

# CLIL: A Suit for All Seasons

## AICLE: Un traje para todas las temporadas

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### **Abstract**

*A frequently mentioned advantage of CLIL is that it is a theory of practice, with an intrinsic flexibility and heterogeneity; nonetheless, there is often confusion regarding the factors of success and failure among teachers applying the approach, which often leads them to unwittingly misapply CLIL. This article first presents several definitions of CLIL, and the practical and theoretical assumptions at its core, and then analyzes a number of longitudinal studies from such places as Canada, the Netherlands, Spain, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Malaysia in order to identify factors that contribute to the relative success or failure of this methodological approach. Drawing on a basis of research and training courses for CLIL teachers, this study presents its unique and defining factors and presents guidelines for teachers who wish to apply it.*

**Key Words:** CLIL; L2-medium instruction; bilingual education; theory of practice.

### **Resumen**

*Una ventaja del AICLE (Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras) mencionada con frecuencia es que éste es una teoría de la práctica, con flexibilidad intrínseca y heterogeneidad; sin embargo, a menudo se presenta confusión en cuanto a los factores de éxito y fracaso entre los docentes quienes la aplican, lo que a menudo lleva involuntariamente a una implementación errada. En primer lugar, este artículo presenta varias definiciones del AICLE, y sus supuestos teóricos y prácticos, y luego analiza una serie de estudios longitudinales de lugares como Canadá, los Países Bajos, España, Hong Kong, Filipinas, y Malasia con el fin de identificar factores que contribuyen al éxito o fracaso de este enfoque metodológico. A partir de una base de investigación y cursos de formación para profesores de AICLE, este estudio presenta sus factores distintivos y esenciales y también presenta directrices para los profesores que deseen aplicarlo.*

**Palabras Claves:** AICLE; instrucción L2-medio, educación bilingüe, teoría de la práctica.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Reflecting on what CLIL is, or rather what it should be, at a time when new books and articles on this topic are appearing weekly, may seem risky, even if such observations have been shared and anticipated by many teachers. Nevertheless, having to face the problems implicit in implementing the CLIL in our field of work, has given rise to our desire to clarify this approach, above all for teachers about to apply the CLIL method. “*Is what I’m doing CLIL?*” is a recurring

question we have faced as teacher trainers, and it is one we try to answer, in a slightly pragmatic way, in this paper, irrespective of the debate under way on CLIL in its various meanings, a discussion we are well aware of and informed about.

We first need to set forth some of the numerous definitions of CLIL:

CLIL refers to situations where subjects or parts of subjects are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language. (Marsh, 2002, p. 15)

The simultaneous learning of a foreign language and other syllabus content means studying a subject such as the history of natural science in a second language. [...] The implicit emphasis in CLIL on *problem solving* and *knowing how* means that the student is motivated and able to solve problems and to do things using other languages as well. (Navés y Muñoz, 2000, p. 2)

CLIL is an educational path, more or less lengthy, characterized by strategic, structural-methodological choices that aim at ensuring a non-linguistic dual integrated learning—language and non-linguistic content—by students who learn through a non-native language. (Coonan, 2007, p. 23)

Through CLIL, the focus changes from language as a vehicle of culture to language as a means of communication in academic settings. A new vision of language called for a new vision of learning. CLIL is linked to experiential views of second language acquisition and consequently a new methodology of language teaching (Lorenzo, 2007, p.28).

The term Content-and-Language-Integrated-Learning (CLIL) refers to educational settings where a language other than the students' mother tongue is used as medium of instruction. (Dalton-Puffer, 2007, p. 1)

## WHERE DOES CLIL COME FROM?

In 1928 a conference on bilingualism was held in Luxembourg. The discussion at this symposium led to the decision that bilingual education was highly detrimental and that the learning of a second language had to be delayed until at least 12 years of age. Views changed dramatically throughout the twentieth century. L2-Medium Instruction, or Content Based Instruction (CBI), is a term that refers to many different approaches that have language and content as objectives (Stryker and Leaver, 1997). One of the most well known cases is Bilingual Education. Baker (2001) distinguishes between weak and strong forms of BE. Weak forms (also called subtractive) refer to cases in which learners are included in a new culture that is different from their own and must learn both the language and content at school. In reality, in such cases, bilingualism is not achieved; instead, the majority language is learned. Strong bilingual or additive bilingual education refers to immersion education, where there is a focus on attaining bilingualism and bi-literacy. Immersion can be total or partial in relation to the organization of the curriculum (Johnson and Swain, 1997). According to Garcia (2009), CLIL represents a type of Bilingual Education that is dynamic and heteroglossic.

Cummins (1984) has investigated BE for a number of years now, and one of his most important theories in this regard is the definition of BICS and CALP, which is also highly important for CLIL. BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) refers to a basic language skill, normally acquired through formal teaching, which is necessary for interacting in normal everyday situations. It is composed of automatized communicative tasks that do not require much cognitive ability. CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) is the linguistic competence strictly connected to context. Though entailing a low cognitive skill, BICS is very closely linked to an everyday context, while CALP is highly demanding, cognitively speaking, though characterized by a low everyday context. The implication is, therefore, that both formal

language teaching and the CLIL approach should be developed. Cummins emphasizes that these two competences are not independent and can therefore be acquired simultaneously.

Only if challenged cognitively and equipped with language support and scaffolding will students learn. This support is composed of both internal and external elements: the former are connected to motivation, culture and previous experience, while the latter relates to the language input. The main concern of Bilingual or Multilingual Education is with education more than with becoming bilingual (Baetens Beardsmore, 1999).

## WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

There are few longitudinal experimental studies evaluating the effectiveness of bilingual educational programs.

The best researched case of bilingual immersion education started around the 1970s in Canada, developing spontaneously and aiming at attaining bilingualism in both French and English. This experience led to research that demonstrated that students in immersion programs developed native-like competence only for receptive skills (Swain, 1985, 1996). It is for this reason that empirical studies should provide us with useful material for analyzing this practice.

In Spain, since 1996, there has been a Multilingual Initiative Programme that has led to the implementation of a series of bilingual education programs throughout the country. Of particular interest is an experimental two-year longitudinal study (2004-2006) involving secondary education by the Basque Institute of Educational Evaluation and Research (ISEI-IVEI 2007). This study involved six Basque schools where three languages were taught (Spanish, Basque and English) and where the English course (L3) also made use of the content from other subjects. The study showed that by using a pre-test and post-test (the Cambridge University ESOL exams for English language certification) as well as control and experimental groups, the students from the experimental classes had significant higher results, in particular regarding speaking ability.

In 2006, a Dutch longitudinal study (Admiraal, Westhof and de Bot) sought to assess the linguistic competence in English of secondary school students involved in a bilingual education program. The study, which lasted 6 academic years, called for a control group of 721 students and an experimental one of 584. The results, based on a test of receptive vocabulary skills, reading comprehension and oral proficiency, showed that the experimental group achieved significantly higher objectives than the control group.

Significant for the scope of the diffusion plan of the AICLE (CLIL) program underway in the autonomous community of Andalusia is a study by Lorenzo, Casal and Moore (2009) aimed at assessing the experience gained in the region, which, in terms of size and scholastic population, is comparable to many European countries. The study is based on four fundamental aspects that allowed data to be collected which, in the evaluation report, are presented in four different sections:

- linguistic results and skill level.
- learning paths and differences identified in the CLIL programs.
- L2 use in CLIL classes.
- educational impact of CLIL.

This study also confirmed that CLIL students acquire better language skills than their fellow students in the control group. Moreover, there is no linear correlation between exposure to the

language and competence; this is true for all four skills and for the three languages studied (English, French and German), even if to a different degree. This positive effect derives from:

- the contextualization of the L2 in the subject material.
- the semantic scaffolding that this contextualization provides.

Undoubtedly behind all this is a profound elaboration of linguistic stimuli that results in the attention paid to significant inputs. This results in what the authors call the *primacy of the significance principle*, a primacy that works in contexts of real and authentic use of the L2. This factor strongly promotes the motivation to learn languages while providing a solution to the age-old problem of the disaffection toward learning them. In fact, the linguistic need is immediate and present in the activity being undertaken; it is not represented by a presumed future encounter with native speakers.

Nevertheless, Lorenzo (2007) underlines that in order to obtain positive results it is necessary to be pro-active in order to avoid the potential dangers implicit in the CLIL approach; that is:

- the limited development of language production skills (oral and written production).
- a deficit in the learning of content.

The risk from these dangers can be reduced if the CLIL learning is based on three key aspects on which the tasks are developed:

- focus-on-meaning.
- focus-on-form.
- focus-on-forms.

These refer, in the first case, to tasks inherent in the content; in the second case, to the formal linguistic aspects specific to the content; and in the third case, to more traditional linguistic practices.

The Andalusian evaluation report underlines that the introduction of precocious bilingual learning does not seem to produce an absolute advantage with respect to later learning (11-12 years of age). This could be due to the fact that greater cognitive and meta-cognitive skills and a greater academic competence in the L1 can guarantee the same advantages offered at the neuro- and psycholinguistic level by precocious bilingual learning.

The Andalusian model shows that, in terms of the observable outcomes of learning, the collaboration between the teacher of the NLD, the L2 teacher and the mother-tongue assistant is important. This collaboration functions as a sort of community of practice: the first works mainly on the textual level, the second on sentence grammar, and the last promotes the use of a more formal and discursive language. This approach gives rise to an extremely rich language learning environment, one which promotes not only linguistic awareness in all the teachers involved but also favors collaboration between different departments, approaching in certain regards philosophies that lie behind other movements, such as language across the curriculum, the genre-based approach, and the multi-disciplinary curricula.

## THE CONS OF ENGLISH-MEDIUM INSTRUCTION

CLIL as a kind of L2-Medium Instruction represents an extremely effective approach. However, it is strictly linked, as is any kind of learning, to the context. Only a few studies have shown the negative effects of this type of approach.

The first is a longitudinal study (Marsh, Hau, and Kong, 2000) which evaluated the effects on non-language subjects of late immersion in English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI). The results show negative effects on the learning of subjects (mathematics, science,

geography and history). Although the situation in Hong Kong might seem to be among the most advantageous (English is a prestigious language and, at the same time, Chinese is also a strong language), it appears that the English-Medium Education (EME) does not function, despite the fact that even parents are in favor of it. There are two possible reasons for these negative effects:

1. a lack of competence amongst teachers, which the study also pointed out.
2. the fact that late immersion does not function as well as early immersion.

The second study (Yip, Tsang and Cheung, 2003) came to the same conclusions. Well before these two studies appeared, Johnson (1997) had analyzed the situation in Hong Kong, concluding that there was, and had been throughout the 1990s, a poor level amongst EME students, which he entirely attributed to incorrect teacher input. There was too wide a use of code-switching, no entry test for students who enter English-Medium Education at high school (who might therefore have had a very low level of English), and the texts used were oversimplified.

This situation also exists in many Asian countries, for example the Philippines and Malaysia. In Malaysia (Tan, 2005), after a post-colonial period in which the country took back its own culture, since January 2003 there has been a strong push toward EME. In the last few months, however, there has been a reversal in tendency, for the most part political in nature, which has led to opposition to EME (Zalkapli, 2009). The same opposition has occurred in the Philippines (Gonzalez, 1998), where Philippine is the official language and English the academic one. The government has decided recently to move toward teaching in the native language beginning in 2009 (Republic of the Philippines, Department of Education).

Without the need for further confirmation from research studies, it is clear that in some contexts EME, and by extension CLIL, is detrimental to learning. In many parts of Africa, children start to learn English in year 4; nevertheless, they finish their studies with serious gaps in both English and their mother tongues, as well as in the subject matter they study. Often when the families of students are poor and with low literacy, education in general fails, especially if taught in a foreign language, which further impoverishes language and culture in poor countries. It appears that people with high social status are the only ones not experiencing culture clashes when dealing with bilingualism and bi-culturism (Wolff, 1998; Baetens Beardsmore, 2003).

## WHAT WORKS THEN?

Only a few studies have explored pedagogical, institutional and teaching frameworks that could work well in L2 medium teaching and learning.

In 1997, Grabe and Stoller designed a six T's approach that could be used to set up a content-based curriculum. This is achieved by means of:

- selection of themes (central ideas).
- selection of texts (resources).
- selection of topics (sub-categories of themes).
- selection of tasks (activities).
- selection of transitions and threads which are coherent and create links between different curricula.

In this respect, Coyle (2007) has provided a pedagogical framework called the 4Cs (Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture) in order to provide a useful tool for teachers involved in CLIL. CLIL should take into account integrating content learning (content and cognition) and language learning (communication and cultures). In particular, it should form an interrelationship between content (subject), communication (language), cognition (thinking) and culture.

In 2007 de Graaff, Koopman, Anikina, and Westhoff analyzed CLIL lessons in the Netherlands on the basis of some assumptions on effective language teaching. The aim of the study was to find effective guidelines for CLIL teachers, as there is a lack of competence due to a lack of appropriate CLIL training for teachers and the fact their teaching is often performed in a casual manner. At the end of the research study they developed five teaching performance indicators that should be adopted by teachers engaged in CLIL.

- Teachers should expose students to an appropriately demanding input (by selecting, adapting and scaffolding it).
- Teachers should employ meaning-focused activities.
- Teachers should use form-focused teaching.
- Teachers should elicit output production.
- Teachers should help learners acquire compensation strategies in order to facilitate communication.

Navés (2009) identifies factors for successful CLIL programs which include:

- respect and support for learner's L1 and home culture.
- hiring of multilingual and bilingual teachers.
- provision of integrated dual language optional programs.
- presence of long-term teaching staff.
- parental involvement.
- joint effort of all parties involved.
- high teacher profile and training.
- high expectations and assessment.
- use of right materials.

Unfortunately many teachers have not realized that bilingual education is different from a monolingual one (Baetens Beardsmore, 1999). Implementing CLIL requires a whole new approach that involves “far more than merely changing the language of Instruction” (Marsh, Marsland, and Nikula, 1999, p. 36).

## WHAT CLIL IS NOT, OR SHOULD NOT, BE

It is by now a common view, and one supported by the works of the most famous theoreticians and scholars on the subject, that the CLIL acronym, which is now a term in itself, expresses an umbrella concept that contains a series of didactic methodologies which, starting from *bilingualism* and going up to the most recent *language across the curriculum*, connote the more or less immersive use of a foreign language to learn content.

Undoubtedly, this opinion is based on the objective fact that a number of CLIL programs exist which have different characteristics while having in common the original roots which go back to the learning of content in a foreign language. Nevertheless, while we share the basic idea of not wishing to rigidify an approach that by nature is flexible and dynamic, it seems that the time is ripe to begin clarifying a bit what is found under an umbrella that today is too crowded. In fact, the risk is that “poor-quality CLIL could contribute to a lost generation of young people’s learning” (Coyle, Hood, and Marsh, 2010, p. 161). The objective is not to erect barriers to exclude all those experiences that have livened up and certainly enriched the didactics innovation landscape in this regard in the last two decades. On the contrary, the intent is to valorize these experiences by inviting those teachers that have enthusiastically and dedicatedly contributed to

this area to take a step forward to improve the quality of their work and thereby guarantee its continuity and significance.

Our experience as teachers and teacher trainers of CLIL, and as researchers today, has enabled us to meet, observe and supervise an important number of teaching programs that, in good faith and with the best intentions, were under this large umbrella called CLIL. Our observations and studies have led to the following crucial aspects to which we wish to draw the attention of those about to engage in CLIL teaching or to promote it through developing plans for this methodological approach:

- the actors in the CLIL teaching/learning process.
- the methodologies, contents and outcomes.
- the basic choices.

## THE ACTORS IN THE CLIL TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

It goes without saying that the main actors in this, as in any, process of teaching and learning are the teachers of the non-linguistic disciplines (NLD) and the students. The primary school teacher, who should have a dual competence in both the language and the content, normally represents the only exception. In the various cases we have examined and observed, the L2 teacher and/or at times a mother-tongue teacher or conversation tutor were present either directly (joint participation, for example) or indirectly (formal teaching of the language). In this triangular interaction the NLD teacher has the main role and his linguistic competences, as is generally the accepted view, should not fall below the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. A level of competence below B2 does not allow a true communicative interaction and an effective presentation of the content. The competence level should not be determined based on personal perceptions (*I see that I can manage alright abroad; I can manage to speak with my foreign colleague with whom I organize exchanges; I throw myself into it because I'm an extrovert*) but documented by official certification issued by accredited bodies.

If a lesson is not given for at least 50% of the time in the additional language (75% of the time according to some experts) it cannot be defined as a CLIL lesson. This percentage is difficult to achieve with low levels of teacher competency. Unfortunately, it is not rare for us to encounter teachers who *perhaps* had an A2 level and yet taught a CLIL course. The ultimate objective is to gradually reach 90% of lesson time in the target language, keeping in mind that code-switching should not completely disappear from a CLIL learning context given the fundamental role of the L1 in consolidating the cognitive processes, especially in school-age students.

If code-switching between the native and the additional language in teaching interaction is a component factor of CLIL, which should occur in predictable and/or structured moments, the mixture of codes that occurs when the competence level of the teacher is not adequate creates only confusion, predisposes the student to accept non-acceptable errors, and favors inaccuracies and superficiality without bringing any real learning advantages to the students.

The input given to the student must be correct and appropriate. In addition, the input of the CLIL teacher must take into account both the content (without trivializing it) and the language. Thus, it requires linguistic precision and clarity, even formal in nature (the so-called focus on form), for both the L1 and the additional language.

Moreover, it is common practice to believe that, similar to what is done in the teaching of the additional language, even in CLIL teaching, a well-delineated linguistic progression must be

followed. This is not possible for the CLIL approach, where the language is learned in a more natural and global manner. Thus, precisely due to the close connection between the language the students are exposed to and the content, this language must be learned in its entirety and in all its richness.

Furthermore, the mother-tongue teacher or conversation tutor can, when called for, significantly contribute to CLIL learning if they are aware of the students' language skill levels and their language difficulties and needs, and if they support the motivation, presentation and consolidation of what is learned from the content teacher. If they limit themselves to translating for the NLD teacher (as unfortunately we have occasionally observed), then they are doing something that has nothing to do with CLIL.

The cooperation between the NLD and L2 teachers is one of the factors the CLIL approach is based on, even though this is more significant in certain contexts as opposed to others, for example, in Italy and Southern Europe in general, where the co-presence of a support teacher has been an important feature, which today has almost entirely disappeared (cooperative CLIL model). Nevertheless, this cooperation must never take the form of a translating activity or even a *substitution*, as occurs when the NLD teacher plans the lesson together with the L2 teacher, who then carries it out while the NLD teacher only checks on the knowledge of the content in the L1.

The role of the L2 teacher from the CLIL perspective must consist of collaborating on both evaluating the linguistic difficulties of the subject matter as well as its presentation. Moreover, he can support the work of his NLD colleague by laying the groundwork with parallel tests, glossaries, and basic language structures for dealing with a certain topic, but managing the subject content is the role of the NLD teacher.

In fact, CLIL is not so much applied to a *topic* but to a *discipline*, and it is for this reason that, when a teacher is organizing a CLIL course based on modules, these should not involve less than 20-25 hours of teaching, a total which will allow the discipline and the disciplinary language to be developed in all its proper specificity. In our opinion, differentiating between topic and non-linguistic content/discipline is fundamental. Using civilization topics (for example, the geography of Great Britain) is common practice for all language teachers. Thus it cannot be the discriminating factor for the CLIL approach, which must be characterized by a disciplinary *core content* which is non-linguistic, very robust and solid, and serves as a foundation for the entire teacher-learning path and develops the cognitive engagement typical of CLIL. It is clear that the *core content* will be different depending on the school level and cognitive development of the students. In fact, it is appropriate to underscore that the CLIL acronym means the integrated learning of language and (non-linguistic) content, and it is this concept that should lie behind the development of didactics. Moreover, it is legitimate to adopt CLIL even without the new technologies, without being obliged to adopt an interdisciplinary approach or methods such as dramatization, even though all these would be welcomed.

With this regard, below we present some important examples of some common misunderstanding. We have often been asked if, for example, mere performing of the *Wizard of Oz* in the additional language represented the CLIL method. It does not, since there is no trace of disciplinary content in this case. On the other hand, performing a dramatization of the *Water Cycle* in the additional language is a good technique for implementing CLIL. Another question has been whether Latin could be used as content in a CLIL program. We feel this choice is not appropriate, since Latin is a language and thus cannot be considered a non-linguistic discipline. Likewise, presenting *Blood Circulation* in the additional language and linking it to motor science



can represent CLIL, but not simply treating *Blood Circulation* from the point of view of science. In short, an interdisciplinary approach is not necessarily synonymous with doing CLIL.

## THE METHODOLOGY, CONTENT, AND RESULTS

CLIL is by nature a dynamic approach that cannot do without an active didactics that is interactive and student-centered. *Always* and *only* doing frontal lessons (though recognizing that at times it is appropriate and necessary to do so, especially in higher-level classes and at university level, where no, or very little, interaction occurs) may reassure the teacher preparing the lesson and content for passive students but does not represent CLIL didactics. CLIL is the shared construction of knowledge (both of content and language); it is dialogue, shared responsibility in the learning-teaching process. In our opinion, handing out pages to read in the target language, at most asking for a summary, should only be an occasional activity in CLIL didactics.

Adopting an active didactics is undoubtedly desirable and necessary even when teaching students in the native language. But reality, observation and experience tell us that very often this does not occur, particularly in secondary schools and universities, where, for many reasons (some even understandable), such as the large number of students, environmental conditions, course program constraints, to name but a few of those mentioned by teachers, the frontal lesson still represents the most common methodology.

Another topic in the debate on CLIL is the quality of the content learned. CLIL must guarantee the learning of content at a level comparable to that taught and achieved in the native language. If, due to the linguistic level of the students (or teacher), an excessive simplification is accepted (a content transfer in pill form) then perhaps we should not call this CLIL, irrespective of the opportunity presented to reduce the excessive redundancy of certain textbooks typical in some European contexts, such as in Italy. The teaching should guarantee adequate standards of the disciplinary curriculum and profit from the added value of the language learning, which in turn should be reflected in terms of both quantity and quality, as shown by the research cited earlier. If the simplification leads to the trivialization of the content and does not favor the proper cognitive growth of the students, then the CLIL approach is not being implemented.

Neither is CLIL being implemented if all that is done is to merely repeat a lesson already held in the native language; if the students are presented with content which has no new features, since there would be no conceptualization process in the additional language, which is one of the component features of CLIL.

## EVALUATION

We know there are a variety of opinions on this topic and often the evaluations depend on the different regulatory framework in different countries. Thus we will only express a strong conviction on our part, while recognizing that it runs up against constraints that a teacher often must accept. If the CLIL acronym stands for Content and Language Integrated Learning, it would logically follow that evaluating this learning should involve both aspects; that is, both content and language. In reality this hardly ever occurs. Only rarely are tests, and thus the evaluation, truly integrated, for the following reasons:

- the NLD teacher *does not feel capable/want* to evaluate the purely linguistic aspects of learning.

- the NLD teacher *does not feel it is right* for linguistic aspects to influence the evaluation of the learning of the disciplinary content.
- the normative framework *obliges* the NLD teacher to evaluate learning in the L1.

Thus, with regard to evaluations more clarity is in order, and the NLD teacher should be placed in a position where they are made more aware of and responsible for the didactic activity they are undertaking.

## FUNDAMENTAL CHOICES

Adopting the CLIL teaching method at times implies contextual decisions that are outside the control of the teachers and which often are determined by the broader scholastic context. One such factor is the use of CLIL to valorize the best students. Several times during our research we encountered teachers who offered CLIL only to students who, possessing good language skills (or good knowledge of a discipline), are willing to work on subjects in the additional language outside of regular class hours. Is this decision didactically justified and shared? Moreover, is it justifiable to create CLIL sections with access limited only to students with good marks in foreign languages and perhaps in the discipline taught in the additional language, as occurs in some instances? If CLIL is meant to be an inclusive, unifying and democratic instrument, then perhaps this also does not represent CLIL.

Below is a synoptic table that summarizes what we regard as characterizing proper teaching using the CLIL approach:

WHAT CLIL IS	WHAT CLIL IS NOT (OR, WHAT BAD CLIL IS)
Where the teacher's linguistic competence allows for satisfactory interaction with the students	The linguistic competence of the teacher which is fragmentary and inadequate, and leads to the acquisition of misleading linguistic models
At least 75% of course taught in the additional language (in any event, not less than 50%)	Minimum % in the additional language (less than 50%)
The teacher of the discipline leading the L2 lesson	Where the L2 teacher does the lesson for the teacher of the discipline, who then checks students in the L1
Subject/Content	Topic
Minimum exposition of no fewer than 20 hours	Occasional carrying out of some activities in the additional language
Explicit guide to understanding and use of linguistic aspects of the content	No explicit attention to the linguistic aspect of the content
Linguistic progression not planned. The linguistic structures are dealt with as they naturally arise as a by-product of the content-related language	Planning of the linguistic progression
Content presented at levels similar to those that would occur in the L1	Excessive simplification and/or trivialization of the content proposed to the students
Lesson introduced in the native language and then carried out in the additional language	Repetition of the lesson given in the native language
Interdisciplinarity is not mandatory but can be successfully used in a CLIL project	Interdisciplinarity is the only way of working and as the only goal of the project
Co-presence not mandatory	The mother-tongue conversation tutor/teacher serving as a translator
Assessments that combine language and content, at least at times	Assessments that are always and solely in the L1
Acceptance of certain national traits in teaching style	The mere translation of foreign texts into the L1 or, vice-versa, the translation of texts from L1 to L2, which are then handed out to the students
When there is the awareness that the use of a different language implies the awareness as well of its culturally-diverse content	The use of the additional language without any intercultural awareness, thereby emptying the content of some of its fundamentally significant elements
Where extra-curricular hours are not necessarily required	Lessons only taking place outside normal class hours (this can represent the CLIL approach but not the CLIL philosophy)
TIC are not mandatory but can be successfully coupled with CLIL	TIC as the only way of working and the only goal of the project
A program open to all students (not only those good in the L2 or in the discipline)	The selection of participating students

## CONCLUSIONS

CLIL is an extremely flexible approach born from both negative and positive past experiences. Ten years after its official introduction in Europe and after its fast growth, the time has come to place it in its proper context and to formulate a theory of practice that defines what CLIL is and is not. This need derives directly from teachers that implement this approach and are often in doubt about what it is they are doing in class. We have thus identified several important points to be clarified for the teachers in order not to create confusion, among which are:

- the need for strong competence by the teacher in both language and content;
- the difference between the use of content to learn an additional language and the true integration between the two disciplinary fields, achieved in part through the support and collaboration of the L2 teacher;
- a minimum percentage of foreign language use; a minimum length in order to make a CLIL course effective; the strongly democratic nature of CLIL (open to all);
- and, finally, the need for an assessment that takes both factors (language and content) into account.

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