the speaking part of English, but it certainly was a huge success. We are considering offering this day to the higher grades as well.

What can you tell us about the way the students at your school experience Anglia?

Students have to participate in an online placement test to determine their entrance level. We check those levels ourselves as well, because students can end up at a level that is too low. That would be a pity, so we sometimes advice students to try and do an exam at a higher level. It also happens that students experience that the exam was too easy for them so they try to do the exams again later at a higher level. Sometimes students do not pass the exams, but in our opinion this stresses the fact that they do have to work really hard for the exams. It’s not something that comes easy.

Sander: I would like to think that Anglia’s vision of English education is based on stimulating language learning by engaging students in new and motivating ways. That is the reason we have custom-made courses and exercises for each student, at their own level. This allows students to make most of their current English talents and choose a level that fits them. Under this model, a student is also able to study, write, and pass an exam with confidence, which is both motivating and stimulates further language development. We think it would be very frustrating if one student would not pass the exams, most of the time that is probably the student who experiences a lot of problems learning the language. When we look at the numbers, the vast majority of students taking an Anglia exam pass and do well because of this possibility to differentiate—to select a level that best fits them. There are also some schools that require all their students take an Anglia exam at a specific level, which can result in a decreased number of students passing the exam because they may not yet be fluent enough within that particular level.

This suggests the Anglia levels are not linked to the departments like havo or vwo on a secondary school.

Sander: Because our step by step approach, every student can work with Anglia. There is no such thing as a standard Anglia Exam for the student in the third year of havo or the fourth of vwo. They can all work with Anglia, at their own level.

Lia: We recently introduced Anglia in the vmbo as well, with the added demand of Elementary level which coincides with the national level of English they have to achieve at their exams. These students are supported by teachers who offer extra lessons. This is an example of our school facilitating teachers to uphold the quality of English.
Do you organise other activities like the Spring Days at your school?
Not at this moment, but as mentioned before, we are looking at ways to implement the Spring Days in the higher years as well. We offer the Strengthened Language Course in years the second and third years of our school but because we switch to Dutch again in the higher ears the Spring Days might be an effective way for the students to actively use their English again.

Another idea that will we execute this school year is sending students from higher years to primary schools to promote English. They talk about the possibilities and we hope this will convince students to join our Anglia programme, or even better, start an Anglia programme themselves. This would result in students with more knowledge of English when they go to our school.

Sander:
A smooth transition to secondary school English is very valuable. Primary schools offer a wide variety of different ways to learn English. With Anglia, an on-going learning line from primary to secondary school and further is possible. Fortunately, many primary and secondary schools are already working together, and discussing the way English is taught at their schools.

Can you explain the difference between the Strengthened Language Course and Bilingual Education?
Margriet:
We are a small auxiliary branch of Wartburg College and as such do not have sufficient students and teachers to offer a complete bilingual course. Because we believe English is something our students should learn to work with we offer the Strengthened Language Course. I do not expect us to become a complete bilingual school but we do look for ways to improve our VTO programme.

In what ways does Anglia support English education other than the ways just mentioned?
Sander:
Over 350 schools in the Netherlands are part of Anglia Network Europe. Primary schools, secondary schools and various vocational institutes are included in our member-base. Because there is no such thing as the ‘Anglia way’ of teaching, schools and teachers are free to implement whatever elements, methods, and pedagogies they feel are relevant and interesting. Our step-by-step levels of English proficiency provide great flexibility, so every Anglia school can find it’s own unique way of applying our levels and services. We function as a guide - a foundation upon which schools and teachers can build their programmes and courses. It is very likely that Wartburg College does things quite differently from other schools, and that is perfectly fine. We need to ensure that our system can adjust to suit the individual needs and character of a school.

So Anglia offers both a few extra lesson of English as well as complete support course for Bilingual Education and everything in between?
Indeed. Some schools simply offer the Anglia exams, where others put signs up saying they are an Anglia school and have big ceremonies where students receive their certificates. Wartburg College is an example of a very active Anglia schools offering not only exams but Anglia Activity Days and Exam Training (via our English Academy) as well. They also participate in network meetings with other Anglia schools. At these meetings, which are open to schools that might be interested in Anglia as well, we talk about ways we can help schools be even better. Twice per year we offer subject specific workshops which are visited by schools, teacher education programmes and the University College students. On the 13th of November we will have our next Anglia Members’ Meeting in Soest. You are all invited to join.

Teachers that have to teach in a language that’s not their mother tongue will have to be prepared very well.
How did your school do this?
Margriet:
The main school does offer bilingual education and when their teachers went to achieve certificates teachers from our school joined them. There is also a native speaker who works at our main school whose sole job is to actively support the teachers. At our location I am the one responsible for the contact with this native speakers. We also go to England quite often to improve our English.

This magazine is called CLIL Magazine. As such, I was wondering how you implement CLIL into your Strengthened Language Course
Because the teachers that teach VTO also teach their subject in English we have the same didactic challenges as a bilingual teacher. That’s one of the reasons our teachers go to Hilderstone regularly, to be taught in both the language as well as the CLIL didactics.

Can you tell something of what you are proud of concerning Anglia?
Sander:
Personally, I greatly value our efforts of inclusiveness. We are an ‘inclusive’ network instead of an ‘exclusive’ network, which excludes people. We try very hard to involve as many people as we can in our network, projects and programmes, and work to inspire collaboration between the different schools too. Every student can learn English as their own pace, regardless of the type of school they are attending. Any school can join our network and take Anglia Exams at prices lower than most of our competitors, and in doing so, they are able to access a wealth of English exercises, experience, and of course-exams.

Sander van Haarlem

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Four ways to EI0fy a CLIL lesson

By Jason Skeet, j.a.skeet@uu.nl

European and International Orientation (EIO) is often an aspect of bilingual education here in The Netherlands that teachers find difficult to integrate into subject lessons. For example, some aspects of the EIO rubric are rather abstract — if you’ve never seen the EIO rubric it can be downloaded from the European Platform’s website. One problem that I personally have with the rubric is that it does not offer concrete examples of how to put particular criteria into classroom practice — although, to be fair, it was never designed with this in mind.

Of course, for some teachers, such as sociological studies, geography and history teachers, incorporating EIO can be as straightforward as identifying relevant content that connects with their subject. For example, in the first ‘domain’ on the rubric, which concerns knowledge and understanding, the statement “I have basic knowledge of the geography in Europe and a general idea of European history” is easily relatable to history and geography lessons. The only thing that the teacher then needs to do with their students is to make this statement into an explicit learning objective so that the students also understand this as being EIO.

At some schools the approach has been to teach EIO as a separate subject, with lessons that tend to focus on the knowledge and understanding domain within the EIO rubric. But what about other subjects in the TTO curriculum, and what about other domains in the rubric focused more on skills and/or the ability to demonstrate something? For example, the statement on the rubric “I show interest and respect for others in Europe and the wider world” from the rubric’s third domain calls for more than only knowledge and understanding: it requires the ability to communicate effectively with others, to negotiate solutions to particular problems or to be able to resolve conflicts. Activities that pupils do in the classroom could then be seen as preparing them to go off into the wider world where they put these skills into practice.

How, then, does a science or maths teacher add an international dimension to their lessons? After all, if you take a look at the teacher competencies for TTO teachers — also downloadable from the European Platform — all teachers are expected to integrate EIO into their lessons.

In order to try and offer teachers a concrete approach that includes examples for actual teaching practice for how to ‘EI0fy’ a lesson, what follows are four EIO teaching strategies. These strategies are:

- Experiencing an aspect of another culture
- Experiencing how to resolve conflicts and negotiate solutions
- Learning about multicultural and inter-cultural content
- Looking at something from another cultural perspective

Potentially every subject in the TTO could use at least one of these strategies and I discuss each of them below.

Strategy one: Experiencing an aspect of another culture

This strategy is about finding lesson materials or ideas for lesson activities that use or adapt something from another culture. The Physical Education teacher in the bilingual stream often offers a good example of this when they give their learners the opportunity to try out sports from other countries (for example, here in The Netherlands there has been a successful cricket league set up between bilingual schools). How about other subjects though?

An example I’ve used in workshops is of games from other cultures that a maths teacher can use for teaching particular topics. For example, how about getting the pupils playing the ancient Chinese game of Nim as part of a lesson in which they learn about calculating probability? And if you think that this particular lesson idea is not then European-based, remember the ‘international’ in EIO — in other words, think of how to connect with the whole wide world, not just the European or English-speaking part.

A good source for ideas for games from around the world that could be used in this way is this website: http://library.thinkquest.org/J0110166/

Strategy two: Experiencing how to resolve conflicts and negotiate solutions

With this approach learners can be given co-operative learning or small group tasks, in which they need to work together to complete a task or solve a problem. The point is to have the pupils focus on the ways they work together, and to encourage them to make explicit for themselves the different skills this involves.

There are lots of teaching resources online with ideas for applying co-operative learning in the classroom (see for example Spencer Kagan’s website: http://www.kaganonline.com)

A teacher then needs to draw attention to the link between these types of task and the international projects and/or exchange trips that the pupils will also participate in as part of a TTO programme — the same skills that they use in the classroom for working together will then need to be applied in an international setting. And of course these activities could also be done during an international exchange.

Strategy three: Learning about multicultural and intercultural content

This strategy is possibly the one that is the easiest to connect to the EIO rubric, and the rubric itself offers an indication of ideas for lesson content (as discussed above). But why not push this further and use the idea of EIO as a launch pad into a range of related and relevant topics — such as human rights, sustainable development, and citizenship — that all subjects in the TTO curriculum could potentially connect with. These topics could then become the focus for cross-curricular projects that different subjects can contribute to.

Strategy four: Looking at something from another cultural perspective

With this strategy learners are asked to experience another or alternative cultural perspective to their own. Role playing activities are a good way to explore this strategy. For example, think of a controversial topic for discussion and then give pupils a particular role to play in that discussion which could be related to a different cultural perspective to their own.

For example, you could watch videos from different countries about the same topic and discuss cultural differences. One project that I have seen required students to watch international promotional videos for the Winter Olympics: a video from the BBC, a U.S. video from NBC, a German promotional video, a video from NRK Sports, Norway, a video from Australia and one from the Vancouver Olympic Committee.

There are many resources online for this type of approach to teaching EIO. Here’s an example from Oxfam: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources

Another example of this particular EIO teaching strategy that I have used in a workshop is a poem written by a refugee in the UK. Certain key words are removed from the poem, and the activity then requires learners to complete the poem by themselves, so putting them into the position of the poet. They can then be asked to discuss what they thought about the person who wrote the poem [cultural background, age, gender, job etc.]. Follow-up discussions can then focus on the difference between their own assumptions and the truth.

To sum up then, taken together these four strategies show is that implementing EIO is an approach that can involve knowledge and understanding of subject content [and which can potentially be linked between and across different subjects] but also a range of skills that various subjects can also work with.

I’d be interested to know what other teaching ideas you have in relation to EIO, or any thoughts on how to add an international aspect to CLIL in the classroom.

Thanks to Rosie Tanner for her feedback on this article.
CLIL in Higher Education: A Happy Learning Experience

By Ling Jie, Xi Hongmei, Jiang Xiujuan, Dai Jiaqi with Rosie Tanner

In this article we realize that many aspects of CLIL are valid as far away as China!

Introduction

During the last two weeks of August 2013, we - a group of 16 Chinese instructors from Shanghai University of International Business and Economics (SUIBE) - came all the way from Shanghai to the Netherlands in order to attend Utrecht University’s CLIL summer school: Methodology for Teachers in Bilingual Higher Education - a custom-made course especially designed for us.

SUIBE enjoys a high reputation in internationalization; each year hundreds of international students are hosted here, mainly from Europe (e.g. France, Germany, Holland). These students come to Shanghai and study either with the local students or in a class consisting of international students. This means that the lecturers at SUIBE face the challenge of teaching subject content through English, and we are subject teachers, not English teachers.

What is CLIL?

CLIL is known to us for its appealing feature of combining language and content together. After months of communication with the course leader at Utrecht university, we decided to experience CLIL for ourselves.

Bilingual teaching in higher education faces two problems in China:
1. The overemphasis on English language learning tends to lower the quality of subject content.
2. The teacher’s domination of class time leaves little room for student-teacher or student-student interaction.

As a result, students tend to be weak in skills such as knowledge building and creative thinking. To solve these problems, we learned that CLIL teaching methodology can be adopted to improve the quality of bilingual teaching.

The differences in emphases between the traditional and CLIL classroom are illustrated in table 1.

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What did we do?

Before we came, we realized that the summer school programme would be challenging. Firstly, how could a single summer school serve all sixteen professional university lecturers in diverse subjects: economics, marketing, tourism, hospitality, accounting, international business, logistics, mathematics, management, international politics, law and language? To be honest, we were extremely curious: how could CLIL work with all of us? Secondly, in our minds, we actually did not really agree on one basic idea of CLIL -- a CLIL teacher is not only a subject teacher, but also a language teacher.

At the beginning of summer school, when asked whether we believed subject teachers were also language teachers, only one attendee agreed!

During the two-week summer school, we learned the skills essential for successful CLIL in higher education. Some of the topics we covered were:

- activating in CLIL
- guiding understanding and lecturing in CLIL
- encouraging higher education students to speak in CLIL
- presentation skills for CLIL
- aligning language and subject in CLIL
- improving writing in CLIL by using subject language.

Two experts in higher education gave us workshops on (i) intercultural communication in CLIL and (ii) assessing teacher performance of faculty in higher education. During the two weeks, we also worked on our own personal project in groups which we presented at the end of summer school in our very own CLIL Symposium. At the end, we have to say this experience indeed served us a big meal of CLIL. What was amazing is that towards the end of our two weeks, all summer school attendees firmly believed subject teachers should and could be language teachers! You can see the shift in opinions in this photograph:

We changed our minds

Below, we describe some of our learning experiences in Utrecht.

Dai Jiaqi

Two weeks spent at Utrecht elapsed so quickly! Truth be told, CLIL was a strange term to me before my arrival in the Netherlands. As an English teacher, I used to be more familiar with pedagogical terms like Content-Based Language Instruction. I remember vividly how my curiosity was demystified on the very first day. Through Rosie and Jason’s explanations, it dawned on me that CLIL was the abbreviation for “Content and Language Integrated Learning.” Out of professional instinct I soon grasped the notion and couldn’t wait to absorb its ins and outs like a sponge. In the following days, different aspects were touched on that shed new light on my understanding of CLIL.

My main observation about our CLIL summer school is that it was refreshing and rewarding. As one of my colleagues rightly remarked, “I never thought that learning could be so relaxing and yet fruitful, and that classroom atmosphere could be so lively.”
Jiang Xiujuan
Teaching students to communicate in English about a business topic is not necessarily CLIL, I learned. As a language teacher, I believed my class was already CLIL enough. My thoughts, however, turned out to be misinformed judgments. To be CLIL, a course should be designed and delivered in a way that seamlessly incorporates the four essential Cs of CLIL—content, cognition, communication and culture. Traditional content-based instruction, immersion, and the communicative approach may have stressed one or several aforesaid Cs, but ‘cognition’ is often the neglected ‘Cinderella’ in language classrooms. Watching my colleagues—teachers of business management, economics, mathematics, and law skillfully use language scaffolding and communicative activities in their personal project presentations, I was amazed at the wonder this CLIL summer school has worked.

Lingjie
How can CLIL help from the teachers’ perspective? The following are some points I have learned in this CLIL summer school and would like to adopt in my teaching practice:

1. Plan your learning objectives, activities and questions in line with Bloom’s new Taxonomy, in order to engage students in more higher order thinking (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001).
2. Encourage active learning and thinking. We have the responsibility to create an active learning environment in which the students can learn more actively and more happily.
3. Pass more responsibility of learning to learners and involve learners in learning activities that require them to actually experience or do things.
4. Questioning should lead thinking rather than testing. I realized that as a CLIL teacher, we should not just work as a question creation machine (just raise the questions to the students and wait for the answers). Questioning should lead the students to think and create!

What impressed me most is that we should learn to integrate the 4Cs into our practice: content, communication, cognition and culture. I am so excited to know there are so many scaffolds which can support my students when they are exploring something new. At this very moment, I have just finished the preparation of my first class for this coming new semester, in which I will firstly introduce scaffolding on my handouts. When I was creating these handouts, I wanted to create an efficient scaffold for my students to understand, analyse, apply and then finally create something new. I believe my students will be very happy with these new materials.

Dai Jiaqi
During the course, I learned a lot about question design. Of all the aspects, I was most impressed by the discussion we had about “how to get higher education students to speak more effectively.” It is a common delusion that the teacher’s questions are of the ‘spur-of-the-moment’ type. However, things are not that simple. Question-raising is actually a science. Through CLIL instruction, I have familiarized myself with an interesting pair—skinny and fat questions. Skinny questions “usually provide facts, are easy and quick to answer in a few words.” An example of a skinny question might be, “What is CLIL?” When it comes to fat questions, they “have more than one answer and help learners to think more deeply about input and speak longer.” So a fat question might be “how can you apply CLIL differently with beginning, intermediate and advanced language learners?”

Later on in the course, I learned how to start discussions with a variety of question types. This part could be seen as the categorization of fat questions. Eight categories were introduced with explicit examples: a common experience, a controversy, application and interpretation questions, problem questions, comparative, evaluative, critical, a problem or a case. With this brand-new knowledge, I now feel so empowered that I cannot wait to try the ideas out.

Let me conclude with a teaching example. I once asked students to talk about the question “what are your top priorities in life?” Their ten-minute discussion did not go smoothly and my students seemed to lack interest. I then thought that it was because college freshmen resented philosophical thinking. After CLIL instruction about questioning, I have to admit that I must take most of the blame because my question design was problematic! If I were to lead the discussion again, I would rephrase my question like this: “Suppose your life were reduced to one more day, you would choose to spend it with whom doing what?”

Jian Xiujuan
In a typical language classroom in China, language knowledge (for example, vocabulary and grammar) is stressed, and the understanding of a text is also considered important. However, the importance attached to analysis, synthesis and evaluation is often weaker. As a result, as Professor Xie Tao of Beijing International Studies University sharply commented, many language learners in China, though perfectly fluent in a foreign language, are in dire need of developing higher-order thinking and creativity. CLIL has helped me with some answers to this dilemma.

Hong Mei
In a typical subject learning classroom in China, students tend to be quiet and are busy with taking notes. They feel unsafe to challenge their instructors or fear criticism when voicing their own ideas. As a result students become less independent in thinking. However, CLIL methods can encourage students to be active learners in class when instructors become good listeners. After following the CLIL summer school, I understand that listening is a kind of art. As a discussion instructor, he tries to listen at four levels:
1. He listens for what is said.
2. He listens for how things are said.
3. He listens for what is left unsaid.
4. He listens for disconnects or discrepancies.

When students speak, there are always emotional undercurrents. Sometimes the voice is tentative. Sometimes the voice is very strong. Sometimes there is lack of energy in the comments. Sometimes there is tremendous dynamism in the debate. In terms of evaluating students’ contribution to class discussions, the instructor not only evaluates them on how often they speak in class, but also on whether they are able to comment on other participants’ opinions and to discover hidden information.

Conclusion
Our two weeks in Utrecht passed so fast, and the summer school on CLIL is definitely one of the happiest learning experiences in our lives. We all believe the ideas of CLIL and the tools we have acquired will also take the happy learning experience to our students.

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CLIL theory in practice – sources of inspiration

By Liz Dale

In this column, I talk about something that I have seen in a CLIL classroom and explain which principles of CLIL I see reflected.

I saw part of an English lesson before the summer, which really impressed me. I was part of the visiting panel to a CLIL school which was applying for certification by the European Platform. We sat in on several lessons, but this lesson stood out. In the pre-service and in-service courses I give on CLIL, and in the CLIL methodology books I have contributed to, there is always a section on the importance of learners writing. In CLIL Skills, for example, there is a section on encouraging speaking and writing. In CLIL Activities, there is a chapter with activities which focus on writing. In CLIL Skills we mention these pointers:

1. Discuss text types, aims and audience
2. Work with examples
3. Look at text features [text deconstruction]
4. Help learners generate ideas
5. Write together [joint deconstruction]
6. Guide and support first attempts
7. Scaffold the writing process
8. Encourage learners to write independently
9. Encourage peer review
10. Give feedback during the writing process

As I watched the English lesson, I was really pleased to see some of these being put into practice. The setting was a standard classroom with desks and chairs, the children were aged 14-15 (third years). They had written their first essay about a novel they had all read. The tables and chairs were arranged in small groups, and learners were sitting together at tables in groups of four. They each had another pupil’s essay in front of them, and were using a rubric to give feedback on the essay.

Like the lesson I talked about in my last column for this magazine, this is a simple, not unusual classroom set-up. It is perhaps less traditional than a standard classroom with desks in rows all facing the teacher at the front, but it is not revolutionary.

So why did it impress me? Because it put into practice aspects of teaching writing which I feel are going to help learners become good users of English, which is after all one of the key aims of CLIL.

By reading another learner’s work, the children were taking the perspective of the reader of a text – i.e., an audience, which is linked to the first point above. A key idea in teaching writing is for writers to become aware of the fact that they are writing for someone else, and so need to express their ideas in a way that makes them accessible to the reader, or audience. By reading another pupil’s text, these learners discover how important it is to express their ideas clearly. If they do not understand what the writer is saying, it is hoped they will realize that in their own writing, they also need to be careful that they write clearly for the reader. In the lesson, they are using examples of essays written by their classmates [second bullet above], so they can see how another writer has approached the task, and can pick up vocabulary and ideas [point 4]. The rubric referred to specific text features that the teacher wanted to see in the essays, helping to make it clear to the learners how an essay on a novel is constructed. Although the learners were not actually writing together in this lesson, they were giving feedback on each other’s essays, so were collaborating to improve each other’s writing. The lesson was clearly guiding and supporting the children’s first attempts at a literary essay. Making use of a rubric to highlight the expected content and structure of a literary essay scaffolded the writing process in two ways – it made it clear what should be in the essay, and helped structure the feedback the learners were giving to each other. After the lesson, the learners were going to use the input to re-write their essays independently and the whole lesson consisted of peer review. Some suggest that peer review is a way of reducing teachers’ marking loads. This is certainly the case but not, primarily, why it is useful to the learners. By giving feedback on each other’s writing, the learners develop a better understanding of what is expected of them when they write. The hope is that they will become better writers themselves. Finally, the lesson made sure that the learners received feedback during the process of writing, and were able to take on board feedback before they handed in the final piece of work. In effect, they were receiving feed forward, rather than feedback, so that their final product would be of a higher quality than their first attempt.

All in all, there was a greater chance that these learners were going to produce a literary essay of high quality than if they had been asked to write the essay at home, and then given a grade by the teacher. For me, that is an example of good CLIL practice.

Resources:
For more on these ideas, check out CLIL Skills chapter 4 CLIL Activities chapter 5 http://www.leraar24.nl/dossier/3071/clil-skill-encourage-writing 1

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English Language Policy and Education from Global Perspective: South Korea and Vietnam

Mr. William Owens, Mr. Hong-Duan Mai and Ms. Melissa Yu

Background

The global status of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF henceforth) has had considerable impact on educational policies and practices in countries worldwide. English language education is thus widely implemented more often than not outside its native-speaking contexts, within world contexts. English language policy and ELT, therefore, need to take account of these multilingual, multicultural contexts that learners may find themselves in. This article first reports two cases that exemplify the English language policy and education of South Korea and Vietnam in relation to English as a dominant foreign language. These countries were chosen not because they represent ELT contexts worldwide, but because the description of such policy implementation offers a glimpse of the underlying beliefs in the global status of English and its impacts on English language education. This article then briefly addresses the issues emerged from the implemented policy and education in wider ELT contexts from global perspective.

Two cases

It is believed that a ‘global’ citizen's English proficiency has a direct or significant impact on their employability, social status and, by extension, quality of life [for an explanation of this phenomenon, see Graddol, 2006, Shohamy, 2006]. Like the countries in Europe [cf. Phillipson, 2003], the national governments have had tremendous and increasing investment in English language education in countries of the Asia-Pacific region. South Korea and Vietnam are cases in point [Song, 2011; Nunan, 2003]. We discuss two examples of English language education policy in the Asia-Pacific region, exploring how global status of English influences the language policy and education.

South Korea

Given the global status of the English language, parents compete to give their children the best advantage possible through private English education. This can take many forms, from private after-hours English academies [South Koreans spent over US$2bn on them in 2012, according to the Korea Times] to one-to-one private tuition, and extended residence in native English-speaking countries, often splitting up the family [Song 2011]. The more wealth a family has, the better the quality of English language education they can secure for their children, and so secure their future place in society’s elite. This reciprocal, self-perpetuating relationship between English and privilege is known as the “English Divide” [Song 2011, Jeon 2012], and exacerbates the already-existing problem of social stratification based on wealth. The government has made many efforts to counteract the English Divide. These include a ban on private instruction, which proved unpopular and impossible to enforce [Seth 2002], and the employment of native-speaking English teachers in almost every public school [Jeon 2009]. They also proposed a nationwide move towards CLIL in schools in 2008, which proved equally unpopular, partially because it would favour those students already proficient in English [thus contributing to the English Divide], and partially because English proficiency of teachers and students was not considered adequate to make it feasible [Jeon 2012]. CLIL is now almost entirely exclusive to private schools. Accessible English immersion education is still considered desirable to counteract the problem of child emigration, though it is still yet to be successfully realised. One of the most interesting incarnations of the idea is perhaps the English Village.

An English Village is a lifetime, artificially-constructed village, comprising imitations of schools, airports, post offices, shops, hotels, doctor’s surgeries and other common public establishments, where only English is spoken. Casual events such as magic shows, street performances and outdoor village parades also take place, specifically designed by staff “educainment” writers to provide accessible – but targeted – L2 language practice [Trottier 2008]. Users pay for time spent there, attending English lessons and generally living and engaging in day-to-day activities such as negotiating an airport check-in, a trip to the doctor etc. in English, without having to leave the country. Visits can be a single day, or residential; the ‘full’ programme last four weeks, and usually costs around $1,700 [Trottier 2008, Jeon 2012].

Whether or not the Villages are a pedagogically sound alternative to foreign immersion is a controversial issue. Stephen Krashen (2006) himself criticised the Villages on three points:

- Firstly, for touting artificially constructed situations, effectively elaborate role-plays, as genuine need-creating immersion: the doctors are not real doctors, the airport is not a real airport, and the generation of genuine need critical to language acquisition is as absent as it would be in a normal classroom.
- Secondly, for being built on such a large scale without proper research into their efficacy: though their theoretical merits and deficiencies are well-documented (e.g. see Trottier 2008), empirical evidence about their value in language acquisition remains lacking.
- For being economically unviable: In Krashen’s words, “English villages are very expensive. The Paju school has a maximum capacity of 550 students. If the other nine schools have a similar capacity, that means the schools can deal with about 6,000 children per month. A total of 12 million children are in school in Korea, with at least six million in grades in which English is taught. Thus, English villages can, at best, impact on 1 percent of the children who are in English classes.”

Though those nine villages had increased to thirty by 2010, the Villages all lost money heavily in consecutive years [Jeon 2012] and were either privatised or closed down: in 2012 the number had reduced to 21 [Song 2012], though there are still plans to build more.

Krashen sums up his criticism as follows:

“In other words, Korea is paying an enormous amount of money to provide an untested English experience to just 1 percent of its school-age children, an experience limited to children whose parents can come up with the tuition money.”

Trottier’s [2008] in-depth rebuttal of these claims does present a sound theoretical case for English Villages being a considerably better learning environment than schools and underserving of Krashen’s outright dismissal. However, it does not [in my opinion] effectively annul any of Krashen’s individual criticisms, only the perceived conclusion drawn from them that English Villages are a ‘bad idea’. For the time being, pedagogically they appear to offer an effective and worthwhile learning experience, an enhancement of classroom education but still not as effective as foreign immersion, though Krashen and Trottier agree that research is needed to substantiate this. Socioeconomically, they represent another form of private education only available to those able to pay for it, and an untenable business enterprise.

Vietnam

Sharing a similar situation with that in South Korea, many private schools have mushroomed in Vietnam in recent years. Unlike in the public schools where English is taught as an independent subject, in those private schools where the parents are charged much higher for their children’s study, English almost replaces Vietnamese as the medium for learning and teaching as well as for daily communication. Besides, there are also some English summer programmes held by a variety of private English language centres and societies in which students have a chance to gather with others in a camping venue in Vietnam or abroad [usually in Singapore or other English-speaking countries] and indulge themselves in the all-English-speaking environment there. However, as there is hardly any research to point out the pros and cons of this model in Vietnam’s context, the next part aims to provide the readers with a brief overview of English language teaching as well as how CLIL has replaced GTM as the favourite method in Vietnam.

A historical review of foreign language development in Vietnam illustrates that a myriad
of foreign languages have been incorporated into language education system over the course of time. Before the 19th century, Mandarin became the dominant foreign language owing to the influence of about a-thousand-year Chinese regime. During French colonial rule in the mid-19th century, the French language was widely taught and learnt in a systematically designed curriculum, replacing Mandarin as the dominant foreign language. From 1954 to 1975, as the country was divided, Russian language was promoted in northern Vietnam, while English became more popular with learners in the south of Vietnam. Russian language remained the favourite foreign language of many learners until 1986 [Wright 2000]. As Phan (2010: 17) explains, “the government’s open-door policy from the late 1986 enabled the expansion of English in Vietnam with emergence of foreign companies, services and tourism throughout the country.” Thereby, English has been recognised as the primary Lingua Franca (or perhaps foreign language), “which are seen to provide socio-economic benefit” [Kirkpatrick, 2010: 61] and allow Vietnamese people to engage in the global market [Phan 2010; Trinh, 2005] as a member of the Association of Southeast Asia [ASEAN henceforth]. In 2008, Vietnam’s Prime Minister signed Decision No. 1400/QD-Ttg approving the Foreign Language Project for the period 2008-2020 to first establish the objectives of foreign languages and then to facilitate the Vietnamese citizens’ foreign language acquisition. The Foreign Language Project first explicitly states that not only state but also private/foreign educational institutes should take part in the development of Vietnamese learners’ communicative competence. Secondly, foreign experts with good language skills from various professional fields were invited to not all levels of school in Vietnam. For instance, the US Fulbright programme, Belgian bilateral scholarships, and Swedish-Vietnamese Culture are exchange programmes aimed at recruiting visiting teachers and professors from the aforementioned countries or ASEAN countries. There are also exchange programmes for international students coming to Vietnam and Vietnamese students going to other countries. In this regard, Vietnamese people need to use English to study or work. Furthermore, Vietnamese people have a higher chance to be exposed to various ways of spoken English and then carry out intercultural exchanges through ELF. For a long time, the Grammar-Translation Method [GTM henceforth] prevailed in the ELF classroom, helping Vietnamese learners with English reading and writing [Pham, 2005]. GTM has been greatly challenged in that Vietnamese students, for instance, need to submit proof of English proficiency concerning speaking and listening in IELTS or TOEFL before being considered to study in English-speaking countries. It is believed that GTM failed to help students with speaking and listening, hindering them in using English to communicate with people worldwide. Accordingly, teachers of English, with Vietnamese teachers as majority [Phan, 2010], were encouraged to take a Communicative Language Teaching [CLT] approach to teaching English to prepare Vietnamese learners for communicative language use, despite the difficulties in implementing CLT [Ho, 2004] or the tension of taking CLT or GTM approach to teaching [Pham, 2005]. As can be seen, the belief underneath taking a communicative approach to language teaching is aimed at producing proficient Vietnamese speakers of English.

English village or CLT for ELF communication: relevant or irrelevant

Our article did not set out to provide answers on the relevance of English language education in English villages or through CLT to ELF communication outside of the classroom. Instead, we would like to highlight the pedagogical issues that emerged from the application of ELT in English villages or through CLT, from the perspective of ELF by posing some questions for teachers of English to ponder over. Before listing the questions, we would like to present two quotes concerning teaching English for international communication purposes.

To teach is to be caught up in an array of questions concerning curriculum [whose knowledges are given credence?], educational systems [to what extent does an educational system reproduce social cultural inequalities?] and classroom practices [what understandings of language, culture, education, authority, knowledge or communication do we assume in our teaching?] [Pennycook, 1994: 295]

The notion of ‘authentic’ language becomes problematic within a framework of English as an international language: whose words and whose culture comprise authentic language? Native-speaker practices do not apply across multiple contexts of use. A more acceptable notion in ‘appropriate language’, but even this term needs to be examined, for what is appropriate in an international context may not be appropriate in a local context’ Kramsch and Sullivan [1996: 199]

Referring to these two quotes and examples in ELF contexts, we would like to invite teachers of English, or teacher researchers working in similar ELT contexts, to consider the following questions. Instead of providing answers to these questions, we take an open approach to response or comments from teachers of English or teacher researchers. We are looking forward to the further discussion on the mentioned issues.

1. Under the traditional ELF paradigm, to what extent are the ELF teachers empowered to bring about the necessary changes in their own teaching contexts if they are made aware of the aforementioned pedagogical implications for preparing students for multilingual, multicultural communication through ELF? If there are constraints in taking an ELF approach to teaching, what are these constraints and in what ways will they affect the possible pedagogical changes in classrooms worldwide?
2. Pennycook [1994] suggests that the counter-discourse in ELF classrooms should be explored to challenge and change the established agendas of ELT in ELF contexts. What are the implications of researching English taught and learned in EFL/ESL contexts for teacher researchers?

References


