

## Focus on CLIL



Focus on CLIL:  
A Qualitative Evaluation of Content and Language  
Integrated Learning (CLIL)  
in Polish Secondary Education

By

Katarzyna Papaja

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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A Qualitative Evaluation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)  
in Polish Secondary Education,  
by Katarzyna Papaja

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# INTRODUCTION

The political, technological, economic and social realities of the modern world have led and still lead to more contact between people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Globalization has made the world interconnected. The world is rapidly becoming a mixed global village where the role of languages is extremely important. In an integrated world, integrated learning is viewed as a modern form of educational delivery.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an innovative approach which refers to educational settings where a language other than the learners' mother tongue is used as the medium of instruction. The other language can be found in use from kindergarten to tertiary level, and the extent of its use may range from occasional foreign language texts in individual subjects to covering the whole curriculum. Rationales for the use of CLIL tend to direct their arguments towards the perception that outcomes of foreign language learning in school settings are frequently seen as unsatisfactory, especially in terms of productive skills (Dalton-Puffer, 2007a: 2).

CLIL classrooms are not typical language classrooms due to the fact that language is the medium through which content is "transported". Non-linguistic content is used to teach a language and learners acquire new knowledge but in a foreign language. Naturally, they must have some basic knowledge of the language they are learning and be capable of understanding the content. As knowledge of the language becomes the means of learning content, the learner is highly motivated and language acquisition becomes crucial.

There are number of generally agreed principles underlying CLIL (Darn, 2006: 2), namely:

- language is used to learn and communicate,
- a CLIL lesson should combine content, communication, cognition and culture;
- language is functional and it is adapted to the subject;
- language is approached lexically, grammar is not important;
- learning styles are taken into account in task types;



Thus, the concept of CLIL is in many respects similar to ESP, but does not necessarily include explanations relating to the language itself, but simply integrates language and content which involves understanding and production of the second language. Although subject specialists and language specialists have to work very closely in designing materials that are appropriate for the CLIL classroom and as a result of that invest a large amount of time, there are a lot of advantages which make CLIL an innovative methodology that has emerged to cater for this interconnected age:

- it introduces a wider cultural context;
- it prepares the learners for international activities and exchanges;
- it gives access to international certification;
- it improves general and specific language competence;
- it prepares for professional life and provides more job opportunities;
- it develops multilingual interests and attitudes;
- it increases the learner motivation to learn a second or even a third language;

The aim of the following book is to present and analyse the changes which take place in a CLIL classroom in secondary education. The title of the book is “Focus on CLIL – a qualitative evaluation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Polish secondary education” but the word “evaluation” does not mean assessment. The purpose of the research conducted was not to assess Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) but to describe it.

A further aim of this study is to raise the CLIL teachers’ awareness of certain changes which occur in the CLIL classroom, and consequently, to help them understand the process of Content and Language Integrated Learning.

The book is organised in two parts: theoretical and empirical. These parts consist of six chapters. The first three chapters review the professional literature relevant to this study and the other three chapters are devoted to the empirical study.

In **Chapter One (The concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning)** the concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is described. A definition of CLIL is provided and followed by the outline and history of CLIL. Then different variations of CLIL are presented divided into: typologically induced variations, environmentally induced variations and a modular variation. In the next part of this chapter,

CLIL is presented in the context of European integration and finally in Poland.

In **Chapter Two (Content and Language Integrated Learning – important issues)** CLIL according to four aspects: language, content, learning environment and attitudinal and motivation is presented. All these aspects are further elaborated on and closely linked to the empirical part of the thesis. In addition, the main features of the CLIL learner and the CLIL teacher are described.

In **Chapter Three (Recapitulation)** the beneficial effects of CLIL are discussed. The beneficial effects are presented with reference to learners, teachers, school and society. Additional, a summary of the theoretical part is provided.

**Chapter Four (The empirical study)** serves to orient the reader to the empirical part of the book by providing a description of the study, its aims, design and procedure adopted, the main research questions and a description of categories of the data analysis. One of the main objectives of the empirical study is to describe and analyse the changes in language education which occur in the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) classroom in Secondary Education throughout one school year. Additionally, the pilot studies conducted in Poland and Germany are described.

In **Chapter Five (Data presentation)** the results of the research are discussed. The analysis is done according to the established categories. All the data is based on the observations made by the author of the book, questionnaires carried out among the CLIL learners and the CLIL teachers and an interview conducted with the CLIL teachers.

**Chapter Seven (Conclusions and further research implications).** The concluding part of the book attempts to examine the results and major findings of the study in relation to the general research question and further research sub-questions. Recommendations for further CLIL classroom practices as well as recommendations for further research are offered.

The **Appendix**, which consists of 10 parts, contains the study instruments used for the empirical part of the study (the questionnaires, observation sheets and criteria of subjects' evaluation).

## **PART I**

# **THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF CLIL**

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE CONCEPT OF CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL)

Bilingualism is a phenomenon which can be observed in many parts of the world, particularly in Europe. This is mainly due to extensive migratory movements in Europe which began in the 1960s. At present more than 450 million people with different historical, social and cultural backgrounds live and work in Europe from many diverse nations, communities, cultures and language groups. According to Bialystok (2005: 425) “bilingualism enhances many metalinguistic abilities, including sensitivity to the details and structure of language, early word-referent distinction, recognition of ambiguities, control of language processing, and correction of ungrammatical sentences.”

*Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)* is a term which refers to a dozen or more educational approaches (e.g. immersion, bilingual education, multilingual education, language showers and enriched language programmes). What is new about CLIL is that “it synthesises and provides a flexible way of applying the knowledge learnt from these various approaches” (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008: 12).

The aim of this chapter is to present the outline and history of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), the definition of CLIL as well as its different variations.

### 1. A Definition of CLIL

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a common term for a number of similar approaches in Europe to teach content subjects through a foreign language. Other terms used are *Bilingual Content Teaching*, *Bilingual Subject Teaching* or *Content-based Language Teaching* (Wolff, 2003: 211). The term CLIL is now the most commonly used and “it is based on the assumption that foreign languages are best learnt by focusing in the classroom not so much on language but on the content which is transmitted through language”. The novelty of this approach is that classroom “content is not so much taken from everyday

life but rather from content subjects e.g. mathematics, biology, geography etc.” (Wolff, 2003: 211-222).

The following definition of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has been provided: Marsh (2000 in Marsh & Langé, 2000) provides the following definition of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL):

“Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is a generic term and refers to any educational situation in which an additional language and therefore not the most widely used language of the environment is used for the teaching and learning of subjects other than language itself” (Marsh 2000 in Marsh & Langé, 2000: iii)

According to Wolff (2003: 211), there are at least three points which are important in the context of this general definition:

- a). CLIL should not be perceived as an approach to language teaching and learning; it is important to pay attention to both content and language.
- b). In CLIL content and language are learnt in an integrated way. The two subjects are related to each other and dealt with as a whole.
- c). In CLIL another language is used to teach and learn content subjects, i.e. it is the medium of instruction.

Marsland (1999 in Marsh & Marsland, 1999b) describes CLIL as an “approach which refers to any learning context in which content and language are integrated in order to fulfil specified educational aims” (p.21). What is more, it could be used to refer to a classroom in which a foreign language teacher instructs learners on non-language subject content in a foreign language. At the same time it may apply to a situation in which a subject teacher uses a foreign language, to a greater or lesser extent, as the medium of instruction in any specific lesson. This does not mean, however, that language as such should not be focussed upon in the classroom. What is more, “language is both content and medium in the CLIL classroom but it is not taught in the same way as in the traditional classroom – it is focussed upon when it is necessary and important for the understanding of a specific aspect of the content subject or the academic discipline” (Wolff, 2003: 211).

Maljers, Marsh, Coyle, Hartiala, Marsland, Pérez-Vidal & Wolff (2002) claim that there are 5 dimensions or reasons for introducing CLIL in schools and universities in order to strengthen the teaching and learning at these institutions.

The 5 dimensions of CLIL are based on issues related to culture, environment, language, content and learning. Each of these includes a number of focus points realised differently according to three major facts: age-range of learners, socio-linguistic environment and degree of exposure to CLIL (Maljers, Marsh, Coyle, Hartiala, Marsland, Pérez-Vidal & Wolff, 2002: 65):

- a). The Culture Dimension – CULTIX
  - Build intercultural knowledge & understanding
  - Develop intercultural communication skills
    - Learn about specific neighbouring countries/regions and/or minority groups
  - Introduce the wider cultural context
- b). The Environment Dimension – ENTIX
  - Prepare for internationalisation, specifically EU-integration
  - Access International Certification
  - Enhance school profile
- c). The Language Dimension – LANTIX
  - Improve overall target language competence
  - Develop oral communication skills
  - Develop plurilingual interests and attitudes
  - Introduce a target language
- d). The Content Dimension – CONTIX
  - Provide opportunities to study content through different perspectives
  - Access subject-specific target language terminology
  - Prepare for future studies and/or working life
- e). The Learning Dimension – LEARNTIX
  - Complement individual learning strategies
  - Diversify methods & forms of classroom practice
  - Increase learner motivation

The above mentioned dimensions are based on the most important issues which ought to be presented not only in the CLIL classroom but also in a language classroom where building intercultural knowledge preparing for internationalisation or preparing for future studies and working life are also aspects. The learners ought to be made aware of the

importance of languages in the world and should be taught how to use them effectively.

## **2. An outline and history of CLIL**

Schools in which the teaching of certain content subjects in the curriculum are offered in a foreign, regional or minority language have existed in Europe for several decades.

Before the 1970s, this type of provision was mainly available in regions that were linguistically distinctive (because they were close to national borders or used two languages, etc.), or in the largest cities. It concerned very limited numbers of pupils who were growing up in somewhat unusual linguistic or social contexts. The aim was to turn them into bilingual children by enabling them to acquire proficiency.

During the 1970s and 1980s, development of this kind of provision has been influenced in particular by the Canadian experiment with immersion teaching (Day & Shapson, 1996). This first began as a result of English-speaking parents living in the province of Quebec who considered that proficiency in French was vital in a French-speaking environment. "They sought to offer their children an education in this language that would lead them to acquire significant language skills" (Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols, 2008: 9).

In 1965, a group of parents encouraged the local authorities to establish a language-immersion programme that would make it possible for their English-speaking children to study the subjects in French (Freed, Segalowitz & Devey, 2004). The programme was very successful and it spread throughout Canada and other countries.

Programmes for immersion teaching have been enormously successful in Canada. Support from the education authorities and the involvement of parents have undoubtedly been key factors in their success. These projects have given rise to a great deal of interesting research. "While it has gradually become clear that the Canadian experience is not directly transferable to Europe, it has nevertheless been valuable in stimulating research in this area and encouraging the development of a very wide range of experimental activity" (Figel, 2006: 8).

The provision of immersion teaching may take many different forms. It may be regarded as "early" or "late" depending on the age of the children for whom it is intended. "It may be considered "total" if the entire curriculum is taught in what is termed the target language or "partial" if that language is the language of instruction for just some subjects" (Figel, 2006: 8). These different approaches are a reflection of the rich variety of

linguistic and education environments, as well as the varied ambitions and aims of pupils or their parents and education authorities.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as an educational approach was developed in Europe and is, therefore, very strongly European-oriented. “It is based on the assumption that foreign languages are best learnt by focussing in the classroom not so much on language – its form and structure – but on the content which is transmitted through language” (Wolff, 2002: 47). Integrated language and content education which fits the working definition of CLIL has had a long history in Europe. Already in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century private and mostly elitist schools existed which made use of the main principle of CLIL, i.e. using another language to teach content subjects.

Bilingual education in Germany and France was initiated by the political changes which took part in these countries (Iluk, 2000). There was a peace treaty concluded in 1963 between Germany and France the aim of which was to build up new and stable relationships. According to Mäsch (1993: 155) “French which functioned as a foreign language in bilingual streams in German schools did not only serve as means of communication but also as a language of integration and cooperation with the nearest partner”. During the conference organised in Belgium in 1990 by the European Commission it was said that the German bilingual model was the one to follow due to the fact that it was promoting cultural and linguistic partnership and not domination (Mäsch, 1993).

In Europe, many people have started understanding the value of multilingualism. There are countries where bilingual education has become an increasing trend initiated by the European Union and supported by the governments (Brisk & Harrington, 2000). Finland and the Netherlands could be very good examples here. Marsh and Masih (1996: 46) point to the late 80s “when greater attention was paid to making the system of education more international”. At that time the introduction of bilingual education in schools was considered due to various globalisation processes. In 1991 a legal act was passed making it possible to introduce other foreign languages as mediums of instruction in Finnish schools. A group of experts gathered at the University of Jyväskylä to create an educational programme for the schools which were going to introduce immersion in English.

In the case of the Netherlands, bilingual education started to develop at the beginning of 1990s. In 1991, the Ministry of Education published a document called “Widening Horizons” which contained some recommendations concerning bilingual education. The main aim of this document was to promote bilingual education by creating bilingual classes



and organising international exchange projects between the learners and the teachers. As a result, the number of schools with bilingual classes increased and in 1995 there were 11 secondary schools in which content subjects were taught using English (Fruhauf, 1996).

In countries such as Great Britain or Italy, implementation of bilingual education has been limited due to the number of various experimental projects and lack of support on the part of the authorities. According to the Eurydice<sup>1</sup> report (2006) Great Britain has not been taken into consideration the possibility of introducing bilingual education in the minority languages (Welsh gaelic and Scottish gaelic). The only languages which can be considered in the case of bilingual education are French, Spanish and German. The Educational Reform Act of 1988 was a lost case because the minority languages were ignored and the language which became officially taught in all schools was French. Coyle (1996) expresses her strong concern about the state of bilingual education in Great Britain. While in other countries all over the world bilingual education is becoming more popular, in Great Britain this model of education is not accepted by the British Government (except for Scotland and Wales which have their own governments). Moreover, “bilingual sections are rare to find at the best of times and are almost unheard of in the UK” (Ullman, 1999). In the following sections, Ullman (1999) refers to the examination boards which do not allow the learners to take their final exams (e.g. GCSE) in a foreign language and as a result, the learners do not feel motivated enough to learn subjects in a foreign language. A similar situation can be observed in Poland. The learners are allowed to take their final exams in a foreign language (e.g. Matura) but they do not get any credit for it so as a result, they feel de-motivated. In Wales and Northern Ireland, the learners are allowed to take their final examinations in the language in which the subject was studied and what is more, they get credit for it which is very motivating for learners.

CLIL provision as part of mainstream school education has been introduced in countries such as France, Ireland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Czech Republic etc. However, the fact that a CLIL-based approach to learning has been a part of mainstream school provision does not mean that it is widespread (Eurydice, 2006: 14). In most of the cases, it has been offered to only a minority of learners and in just a few schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Eurydice is an educational network which provides information and analyses of European education systems and policies. It consists of 35 national units based in all 31 countries participating in the EU's *Lifelong Learning Programme* and is coordinated and managed by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency in Brussels.

In countries such as Great Britain, Spain, Germany, Italy, Sweden etc. there has been a combination of CLIL provision as part of mainstream school education and within pilot projects. In these countries CLIL has been introduced as a part of mainstream school education or as a form of pilot projects. Only Lithuania and the French part of Belgium has introduced CLIL within pilot projects.

To sum up, CLIL has become a very popular educational approach and most countries have introduced legislation to establish it in schools. Within the next few years, other countries are going to join this group.

### **3. Variations of CLIL**

CLIL as an educational concept is not homogenous. There are certain variations which can be distinguished. According to Wolff (2005: 3) “variation depends on a number of factors of which the school type – primary, secondary, tertiary – is the most important”. Other factors responsible for variation are country-specific, i.e. environmental. They depend on the specific educational system and in the wider socio-linguistic context in which the approach is embedded.

#### **3.1. Typologically induced variations**

The number of primary schools which have adopted some kind of CLIL approach is surprisingly high. A distinction must be made between at least two types of primary CLIL schools (Wolff, 2005: 4):

a). The first type of primary CLIL schools exists in bilingual border regions, in France for example in Alsace or in Italy in Southern Tyrol. These kinds of schools can be also found in large industrial centres, for example in Berlin, Paris, Kraków etc. In France and Italy the minority languages (German and French) are used as languages of instruction, in the CLIL classrooms in Berlin one of the larger minority languages is the language in which part of the content is taught such as Turkish, Greek, Spanish or Russian. “This type of CLIL is often but not always a combination of additive and maintenance bilingual education” (Baker, 1996: 4). Learners acquire their family language together with a higher language competence in the society they live in.

b). The second type of primary CLIL schools exists in all regions. The language of instruction is neither the language spoken in the country or the learners’ mother tongue. Primary CLIL branches of this type are the outcome of parents’ initiatives, based on private bilingual kindergarten and

pre-school. The second type of primary CLIL schools can be mainly found in large industrial centres.

The holistic methodological approach, which is characteristic of primary education, makes it necessary to integrate the foreign language into the subject areas taught in the classroom. The larger subject areas are Language (mother tongue and foreign language), Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Sports (Wolff 2005). They are taught partly in the majority language and partly in the minority or foreign language chosen.

Having observed the changes taking place in schools across Europe in the last few years, it can be noticed that CLIL has developed differently in various European school systems but there are still some similarities. CLIL schools are organised in such a way that one or more content subjects are taught in a foreign language. The most common subjects are: History, Geography and Social Sciences. In most cases “teaching in the target language is primarily concerned with science subjects or those in the field of social sciences” (Eurydice, 2006: 24). The reason why these subjects are chosen to be taught in a foreign language can be due to the fact that they cover the global dimension of subjects which focuses on ‘here, then and now’ issues. CLIL provision can also cover artistic subjects or physical education which are very popular in primary schools. The most common languages used in a CLIL classroom are: English and French and German. “Close examination of CLIL target languages reveals that English, French and German are the most widespread foreign target languages in countries in which provision is in one or several foreign languages. Seven countries (Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden) provide scope for trilingual CLIL provision combining the national language and two languages, or the national language, a foreign language and a minority language” (Eurydice, 2006: 18). The reason why these languages are the most popular is connected with their status in Europe. These languages are the most common ones in the EU.

### **3.2. Environmentally induced variations**

CLIL can have different forms depending on the country in which it is introduced. Wolff (2005: 5) enumerates five environmental parameters which are responsible for the development of different forms of CLIL:

- *Interpretation of the concept*
- *Subjects taught*
- *Exposure time*
- *Curricular integration*
- *Linguistic situation*

**a). Interpretation of the concept**

CLIL as an education concept is differently interpreted in various countries. In some countries the main focus is on foreign language teaching and in others on content teaching. Marsh (2000 in Marsh & Langé, 2000: 21) calls the former interpretation “a language learning” and the latter “a content-learning interpretation”. There is a very important factor which may influence the CLIL concept, namely the qualifications of teachers. In some countries content teachers with a knowledge of a foreign language would adapt the CLIL concept paying attention to content teaching rather than to language teaching. In other countries language teachers who have some knowledge of a particular subject would adapt the CLIL concept paying attention to language teaching. However, in both cases the foreign competence of the learner is improved due to the use of a foreign language as a language of instruction.

**b). Subjects taught**

The discussion concerning suitability of certain subjects being taught in a CLIL classroom has not ended yet. “Subjects belonging to the Humanities are more suitable when it comes to the promotion of interculturality, as they are characterised by culture-specific features which by contrast lead to consciousness-raising with respect to the cultural particularities of the target language culture” (Wolff, 2005: 5). In most countries subjects belonging to the Humanities are chosen to be taught in the CLIL classroom (cf. Eurydice report, 2006). However, in many countries sciences as well as artistic subjects and physical education are also chosen as CLIL subjects. The reason why particular subjects are chosen as CLIL subjects can be also connected with the availability of teachers. Countries such as Poland, Czech Republic or Hungary lack dual education. Teachers are either trained to become subject teachers e.g. geography or language teachers. Teachers are not trained to become both subject and language teachers while in Germany there is such a possibility. Most Universities in Germany offer dual education and as a result, both subject and language can be taught simultaneously. In Poland or Hungary if any content teacher has got a very good knowledge of a foreign language he or she can teach the subject in a CLIL classroom.

**c). Exposure time**

The exposure time to content-subject learning in a foreign language varies. In some countries there are three content subjects taught in a foreign language and in some countries there is only one subject.

The number of hours where subjects are taught in a foreign language also differs. In some countries the learners are offered 6 hours per week during which the teacher uses the mother tongue and in others only 3 hour per week during which the teacher does not say a word in mother tongue. “Differences in the amount of lesson time each week on the type of CLIL provision concerned are apparent from one region or locality to the next as in Germany, Spain and Italy, from one school to another as in Belgium (the French Community), the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Finland, or yet again depend on the status of languages in question as in Latvia, Poland, Finland and Romania” (Eurydice, 2006: 27).

**d). Curricular integration**

Different variations of CLIL are influenced by the decision to implement this approach into the curriculum of an education system. If no curriculum exists for CLIL in a specific country, the approach takes a different character which not only influences its quality but can also lead to its being offered only from time to time which will be followed by its disappearance. A lot of countries have been offering CLIL within pilot projects which last from one to three years depending on the country and are evaluated on their completion (Eurydice, 2006). The body responsible for funding or managing them is generally the Ministry of Education or a regional education authority (e.g. Spain). Additionally, higher education institutions or research institutes may be included in the projects on a partnership basis. If successful, these projects also lead to curricular integration.

**e). Linguistic situation**

Europe is a geographical unit which can be characterised by two observable facts: linguistic variation within its boundaries and linguistic variation within many of its states (Wolff, 2005). This situation also has an impact on the development of different types of CLIL. In some countries the CLIL language maybe the one officially recognised e.g. in Belgium or Switzerland there are two or three languages, respectively and one of them can be chosen as the CLIL language. In other cases the language of the neighbouring country is chosen as the CLIL language. One can easily

draw the conclusion here that in such linguistic contexts specific variations of CLIL develop.

### **3.3. Modular variation**

“Modular CLIL can be defined as an approach to teaching content in a foreign language in non-language subjects over shorter periods of time” (Wolff, 2005: 6). It has already been introduced in many schools recently, especially in Germany. The reason why it has been introduced is connected with the time and finances. It can be introduced fairly quickly and it is not very expensive.

Modular CLIL is based on modules. A teacher decides to teach part of the curriculum in the learners’ mother tongue and another part in a foreign language. It is often practised in the case of geography or history where the teacher decides to teach geography or history of a particular country in its mother tongue. In modular CLIL, teachers are responsible for the choice of the topics they intend to work on in the foreign language. There are a lot of topics which are suitable for modular CLIL e.g. topics which are specifically related to the foreign language culture e.g. the American Civil War (in English), Nazism (German), Napoleon (French) etc.

The aims of modular CLIL are the following (Wolff, 2005: 7):

- It makes learners understand the importance of a foreign language, especially when dealing with different content subjects;
- It helps learners to become more aware of language register;
- It can be attractive;
- It is motivating for the language learning processes;

To sum up, modular CLIL is a useful concept. “It serves as a bridge between traditional language teaching on the one hand and regular CLIL on the other” (ibidem). In other words, it may help with implementation of CLIL in the future school curriculum.

## **4. CLIL in the context of the European integration**

Bilingual education can be looked at from the perspective of the changes taking place in modern Europe. One of the most important factors which had an influence on bilingual education was the process of European integration. “Due to this process bilingual education started being officially recognised and also supported by European institutions” (Alder, 2006: 8).

A significant legacy, which had an impact on the educational systems in many European countries, was made in the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. It was written that all European citizens had the right to live and work in any country belonging to the European Union. From this point language competence has become very crucial.

In 1995, the European Commission took a position on bilingual education which was written in the “White Papers”. It was approved that the knowledge of foreign languages was one of the priorities in educating the society. Additionally, some recommendations concerning foreign language education were made:

“It could be even argued that secondary pupils should study certain subjects in the first foreign language learned, as is the case in the European schools” (European Commission, 1995: 47)

It should be mentioned that the European schools were established for the children whose parents worked for the European institutions. The aim of these schools was to maintain the knowledge of the mother tongue as well as to support the acquisition of other foreign languages. The first language was the main medium of instruction at the beginning of their education – the children acquired their writing and reading skills in that language. Beardsmore (1993: 149) points out to “two significant differences between European schools and Canadian immersion: firstly, a foreign language (L2) is taught as a separate subject and then it becomes the medium of instruction and secondly, learners also acquire a foreign language (L2) in a natural environment”.

In 1998, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe asked all the governments belonging to the EU to take some actions concerning multilingual education by encouraging the use of foreign languages in the teaching of non-linguistic subjects (for example history, geography, mathematics) and the creation of favourable conditions for such teaching.

During the meeting of the EU representatives in 2000, Content and Language Integrated Learning was mentioned for first time. The European Institutions pointed to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as a concept which supported their ambitious aims which were prepared by the European Commission in a document entitled “Action Plan 2004-2006 – Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity”. According to the “Action plan” each EU citizen apart from his mother tongue should also know two other foreign languages. As a result of that, each EU country was supposed to provide pupils and students with a possibility to learn at least two foreign languages, which should have been taught through communicative methods. The European Commission

considered Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) to be such a method and fully supported it. The next recommendation concerning CLIL can be found in a “Progress Report” from the year 2004:

“National authorities should encourage a generalisation of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) by defining the standards of teacher qualification and supporting the preparation of appropriate teaching materials” (European Commission, 2004: 23).

Additionally, the European Commission started supporting projects which were connected with CLIL and which were based on international cooperation. CLILiG (Content and Language Integrated Learning in German) was a very good example. The aim of this project was to observe and analyse all the data coming from schools where CLIL existed in German language and also to work out on some teaching methods and innovative practical solutions which could be implemented into other schools.

The Council of Europe also supported Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). In 2004, a new project entitled “CLIL Quality Matrix” was initiated. The aim of this project was to develop innovative teaching “tools” based on modern technology and Internet, which could be used in many European countries.

As it can be noticed from the examples given above, the European Institutions have been supporting Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) for more than 20 years now.

It should be also emphasised that the increasing popularity of multilingualism is supported by politicians and researchers. During the symposium “The Changing European Classroom – Potential of Plurilingual Education” in 2005, Ján Figel (Commissioner responsible for Education Training and Multilingualism) stressed the importance of language learning promotion which he called fundamental to European economy due to the following reasons: firstly, the more languages employees know, the more chances they have to be employed; secondly, the knowledge of foreign languages has a positive influence on the development of business cooperation.

Beardsmore (2001) emphasises the changes which are taking place in the European society. The EU society is getting more keen on multilingual education. The reason behind it is globalisation, modern technology and increasing European mobility. Additionally, European society is becoming aware that in order to get a good job, the knowledge of one foreign language is not enough.



According to Wolff (2005: 10), “it is absolutely necessary for each EU citizen to be able to communicate in two foreign languages. It will help to preserve communication as well as European identity and additionally, it will act as a “safety umbrella” for less popular national languages and minority languages”.

## 5. CLIL in Poland

Bilingual education was introduced in Poland in the seventies (Zielonka, 2007). The first school which introduced it was 3<sup>rd</sup> Secondary School in Gdynia. In the early stages it was English which was introduced as a language of instruction. Some subjects were introduced in English for the whole or part of a lesson. The first bilingual teachers were only content teachers with a certain knowledge of the English language so as a result of that it was rather content which was taught through the medium of English than CLIL. Later on other schools introduced bilingual classes in Polish cities like Cracow or Warsaw. These schools were considered to be elitist schools and their aim was to raise the level of English language knowledge. Bilingual education started being more popular after the political changes in 1989. The borders were open and Polish society started noticing the importance of foreign language learning. In the 1990s, the only schools in which bilingual classes existed were secondary schools. Lower secondary schools were created due to the new Educational Reform from the year 1999 and within a few years bilingual classes started to emerge in some of those schools. It should be pointed out that implementation of CLIL practice in education has been adopted in Poland under the name of bilingual education (*nauczanie dwujęzyczne*) (Dudek, 2002).

Before the year 2002, pupils who wanted to learn in bilingual classes needed to have a very good command of the second language and pass a diagnostic test. In some schools there was additional class “0 class” in which the learners could improve their second language skills. In order to be accepted into “0 class” the candidates did not have to know the second language very well. “Intensive second language learning guaranteed development of second language skills, especially writing and reading” (Multańska, 2002: 90). Education in bilingual classes lasted 4 or 5 years depending on the existence of the “0 class”.

After introduction of the Educational Reform, the programme of the “0 class” was introduced into lower secondary schools which had bilingual classes. The programme was supposed to be covered within 3 years (Act. Nr. 61 from 21<sup>st</sup> May 2001). Bilingual subjects are introduced in lower

secondary schools in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and are continued until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The pupils have 4 hrs (45 min) of mathematics, 2 hrs (45 min) of biology, physics or history and 1hr (45 min) of geography per week. As noticed by Wierzbicka-Drozdowicz (2005: 242), “the pace of learning is slower due to the age of the pupils”.

Taking into consideration the secondary schools which have bilingual classes, all the subjects except for Polish, History of Poland, Geography of Poland and additional foreign language can be taught through the second language. Additionally, the learners should be provided with 6 hrs (45 min) per week of the second language during the whole period of their secondary education (Art. Nr. 61 from 21<sup>st</sup> May 2001). The most common subjects which are taught through a second language are mathematics, physics with astronomy, chemistry, biology, history, geography and computer sciences (Czura, Papaja & Urbaniak, 2008).

One of the major documents describing implementation of CLIL in European countries was Eurydice’s (2006) report *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe*. This document placed Polish bilingual practice in a broader European context. In an attempt to gain a more detailed insight into the use of CLIL in Poland, the National Centre for Teacher Training (CODN) conducted research investigating teaching practice in schools using different content languages. One general report on bilingual education in Poland and in Europe was written in 2006 and other reports on schools using French, English, German and Spanish as a language of instruction have been completed.

The Profile Report (English) presents results of a project coordinated by the National Centre for Teacher Training and the British Council, Poland, which aimed at exploring bilingual schools using English as the content language. The research was conducted in autumn 2007 in bilingual schools throughout the country. This Report provides an overview of practice in Polish secondary and lower secondary schools which teach partly, or largely, through the medium of English language. Nineteen schools allowed the researcher to visit in order to conduct a classroom observation and interviews with students and staff. The schools following MYP and IB programme were excluded from the research.

The purpose of this study was to identify operating models, and examine operational features of bilingual education in Poland. The study should not be regarded as an evaluation, but as an overview of practice, intended to support the development of beneficial bilingual procedures within and across the schools. The project allowed the identification of strengths and weaknesses which helped the researchers to formulate a number of recommendations for future improvement. With a view to

discerning regularities in bilingual education in Poland, the study helped to distinguish four operating curricular models, which derive from the adoption of differing approaches to bilingual education. Moreover, the research aimed at describing the implementation of bilingual practice in respect to four categories, i.e. teachers, students, schools and system, and finally, materials and resources.

The findings of the Report are based on the qualitative research which consisted of observation of at least one English lesson and one content subject lesson in each school. Additionally, the researchers interviewed the headmasters or coordinators of bilingual streams, teachers and students.

With its aim to achieve a general overview of practice in Poland, the Report not only identifies existing models of bilingual education, but also points to the examples of good practice and reveals the areas for improvement. The findings can be categorised into four groups concerning teachers, students, schools and systems (the educational system and its operating agents - Ministries, Teacher Development Agencies, and Examination Boards), and finally, materials and resources.

#### **a). Teachers**

Teachers were mostly Polish with quite common experience of living and working in English-speaking countries and in some cases with experience of teaching abroad. They all showed enormous involvement in teaching, as work with bilingual classes was for them a great challenge as well as the source of personal and professional satisfaction.

What was evident was their eagerness for further development. Aware of the significance of the access to resources and opportunity to exchange experiences for the achievement of best practice, the interviewees reported the great need for specific CLIL training programmes (also subject-specific), workshops, symposia, school visits, exchanges including periods of work or study in countries where the target language is spoken. Moreover, the demand for further development of teacher work partnerships (content-language; content-content) within schools was voiced. In order to ensure this, practical support is required, enabling the proper functioning of 'professional partnerships'. Another concern expressed by the teachers referred to lack of financial resources which are crucial for self-purchase development opportunities.

**b). Students**

Students, in turn, perceived bilingual education as prestigious, broadening horizons, giving them the opportunity to study abroad. Among other advantages, they mentioned access to an extensive range of topics and extra language lessons, studying in better conditions (smaller-sized classes, better learning resources) and participation in foreign exchanges. Being aware of all the benefits, they expressed, nevertheless, their disappointment rooted in the fact that English Matura in many cases does not provide credit for university entrance. Whereas English Matura is difficult and preparation for it requires much effort, students are not granted extra points. Within the disadvantages of bilingual education they also emphasized the lower standard of content subjects in comparison with mainstream classes, as well as the use of traditional methods of teaching. Unsystematic code-switching (Polish-English) was mentioned as another a drawback.

**c). Schools and Systems**

Many initiatives were observed ranging from projects on multiculturalism, cultural festivals, European Union Programmes, to a variety of extra-curricular activities. In spite of that, unfortunately, little networking between bilingual schools in Poland or abroad was reported. Towarzystwo Szkół Twórczych was one of the few examples of such cooperation. Hence, the necessity to build a network which would enable the exchange of materials and experiences is undeniable. Creating conditions facilitating teamwork among the teachers (e.g. embedding team meetings into the timetable) might also contribute to the increase of effectiveness of bilingual education. Furthermore, the need for greater external support from key stakeholders, namely national educational administration, was clearly voiced by the interviewees. Without concrete regulations concerning curricula and insight into the Matura exam the standards of excellence in bilingual teaching will not be achievable. The provision of a bigger range of teacher training is also expected and awaited.

**d) Resources and materials**

Within the category of resources and materials lack of clearly specified bilingual education (English) curriculum was brought in as the problem underlying confusion among the teachers. The words of one of the content teachers seem to prove such status quo: "My feeling is that when it comes

to bilingual classes, there are no rules, no sets of advice available in Poland.” As a result, one of the main observed problems concerns the preparation for the Matura exam. There is no teacher training in this field. Moreover, the Central Examination Board (CKE) does not organize mock bilingual Matura exams and denies both the teachers and the learners access to copies of bilingual Matura exam sets in content subjects used in previous years. The CKE information booklet lacks necessary information, therefore, the teachers prepare the students to bilingual Matura exams without the knowledge of its content, structure and the assessment criteria (“We prepare our students intuitively for the bilingual Matura exams, as no support is provided” English Teacher). Both students and teachers also expressed their frustration resulting from poor access to materials in English. The problem with books adjusted to Polish educational requirements was the reason for additional constraints. Because of their high price and, what is even more important, unsuitability of culturally-bound discourse approaches, the imported course books do not satisfy Polish students and teachers’ needs. Hopefully, the situation will improve soon, as first course books written by Polish authors have been recently published. As far as other materials are concerned, undoubtedly, higher quality of teaching could also be achieved due to the employment of technological teaching devices such as classroom data projectors and portable computers, with which, unfortunately, not all schools are equipped. Certainly much more attention should be given to the provision of quality visual materials both in language and content classrooms.

### **e). Curricular Models**

The curricular models which are to be presented below are the outcome of the observations carried out by the research team in bilingual classes. There are four curricular models of bilingual education in Poland which are further divided into subcategories depending on the adopted educational approach (Marsh et al, 2008: 13-16)

#### ***Model A: (Teacher-based instruction with continuous use of student pair/group work tasks)***

##### **Extensive English Language Medium Instruction**

During the classes it is mainly English which is used for teaching and learning. Polish is only used for translation of terminology and a brief summary of learning concepts. Within this model two other types were distinguished:

**Type A**

Single Focus: the main focus is on content. English and Polish are referred to only occasionally, especially in terms of pronunciation or spelling.

**Type B**

Dual Focus: the focus is on both content and language (English or Polish). While teaching content attention is given to language as well, however, the degree of focus is different from lesson to lesson. In most cases, it is the content that becomes more important.

***Model B: (Mostly teacher-based instruction with limited use of student pair/group work tasks)***

**Partial English Language Medium Instruction (Code-switching English-Polish)**

English and Polish are used for teaching and learning. There is about 50% of time devoted to the use of each language. This model can be further subcategorised into two types.

**Type A**

Single Focus: the focus is only on content. The degree of code-switching between English and Polish is significant, depending on the purpose.

**Type B**

Dual Focus: the focus is on both content and language. Both languages are used during the lessons – English and Polish with a lot of switching between the two languages. While teaching content, a lot of attention is given to the English language. Like in the previous model the degree of focus is different depending on the lesson. In most cases content plays the dominant role.

***Model C: (Mostly teacher-based instruction with limited use of student pair/group work tasks)***

**Limited English Language Medium Instruction (code-switching English-Polish)**

Both languages are used for teaching and learning (English or Polish). From 10% to 50% of time is devoted to the use of English language; code-switching is used for different functions during the process of teaching and learning. Two other types can be distinguished within this model:

**Type A**

Single Focus: the focus is mainly on the content. Polish is mainly used during the lessons with occasional instances of the English language.