

Teacher Education for CLIL

Josephine Moate⁸, Russell Cross⁹, Kim Bower¹⁰, and Enlli Thomas¹¹

The ‘Teacher Education for CLIL’ symposium brought together international perspectives on CLIL with contributions from Australia, England, Finland and Wales. CLIL has long been defined as dual-focused with ‘non’-language subjects being taught and learnt through a foreign language and an ‘umbrella’ able to ambitiously incorporate a variety of methodologies (Marsh & Langé, 2002). As such CLIL is considered an approach with ‘... but no specific set of prescriptions and classroom techniques...’ (Bell, 2003, p. 327 cited in Gabillon, 2020, p. 96) rather than a method. Gabillon (2020) suggests this openness is partly a response to the post-method movement in language education in the 1980s and 1990s, skeptical of ‘universal’ or ‘objective’ knowledge and subsequent methodologies and sensitive to the complexity of local and national situations. Nevertheless, key curriculum building tools have been established and recognised across educational settings, e.g. the 4Cs, the language triptych, the CLIL matrix (Bower et al., 2020). The enduring popularity of these tools highlights the need for more than opportunity to implement CLIL; teachers also need opportunities to make sense of what they are doing, how and why, core considerations in the development of CLIL as a pedagogically responsible initiative.

This flexible background has enabled CLIL to expand in a range of educational environments with various approaches residing under the same umbrella (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2014). This flexibility, however, also potentially hides subtle and significant considerations highlighting the need to better understand CLIL as an approach that integrates different pedagogical considerations alongside subject and language learning (Nikula et al., 2016) and to be more sensitive to situated-knowledge that informs CLIL practices and theorisations. This symposium aimed to explore how CLIL teacher education is shaped by different educational contexts and to address:

1. How have teacher educators responded to challenges that have come from the field as CLIL has been introduced more widely?
2. How has CLIL teacher education been developed as the theorisation of CLIL as an educational approach has expanded?

The four international cases illustrated the importance of situational knowledge when working in different CLIL environments and the potential of contextual sensitivity to draw attention to

⁸ josephine.moate@jyu.fi (University of Jyväskylä)

⁹ r.cross@unimelb.edu.au (University of Melbourne)

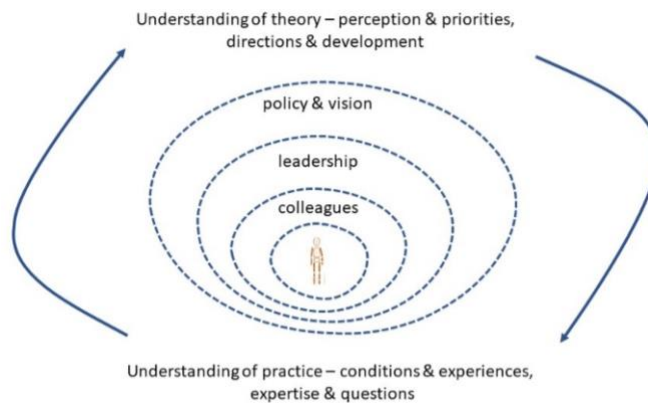
¹⁰ k.bower@shu.ac.uk (Sheffield Hallam University)

¹¹ enlli.thomas@bangor.ac.uk (Bangor University)

key considerations that can contribute to further theorisations of CLIL. The four cases included engaging Welsh-English bilingual pupils in STEM subjects as a way to promote minority language education and language revitalisation (Wales), recognising the impact current teacher education policies for languages and CLIL have on pre- and in-service teachers (England), the role of systemic provision in meeting the challenges busy, experienced teachers face when engaging with and investing time in developing CLIL skills, knowledge and expertise (Australia), and tensions between grassroots initiatives and policy development (Finland).

These cases highlighted the need for CLIL teacher education to validate models, frameworks and tools that are useful to teachers and can be sequenced in ways that are developmentally meaningful and available to teachers. Moreover, these cases highlighted the need to better understand how the integration of language and subject learning in CLIL is enabled and shaped by bilingual policies, multilingual communities and deep learning that contributes to educational communities and societal development. While the post-method origins of CLIL provided teachers with freedom and responsibility to develop CLIL within their particular situation, perhaps unsurprisingly “CLIL implications have [often] been guided by practical maxims, and its theoretical underpinnings have been left implicit” (Gabillon, 2020, p. 95). By placing cases side-by-side, the different conditions of the environments come more starkly into view highlighting the importance of seeing CLIL/bilingual education as embedded in communities and reliant on the investment of different stakeholders at different community ‘levels’, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Multiple levels informing CLIL



This symposium demonstrated the need to highlight the practical side of CLIL that cannot be overlooked or diminished by the development of good principles and the ongoing need to translate into and between theory and practice. These multiple layers also highlight the importance of theory, understanding what is happening, how and why on a more profound level, especially as CLIL engages with the development sustainable education (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2022). Policy and vision need to be transformed into pedagogical understanding bringing together the leaders and teachers of educational communities. Collegial relationships need to become collaborative alliances that share and encourage expertise from different perspectives and the pedagogical insights of subject and language teachers need to be harnessed within ongoing conversations. As this symposium illustrated teachers alone cannot be expected ‘to ensure that the CLIL phenomenon embraces the macro and micro, the broad values-driven

educational agenda and the hybridity of classroom conditions for learning which will motivate, engage and prepare students' (Coyle & Meyer, 2021, p. 6). Indeed, this development this requires the active involvement of the wider CLIL community, especially researchers and teacher educators.

References

- Bartlett, L., & Vavrus, F. (2017). Comparative case studies: An innovative approach. *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education (NJCIE)*, 1(1), 5-17.
- K. Bower, D. Coyle, R. Cross, & G. N. Chambers (Eds.). (2020). *Curriculum Integrated Language Teaching: CLIL in Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dalton-Puffer, C., Hüttner, J., & Llinares, A. (2022). CLIL in the 21st century: Retrospective and prospective challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education*, 10(2), 182-206.
- Dalton-Puffer, C., Llinares, A., Lorenzo, F., & Nikula, T. (2014). "You can stand under my umbrella": Immersion, CLIL and bilingual education. A response to Cenoz, Genesee & Gorter (2013). *Applied Linguistics*, 35(2), 213-218.
- Gabillon, Z. (2020). Revisiting CLIL: Background, pedagogy, and theoretical underpinnings. *Contextes et didactiques. Revue semestrielle en sciences de l'éducation*, 15, 88-116.
- Nikula, T., Dafouz, E., Moore, P., & Smit, U. (Eds.). (2016). *Conceptualising integration in CLIL and multilingual education*. Multilingual Matters.