Teaching and Learning English through Bilingual Education

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

DAVID MARSH

The CCN 2010-2020 Foresight Think Tank on Languages in Education explored the dynamics of languages in education is relation to a set of value drivers. These included the neurological, cognitive, motivational and social bases of learning; dynamics of lifelong learning and the potential of E-Learning 2.0/3.0; informal learning; human technologies that support learning; and technology-based working and operating environments (CCN 2010).

These value drivers were considered with respect to foresight indicators on social and economic change, in Europe and elsewhere. These included socio-demographic shift; science and technological innovation; re-shaped work and organisational cultures; and new knowledge and competence demands.

Some of the Think Tank outcomes relate directly to issues being discussed in this publication, *Teaching and Learning English through Bilingual Education*, namely teacher capacity-building, trans-languaging/ code-switching; assessment of and for learning; integrated technologies, and the emerging mindsets of the digital generation. The main threads which link these are cognition and diversity.

Cognition has been a major developmental feature in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) for some years (see, for example, Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010). This has been in terms of thinking and learning skills, and in accommodating diverse types of student, with often diverse levels of competence in the vehicular language.

Diversity can make teaching contexts more complex. It is a reality in schools across the world, and increasingly so in European Union countries (Eurydice 2009). Diversity in schools is not only related to the impact of migration. It is also linked to the inclusion into mainstream classes of young people with special or specific needs, which is commonplace across the European Union (Marsh 2005), and can also be linked to early childhood lifestyle differences of children with respect to use of technologies (OECD 2007). Diversity is often considered a challenge, but it can be exploited for advantage if an individualised learning paths

approach is adopted which reflects teaching competences and skills as outlined in the 2010 European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education (ECML 2010).

Interest in accommodating diversity and developing student's thinking skills (McGuiness 1999) in educational contexts where a group of students may not be at the same linguistic or cognitive level, has presented a challenge for practitioners and researchers. This is a particular area of interest for those scholars who are exploring inter-disciplinary collaboration in seeking to determine evidence-based linkage between thinking, brain and learning processes (see, for instance, Fischer et al. 2007; OECD 2007; Hinton, Miyamoto & della Chiesa 2008).

Through focus on integration, Content and Language Integrated Learning involves teaching and learning practices which accommodate diversity. In so doing emphasis has been made on the issue of cognition, and how individuals learn. The correlation between individualized learning approaches and educational outcomes is being increasingly examined as a success factor in educational practice (see, for instance, Sahlberg, 2011).

In order for teachers to respond to this trend towards individualized learning and the challenges posed by diversity, it is necessary to link back to the notion of multiple intelligences (Gardner 1999), cognitive process taxonomies (see, for instance, Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Marzano, 2000 and learning skills (van Lier 1996).

This is now happening in an age of rapid change in age where 'the dialogue in Knowledge Age organizations is not principally concerned with narrative, exposition, argument, and persuasion (the stand-bys of traditional rhetoric) but with solving problems and developing new ideas' (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 2005:749-750). This is an age of social, technological and educational convergence which invites educators to examine how to implement integration within both systems and classrooms. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) provides an opportunity for convergence, and the improved learning of content and language. But such an opportunity cannot be realized without expert input on research and solutions as found in this publication.

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PREFACE

2001 was declared the *European Year of Languages* and 2008 the *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue* by the European Union and the Council of Europe. The European Union is mainly founded on "unity in diversity": diversity of languages and cultures. In this sense, the EU language education policy aims to preserve Europe´s linguistic and cultural heritage by promoting multilingualism and multiculturalism through language and culture awareness as a means to support mutual understanding as well as intercultural dialogue. Accordingly, the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity has become one of the major issues in education.

Every few years, new foreign language teaching methods and approaches arrive on the scene. In a multilingual and multicultural Europe, new initiatives in language teaching and learning have been recently encouraged. In order to improve the quality of language education, such initiatives aim to support learning through languages. These days, numerous studies document and advocate the potential effectiveness of bilingual education which is especially emphasized and viewed as a real priority in classrooms around the world. European bilingual education models are currently exemplified by CLIL - *Content and Language Integrated Learning* –, a new generic and/or umbrella term for bilingual education, which has been rapidly spreading throughout Europe since the mid-nineties. Generally, the basis of this educational approach is that certain content subjects are fundamentally taught and learnt in a second language which is mainly viewed as a vehicle of instruction. That is, CLIL generally involves learning and teaching one or more `non-language´ subjects not simply *in*, but also *with* and *through* a foreign language (Eurydice, 2006). Accordingly, the basic premise is that CLIL combines content learning with language development.

Over the last decade there has been an explosion of interest in CLIL pedagogy in Europe and beyond. One of the major documents describing the implementation of CLIL in the European countries was Eurydice's (2006) report *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe*. The fact is that CLIL should be further implemented as a mediating approach in language education because it involves a real revolution in second language pedagogy. However, CLIL also brings with

it complex challenges concerning its implementation and the professional development of teachers. In fact, CLIL teachers need to reflect on their own teaching practice - what actually works and what does not work for their students and why this is so- to engage in self-analysis and self-evaluation.

Purpose

The main goal of this publication is to examine essential aspects of bilingual education programmes, namely CLIL pedagogy, from classroom-based observational research. This book encourages reflection and the building of a critical perspective. It was written in response to an overwhelming demand from practising CLIL teachers who wish to provide a successful CLIL education. We believe that this collection of papers serves as a good indication that valuable research is being conducted throughout Europe and that CLIL research is establishing itself as an important area of applied linguistics. The authors have been working in education for many years.

An outline of the book

This book provides readers with a collection of original papers covering essential aspects of CLIL pedagogy. The chapters are sequenced in such a way that they give an overall coherence to the book. Examples and case studies are included throughout the book to illustrate the research ideas. A brief summary of the contents of each chapter is given below.

The opening chapter sets the scene for the discussion of how the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) influences Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Chapter 1, *Impact of the CEFR on CLIL: Integrating the task-based approach to CLIL teaching*, mainly focuses on the issue of how the task-oriented approach advocated by the CEFRL can be applied to a CLIL context by specifically making reference to the situation of CLIL classes in France. The specific problems and paradoxes raised by CLIL teaching in France are particularly described. In addition, an example of a task-based activity applied to a CLIL context is provided. Throughout the chapter numerous questions are raised that will make readers reflect on important issues and that can also be used for group discussion.

Regarding the long-debated issue of L1 influence on L2 learning, Chapter 2, *One classroom, two languages in contact: Teaching and learning in two languages*, seeks to shed some light on the issue of L1 use

in CLIL classrooms. This paper mainly discusses the supportive and facilitating role and influence of L1 in CLIL education with an exploratory study of Spanish learners´ attitudes and beliefs. Specifically, this paper examines whether or not L1 should be used in CLIL classrooms and how and for how long. The fact is that this paper does not aim to advocate an English-only approach nor a greater use of L1 but rather a more limited, moderate and judicious use of L1 in CLIL classrooms. Thus, a strategic and occasional use of L1 when necessary and helpful is suggested so as to achieve pedagogical aims.

Chapter 3, *Assessing transferable academic discourse competencies in CLIL***,** mainly focuses on the findings of an evaluation project on long-term CLIL classrooms set at grammar schools in Berlin. The main emphasis is on the transferability of academic discourse competencies. That is, the question is whether there are transferable competencies which can, should or must be developed across the CLIL curriculum. By employing a contrastive design, this research study attempted to answer the question whether students in CLIL classrooms in Germany had developed a level of generalizable and transferable discourse competencies that can be considered equivalent to that attained by pupils in `regular´ classes taught in German.

Given the lack of attention paid to methodological issues, Chapter 4, *CLIL lesson planning*, offers a whole educational approach to give answers to some of the main questions arising in current bilingual classrooms by offering helpful suggestions regarding lesson planning and methodological strategies to be successfully implemented in bilingual classrooms. A wide variety of tried and tested planning tools as well as methodological strategies for CLIL lessons are offered. As the authors suggest, this paper aims to contribute to the establishment of certain methodological parameters that enhance resources for bilingual teaching in the future so as to facilitate bilingual teachers´ work.

In order to achieve a successful implementation of the CLIL methodology, new quality teaching materials and resources are urgently needed. In Chapter 5, *Materials and resources for CLIL classrooms*, the author advocates the idea that in CLIL the role played by materials is of the utmost value and should be appreciated as such. Among the real challenges and difficulties that CLIL teachers will have to face is the lack of effective teaching materials and resources. CLIL teachers as materials evaluators would have to devote time and effort to design and adapt quality teaching materials appropriate to the students´ real needs and interests. Additionally, the existing published teaching materials require an adequate pedagogical adaptation. In short, this paper mainly focuses on the

issue of how to design effective quality teaching materials for the CLIL classroom by offering helpful guidelines for materials design and adaptation.

Based on the idea that CLIL can greatly benefit from the use of technology, Chapter 6, *Technology in content and language integrated learning*, is mainly concerned with `Computer Assisted´ CLIL outside the classroom, particularly through Moodle pedagogy. In fact, it is explained how the Moodle platform resources and activities can be used as a support tool for CLIL, particularly for back up, reinforcement and preparatory work at home. Based on the authors´ teaching experience at Bologna university with CLIL students´ home-based study, a pedagogical approach and out-of-class activities based on Moodle are particularly described. Despite being a great help for CLIL, the Moodle platfom´s limitations and possible causes are also discussed.

Bearing in mind that teachers are decision-makers in managing classroom processes, Chapter 7, *CLIL teacher training*, describes the main types of CLIL teacher training initiatives and actions for a successful implementation of bilingual education programs at Primary and Secondary education in Spain, a country with a serious foreign language deficit. In response to the challenge of CLIL teaching, an original proposal of competencies development for CLIL teacher training programs is offered. As the authors suggest, the implementation of bilingual teacher training degrees and specialized CLIL Masters comprising practical training periods in bilingual schools would also contribute to pushing CLIL teacher training forward.

The last chapter of the book, *Bilingual teacher education students´ struggle with interculturality*, attempts to examine how bilingual teacher education students express their beliefs about culture, and identify the social influences of such beliefs, as they consider the differences and similarities between cultures and create their own identities as bilingual/multicultural teachers. Through a qualitative case study which explores the development of teacher education students´ dispositions about language, culture, and identity and their role in the bilingual classroom, the authors show how teacher education students' *interpretations* reflect their understanding of interculturality, and how they construct *judgments* and *actions*. In fact, the key is to make the students´ cultures visible in the classroom and to begin considering how to integrate their learning in classrooms.

This publication provides the reader with practical suggestions and raises issues for further reflection. For readers who would like to have more detailed information about specific topics, a list of further readings is

included at the end of each chapter. Additionally, the Questions for reflection and discussion section will also be highly helpful for readers.

The book's audience

This book is mainly addressed to those in-service teachers who teach in bilingual classrooms anywhere in the world, under any circumstances, and who wish to know more about CLIL pedagogy. It can also be used as a helpful handbook for EFL student teachers. The book is also for teacher trainers running both pre-service and in-service courses. I hope that the issues addressed in the various chapters will be of value and interest to all of them.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank the authors for their work and their willingness to collaborate because this book would not have been possible without their valuable contribution. Special thanks also to Professor David Marsh for his generosity in writing the foreword.

—The Editor

CHAPTER ONE

IMPACT OF THE CEFR ON CLIL: INTEGRATING THE TASK-BASED APPROACH TO CLIL TEACHING

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Abstract

Given the ambitious linguistic and cognitive objectives of CLIL classes, teachers are forced to face the difficulties inherent in this twofold mode of teaching. Content teachers and language teachers are not trained in the same way and do not share the same goals. How can we improve the situation of CLIL classes in France? How can we help students to integrate the knowledge obtained in a CLIL class into their general world knowledge? How are we going to help them use a foreign language to communicate meaningful content with reasonable confidence? This article will show how the task-oriented approach advocated by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages can help create a better synergy between the two aspects of CLIL.

1. Introduction

For the past ten years, the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) has had an increasing impact on foreign language teaching and learning in France including an emphasis on gaining intercultural perspectives. France was indeed the first European country to

mention the existence of the CEFR and its action-oriented approach in its official school curriculum.

Our purpose here is to analyse the impact of the CEFR on CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning).

CLIL is often seen as the instrumental use of a second language to teach another subject, as the language itself ceases to be the direct object of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, this is only partly true: both the content subject such as mathematics, biology or history and the language used as a medium are involved more or less equally in defining the learning goals.

According to the European commission of languages, the main objectives of CLIL are three-fold:

- to allow students to broaden their knowledge of a subject
- to improve students' abilities in a foreign language
- to give students an intercultural perspective of the subject, thus stimulating their interest in and shaping new attitudes toward other cultures

In addition it is hoped that CLIL's multi-faceted approach will motivate students through more diversified teaching methods.

(The European commission of languages (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc236_en.htm)

This type of integrated learning thus enables learners to use the language both as an object (during micro tasks for instance) and as an instrument (to communicate) while at the same time enlarging students' experience of the world. As Lecercle puts it:

> “Le langage n’est pas un outil à la disposition du locuteur, c’est une expérience, c’est une activité: ce n’est pas un objet distinct du locuteur et qu’il manipule. On entre dans le langage, on se coule dans le langage, pour utiliser la vieille métaphore heideggérienne, on habite la langue. La conséquence est que parfois je parle la langue (ce qui me donne l’impression de l’utiliser comme un outil), parfois c’est la langue qui parle par ma bouche, et guide ou impose mon dire. […] La conséquence ce cette conséquence est que la communication ne peut être la seule fonction du langage. […] Ce n’est peut-être même pas la plus importante: le langage est aussi le lieu de l’expression d’affect, un terrain de jeu et d’apprentissage du monde, etc. (Lecercle, 2004 : 69-70)."

The CEFR offers a vision of language-learning that enhances the social dimension of the individual through an action-based approach whereby human communication is not to be restricted to a performance in a given

situation: “The action-based approach therefore also takes into account the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources and the full range of abilities specific to and applied by the individual as a social agent.” (CEFR, 2001: 9)

In France, CLIL is often assimilated with *DNL* which means teaching content subjects through a foreign language (usually at secondary school level in *classes européennes*, or LANSAD, LANguages for Specialists of other Subjects, at university. In this chapter we will focus on CLIL at high school level (*lycées*) and discuss the topic from our French specific context.

What sort of problems do CLIL teachers encounter? What are the most frequent questions and paradoxes in CLIL teaching? Can learning through CLIL be improved through a CEFR task-oriented approach? Can we really give the students the opportunity during their CLIL classes to experience the language such that they are aware of the benefits gained from this mode of learning?

In order to answer these questions, we will first consider the specific problems and paradoxes raised by CLIL teaching in France and potentially in other countries.

In part 2 we will bring out the characteristics of the CEFR which can apply to CLIL teaching and help solve the problems listed in part 1.

Then, we will suggest activities in a CLIL context to improve students' learning and offer one example.

Finally, we will discuss the question of assessment in a task-based CLIL context.

2. CLIL teaching: problems and paradoxes

2.1. CLIL teaching in France

2.1.1. An “imperious necessity”

In 1992 a seminal note was sent out from the National Education Ministry to the attention of the superintendents (recteurs) of all the country's school districts (académies) concerning the importance of preparing students to become European citizens. The Minister spoke of "the imperious necessity" (1992) for students to gain fluency in foreign languages and knowledge of foreign cultures. Beyond language teaching, a European program of study (sections européennes) was to be initiated in middle school and high school. Motivated students would get extra hours of foreign language classes beginning in eighth grade which would allow

them to follow a course in a content subject, beginning in high school, that would be taught in that language. The superintendents were asked to work together with the middle-school and high-school principals of their districts interested in this project to set up European sections in their schools. After participating in the European Section, the students would be able to take an exam at the end of their secondary studies. If they passed this exam, their high school diploma (baccalauréat) would then specifically indicate which content subjects they had successfully completed in the European Section. The implication of such a note would be that the student's foreign language competence was quite high.

2.1.2. The CLIL exam

By 2003 the terms that govern students' achievement in CLIL are established. An optional oral exam will be offered to students who have received a passing grade in their CLIL class during their high school studies and who attain a minimum grade of twelve out of twenty (an above average score equivalent to approximately B2) on the language section of the exam leading to their obtaining a high school diploma.

The students take the CLIL exam in the content subject and in the language in which they followed a CLIL course. The subject could be Biology, Physics, Mathematics, History-Geography, Physical-Education or any other subject in which the high school offered a CLIL class. The precise form of the exam and the tasks that the students will have to carry out will depend on the content subject. In general, the students are given a text (which might be accompanied by other documents, such as graphs or pictures) in the foreign language that they have never seen before and have thirty minutes to study it. They must then give an explication of the documents in the manner defined by the national commission that is specific to each content subject and that oversees its curriculum.

The students' final grade in CLIL will be composed of both the grade in class and the grade on the final exam calculated on the basis of 80% for the final exam and 20% for the course average. As originally indicated by the Ministry in 1992, this grade will be transcribed onto the student's high school diploma.

Students are very proud to have "classe européenne" inscribed on their diploma. They always mention this on their resumes when looking for a job. For potential employers it represents a proven ability to speak a foreign language and attests to the candidate's willingness to work harder than average in pursuit of greater achievement.

2.1.3. The CLIL teacher certificate

Content subject teachers who want to become involved in CLIL must necessarily be certified to do so. The certification process, as defined in the latest certification decree (2010) includes two main stages. After signing up for the exam, candidates then have to write an approximately 5-page "report". In the report will be a resume of the candidate's work experience, degrees and any specific studies, training or travel experiences that are pertinent to the CLIL situation including how they became proficient in the language they want to teach in. Candidates will also explain their motivations for wanting to teach CLIL, which should prove their interest in the culture of the speakers of the language. Furthermore, a draft of a lesson plan will help to show the candidate's grasp of CLIL methodology. While the decree clearly states that the report is to be written in French, it is highly recommended that the candidates include a one-page summary of the report in the foreign language as proof of their linguistic competence.

2.1.4. The final stage

The final stage is decisive. Candidates appear in front of a commission made up of a language teacher, an inspector of the candidate's content subject and a CLIL teacher. The exam will last up to a maximum of thirty minutes, and will be partially or totally in the foreign language. The candidates will give a ten-minute presentation of themselves and their interest in CLIL after which the commission will question them for up to twenty minutes. These questions will cover the candidate's knowledge of the national CLIL curriculum, its methodologies, cultural aspects, and aims. Candidate's will be asked how they plan to implement DNL in their school, how they imagine working as a team with the language teacher and what sources they can use to create courses. They are expected to be familiar with various programs to increase the students' contact with foreign populations: Comenius and Erasmus programs, eTwinning, UNESCO, etc. They must prove their awareness of differences in pedagogical strategies in France and the country of the language they will be teaching in, and the differences between teaching their content subject in a regular class and in a CLIL class. They will need to show their perfect knowledge of the exam they will be preparing students for and have ideas for how to best create classwork to help the students prepare for the exam.

Thus content teachers who want to give a CLIL course must, first of all, speak the foreign language well, at a B2 to C1 level. They must be

strongly knowledgeable about the rationale underpinning CLIL courses and the methodologies they are to use. They must be fully cognizant of the cultural motivations of CLIL and be able to pass on their enthusiasm for the culture of the speakers of the language they are teaching in, as well as an understanding of the point of view of those speakers concerning the subject content they are teaching. They must show the ability to create CLIL lessons so as to prepare their students for the final exam in the European Section.

2.1.5. Teaching Substance

While the official curriculum texts are quite clear as to the goals of CLIL and the qualifications of the content teacher, they remain hazy as to exactly what content is to be covered in the CLIL class, and to what extent the CLIL teacher is expected to specifically work on the students' language abilities.

One of the objectives of the CLIL course is to develop and enhance students' knowledge of the content subject from an intercultural point of view (Académie de Nancy-Metz 2004). The content of the CLIL class will then follow the curriculum of the subject matter, based on the same topics, but will not be the core teaching of that subject. CLIL lessons will then offer other ways of looking at those topics through the use of current articles written in the language of the class proposing a new slant on the issue. By not defining a specific curriculum for CLIL the National Education bestows on CLIL teachers a vast field in which to exploit their creativity.

While improvement in the foreign language is a core objective of the CLIL class, the official curriculum does not specify the extent to which the CLIL teacher is to work on the accuracy of the students language use. Clearly, the content teacher is not a language teacher and cannot substitute as a language teacher. And yet, the content teacher must help the students to express themselves clearly and correctly in the foreign language. One of the conundrums of the CLIL teacher is thus to decide how far they are to go in working on the students' foreign language ability, and what specifically it is their role to teach.

The official texts offer almost no indication as to the role of the language teacher in CLIL. They address the content teacher who is expected to cooperate with the language teacher. In this respect, the language teacher remains a shadow in the CLIL scheme. Language teachers are not recognized for their work in the CLIL program. They can accept or refuse to cooperate with the content teacher. In the best case

scenario they will commit to the project enthusiastically, generously giving of their time to collaborate with the CLIL teacher.

From this brief overview of CLIL teaching in France, we are bound to conclude that there are obvious obstacles to really empowering both students and teachers with the ability to learn or teach simultaneously content and language. Some CLIL teachers pointed at the difficulties they were facing during their CLIL classes.

2.2. A Questionnaire

A questionnaire including the following questions was sent out to a number of French CLIL teachers:

1. What difficulties do you encounter in your CLIL lessons?
2. What difficulties do your students encounter in their CLIL lessons?
3. How do you manage the gap between the students' level of knowledge in the subject and their level of language proficiency?
4. Do you incorporate the action-oriented approach even though the institutional setting is not very favourable?
5. Can you give us one example of a class activity?

While few people had the time to write out explicit answers, and the responses for the most part remained rather general, teachers waxed their most specific on two points: their difficulties and suggested exercises.

In the first case, the main difficulty was getting the students to speak (other than those who were bilingual), making sure the weaker students had speaking time in contrast to the bilinguals who tended to take up the speaking "space". Other difficulties include working out how much and how the non-language teachers should be working on phonetic and grammatical errors while aware that their own English was not exemplary (as compared to the language teacher's).

The language exercises, for the most part, tended to be vocabulary or fixed-phrase oriented. This leaves us with the difficulty of how to bring task-based exercises into the CLIL class, which may be as short as one hour a week, where teachers are under pressure to teach to the exam, giving the students the vocabulary and forms that are needed and specific to the form of the exam It must be remembered, too that the CLIL teachers do not have training in language teaching, and know little about the notion of action tasks.

From a cognitive point of view, teachers found that one of the greatest difficulties was getting the students to apply the knowledge learned in

their CLIL class to activities and exams in their native language content courses. This means that for some reason, the students were compartmentalizing their knowledge according to the language in which they acquired it.

How can we improve the situation of CLIL classes in France? How can we help students to integrate the knowledge obtained in a CLIL class into their general world knowledge? First of all we need to explain the causes of the problems raised by the teachers.

2.3 CLIL teaching and the level descriptors

The CEFR offers a description of what a language user can do at various levels of competence. When studying level descriptors in the CEFR, a discrepancy between the first three and the last three levels stands out. From A1 to B1, communication remains rather familiar and does not involve complex subject matter, whereas from B2, language becomes specialised. Academic texts can be read and understood and specialised fields of interest can be dealt with. For oral comprehension a learner at B2 "can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines or argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar (...). He can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. He can understand contemporary literary prose." But it is only at C1 that he is supposed to be able to "understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to his field." And it is at C1 level that he can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects (...), or "write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report (...) (CEFR 2001: 27).

Students are expected to reach a B2 level at the end of high school. However, CLIL classes begin earlier when students are only at A2 or B1.

2.4. Problems and Paradoxes

Thus the language difficulties in CLIL classes in France lay precisely in the discrepancy between the level at which students enter CLIL and the level they need to accomplish CLIL work. This is the first paradox of the French CLIL scheme: students enter high school at a B1 level whereby the purpose of CLIL classes is to foster the mastery of the language to help students reach B2. However the prerequisite for CLIL work is a B2-C1 level, which means that the students are, in fact, unable to carry out the work for content learning. The discrepancy between the level needed to do

the work and the students' actual level leads the content teachers to constantly finding that the students' level is beneath the needed level to carry out the work they are expected to do, for the teachers are expected to focus specifically on content leaving the language work to the language teacher. In this context, content predominates over communication.

This introduces the second paradox of the French CLIL scheme. While CLIL is supposed to bridge the gap between language as an object of teaching and as a means, thus combining both language and content learning in a single class, the scheme distinctly separates content teachers' role in CLIL teaching from that of language teachers. Language teachers are given a supporting role to help bring the students' language competence up, while content teachers are to create lessons to teach content, in the assumption that the students can carry out the content exercises. Thus, the importance of content predominates over communication itself. The language class then remains exercise-based, and the CLIL class is content-based, while neither, in fact, is task based.

2.5. What solutions?

From the above transpire the challenges that CLIL teaching must surmount: How can an action-oriented approach be implemented where the subject matter prevails over communication itself with such a discrepancy between the students' actual language level and the required level? How can language-learning and content learning be best integrated? What are the best ways for the content teacher and the language teacher to share their work in CLIL? Indeed, the very purpose of integrating a task-based approach to CLIL classes could be to foster the mastery of the language to help the students reach B2 so that the notable discrepancy between the knowledge of the subject matter and the mastery of the language to deal with it would disappear.

But how are we to deal with this paradox and help teachers with their CLIL classes?

The CEFR which contributed to making us aware of the problem could very well help us solve it.

3. What are the main characteristics of the CEFR applicable to CLIL classes?

3.1. Language as action

3.1.1. The conception of language

The CEFR rests on a conception of language as action: "Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of **competences**, both **general** and in particular **communicative language competences** (CEFR: 9)." This approach is in keeping with Vygotsky's theory of the social origin of thought as well as with Wittgenstein's opposition to the Augustinian lexical vision of language. According to Wittgenstein (1953) language is action, whereas for Saint Augustin, the function of words is to give names to objects and sentences and language is just the way these denominations are connected. For Bange the Augustinian conception of language can lead to learning a language totally apart from communication (Bange, 2005: 17).

The conception of language as action under various conditions and constraints implies a different role for the student. CLIL classes also imply a different learner position.

3.1.2. The learner's use of language

The learner is seen as a social actor in a socio-communicative perspective which is significantly different from the communicative approach. In the communicative approach language activities are based on information gaps, or take the form of different types of role-plays and thus can be considered as artificial by the learner. In the action-oriented approach, real-life-like activities are to bridge the gap between the learning situation and the normal use of language.

The CEFR "describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively." (CEFR: 1)

> "The approach adopted here, generally speaking, is an action-oriented one in so far as it views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. While acts of speech

> occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning. We speak of 'tasks' in so far as the actions are performed by one or more individuals strategically using their own specific competences to achieve a given result. The action-based approach therefore also takes into account the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources and the full range of abilities specific to and applied by the individual as a social agent." (CEFR: 9).

How can such an approach really take place within the closed context of the language class? The answer is given by Ellis who writes that tasks are especially useful to design a communicative course in a context where there is little opportunity for authentic communication. He distinguishes task-supported language teaching in which tasks have just been incorporated into traditional ways of teaching, from task-based language teaching in which tasks are central to the whole design of a course. (Ellis, 2003: 27) What does a task-based approach mean and how can it apply to CLIL classes?

3.2. The Task-based approach

3.2.1. What is a task?

A task is defined in the CEFR "as any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfil or an objective to be achieved. This definition would cover a wide range of actions such as moving a wardrobe, writing a book, obtaining certain conditions in the negotiation of a contract, playing a game of cards, ordering a meal in a restaurant, translating a foreign language text or preparing a class newspaper through group work." (CEFR: 10).

Many other definitions can be found but the most useful one for our purpose seems to be that of Ellis:

- A task is a workplan.
- A task involves a primary focus on meaning.
- A task involves real-world processes of language use.
- A task can involve any of the four language skills.
- A task engages cognitive processes.
- A task has a clearly defined communicative outcome (Ellis 2003: 9).

He also defines unfocused tasks "which are not designed with a specific form in mind" as opposed to focused tasks which "aim to induce

learners to process, receptively or productively, some particular linguistic feature, for example, a grammatical structure." (Ellis 2003: 16).

3.2.2. Final task, macro-task, micro-task

To design a task-based language course, important considerations include how the task is going to be performed by the students, and how the goal will be achieved. For that purpose it is useful to distinguish between a "final task" and a "macro-task", as well as between an "intermediary task" and a "micro-task".

A final task is the culmination of a set of lessons. It breaks out of the classroom to reach the world beyond the classroom walls. If the communication level of the task is to be achieved, the students must be guided by intermediary tasks or exercises. For instance, if the final task is a debate that is to take place in front of an audience, where the parents might also be invited, an intermediary task will consist of training the students to express their points of view through pair work activities, for instance. They may work on vocabulary specific to the subject, along with correct pronunciation, in specially designed exercises or micro tasks.

A micro task is generally focused on one aspect of the language to be used in the task.

A macro-task is a task composed of several tasks, including micro tasks. For instance, in a decision taking type of task, students read different texts, or listen to different opinions, and consider various conditions, to make up their mind accordingly. In a class, a macro task may be divided among groups of students working in collaboration. Not all students will necessarily perform the same tasks.

Other definitions borrowed from French researchers deserve quoting: A macro task is "*une unité d'activité d'apprentissage signifiante*" (Guichon 2006 : 56) whereas the micro-task is «"*une unité de pratique cognitive centrée sur un aspect linguistique, pragmatique ou socioculturel spécifique"* (Ibid. : 79) Guichon adds : « alors que la macro-tâche met le participant en situation réaliste d'utiliser la L2 (ou du moins elle le rapproche des activités de la vie extrascolaire), la micro-tâche découpe la situation en unités d'apprentissage et focalise l'attention de l'apprenant sur des traits particuliers de la L2. » (Ibid. : 80) And according to Françoise Demaizière and Jean-Paul Narcy-Combes, a macro-task is "*un ensemble d'actions réalistes conduisant à une production langagière non limitée à l'univers scolaire."* (Demaizière & Narcy, 2005: 45-64).

How can a task-based approach apply to CLIL classes? Can such an approach be easily implemented?

To respond to these questions, it seems important to discuss the different ways to classify tasks.

3.2.3. Types of tasks

In actual fact, there are various ways to classify tasks. One of them is pedagogical (Gardner and Miller, 1996) and in keeping with incorporating tasks into more traditional modes of teaching. Another one mentioned by Ellis (2003: 213) is Prabhu's cognitive classification. Prabhu (1987) distinguishes three main types of tasks "based on the type of cognitive ability involved:

- Information gap activity involves "a transfer of given information from one person to another – generally calling for the encoding or decoding of information from or into language." (Prabhu 1987: 46) Prabhu gives two examples. One involves a standard information-gap activity while the other involves what Widdowson (1978) has called information transfer, or example, using information in a text to complete a chart or a table.
- Reasoning-gap activity involves "deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns." (Prabhu: 1987: 46) Prabhu points out this activity also involve sharing information but requires going beyond the information provided. An example is a task that requires students to work out a teacher's timetable from a set of class timetables.
- Opinion-gap activity involves "identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation." (ibid. 47) Examples are story completion and taking part in a discussion. Such tasks are open in the sense that they afford many possible solutions (Ellis, 2003: 213).

This type of classification rests on the conception that reasoning fosters learning.

Moreover, Ellis mentions another type of classification which could become useful to design a course: Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun's psycholinguistic classification.

This system of classification is based on interactional categories:

- "Interactant relationship: this concerns who holds the information to be exchanged and who requests it and supplies it in order to achieve the goal. (...)
- Interaction requirement: this concerns whether the task requires participants to request and supply information or whether this is optional. (...)
- Goal orientation: this concerns whether the task requires the participants to agree on a single outcome or allows them to disagree. (...)
- Outcome options: this refers to the scope of the task outcomes available to the participants in meeting the task goals. In the case of 'closed' tasks a single outcome is required whereas 'open' tasks permit several possible outcomes. (...)" (Ellis, 2003: 215).

Finally, Ellis proposes a general framework to inform a task-based course involving four features:

- "input, i.e. the nature of the input provided in the task;
- conditions, i.e. way in which the information is presented to the learners and the way in which it is to be used;
- processes, i.e. the nature of the cognitive operations and the discourse the task requires;
- outcomes, i.e. the nature of the product that results from performing the task" (Ellis, 2003: 217).

Here is an example (Table 1-1):

Goal	Create a radio show.
Input	Medium: podcasts, radio programs, interviews on *You tube*, news, weather forecasts, songs, etc.
Conditions	Structures given; information to be found by students;
Processes	Group work; sharing information; collaborative work.
Outcomes	Several possible outcomes depending on the choices made by each group.

3.3. The plurilingual, pluricultural approach

3.3.1. A new perspective on language learning

The CEFR also enhances the plurinlingual approach in a global context: