# [Special Symposium supported by the British Council] Current Practices and Future Perspectives of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Japan

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# Abstract

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has gradually risen to levels of great interest. It is now recognized that CLIL is an effective and interesting methodology and has the potential to renovate language classrooms. In this symposium, while learning from the successful experience of a CLIL project in Spain, we report what is happening in Japan by showing the cases and discussing the issues of CLIL implementation. Sasajima discusses how CLIL can possibly help change teachers' conceptions. Reilly looks at several of the major challenges and illustrates some examples of how in Spain they met these challenges and how an assessment programme helps both learners and teachers. Hemmi outlines the process in which the game of baseball was taught in English in a non-immersion context at primary school. Ikeda presents the two CLIL programmes and discusses the benefits and challenges of adopting CLIL in Japan. We all hope CLIL will be implemented well in many schools in Japan. For that purpose, more CLIL teacher education, material development and research should be provided in Japan, and we need to share ideas with CLIL teachers and teacher educators in other countries.

#### I. Introduction

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is currently popular in Europe, and then gradually expands into other countries. The term CLIL, however, is rather difficult to define because there are diverse contexts for its applications even in Europe. According to TKT CLIL Glossary (UCLES, 2009), CLIL is defined to be 'an approach in which a foreign language is used as a tool in the learning of a nonlanguage subject in which both language and the subject have a joint role' (Marsh in Coyle, 2006:1). In other words, CLIL is "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010: 1). CLIL focuses on content and language at once in the classroom, but each CLIL practitioner is likely to take a different approach when teaching in his/her classroom.

CLIL is a teaching methodology which comprises four principles: content, culture (or community), cognition, and communication. In addition, specific contexts should be regarded as the infrastructural aspect in teaching CLIL. For example, in multilingual contexts, plurilingualism in the CEFR is promoted as a key concept and students at school have to learn subjects through several languages. CLIL thus can be a rather normal approach to them. On the other hand, in monolingual contexts, such as Japan, students learn subjects through English in CLIL. The contexts are very distinct. Such students' sociocultural and linguistic contexts must be considered in the CLIL implementation in any countries, and it is also necessary to consider the Japanese context when implementing CLIL.

In Japan, it seems that CLIL has been taken as content-based instruction (CBI) or language immersion, so some people wonder how CLIL is different from such conventional approaches. This symposium therefore aims to clarify what CLIL is in the Japanese educational context and discuss why it is necessary for Japanese students and how it should be implemented in Japan, especially in comparison with the case in Spain, which is one of the countries to promote English language learning in Europe these days.

We assume that CLIL is an effective and interesting methodology and has the potential to renovate language classrooms. In this symposium, while learning from the successful experience of a CLIL project in Spain, we report what is happening in Japan by showing the cases and discussing the issues of CLIL implementation. First, Sasajima talks about the current situations of CLIL in Japan and CLIL-type programmes at Saitama Medical University and discusses how CLIL can possibly help change teachers' conceptions about teaching and students' learning. Reilly then looks briefly at several of the major challenges they need to confront as they set out on the road of bilingual/CLIL teaching in Spain. She illustrates some examples of how in Spain they met these challenges particularly through looking at the curriculum in areas such as language and literacy, and how an assessment programme which involves the learners at every stage helps both learners and teachers become more reflective, competent and confident learners and teachers.

Next, Hemmi outlines the process in which the game of baseball was taught in English in a non-immersion context at Morimura Gakuen, where two British Council teachers run a comprehensive English programme for children aged 6 to 12 in collaboration with the PE teachers. Feedback from students shows that the employment of a CLIL approach encouraged student interest and motivation in understanding how to play baseball in English. Finally, Ikeda presents the two CLIL programmes he has implemented with his colleagues: the Academic English Programme at Sophia University and the Cross-cultural Understanding Course at Wako International High School in Saitama. He discusses the benefits and challenges of adopting CLIL in Japan.

Each talk has a different background and is very helpful to grasp the aspects of CLIL and develop CLIL theory and practice in a different context. Each panelist summarises his/her presentation outline to be presented in the JACET international convention.

# II. CLIL-type programmes for medical students in Japan

# Shigeru Sasajima

According to the needs analysis for medical students in Japan provided by Sasajima (2004), medical students are required to improve their English reading skills, increase their English medical vocabulary and develop practical English communication skills. However, they are not always satisfied with normal skills-based ELT programmes, such as speaking, listening, reading and writing classes, even though they need these basic English skills. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was therefore one of the teaching approaches to meet the students' needs.

Medical students in Japan certainly need to learn

English for medical purposes (EMP), but it is actually difficult for most medical students in Japan to study medicine in English in most cases. I thus started an experimental CLIL-type programme in cooperation with three English teachers at Saitama Medical University in 2009. The programme aimed to teach health sciences through English as well as practical English communication skills, in association with content, culture (community), cognition and communication in the classroom (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008; Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010). Before starting the programme, we discussed the course syllabus while studying the CLIL methodology to have a dual focus: subject content and English language. Teachers are all native speakers of English but did not know much about CLIL or bilingual teaching.

The first year was the trial-and-error stage for the teachers, but they were gradually aware that many students were interested in studying health sciences through English and came to focus on the content and think it themselves. Some students came to use English even naturally. Then the second year in 2010 became the step stage to update better CLIL syllabuses and classroom activities, with two more teachers being added to the CLIL programme, and then the 1st-year student English curriculum was provided as in the following table:

Table 1. The1st-year English three-semester curriculum

Courses	No. of	o. of No. of Teachers		5
	classes	students	NES	NNES
Reading	4	30	0	2
Writing	10	12	5	1
Communication (Interaction)	8	15	4	1
Communication (Presentation)	4	30	1	1
CLIL	10	25	5	1

(NES = native English speakers)

(NNES = non-native English speakers)

As the table above shows, the English curriculum covered all four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. CLIL was also an integrated course for the other courses and closely related to them. Except for reading, all five NES teachers taught students and one NNES teacher played the role as a coordinator between teacher and students in each course, and sometimes teamtaught with NES teachers.

Each NES teacher selected different topics in his/her CLIL class. The following syllabus was one example that was conducted actually (see Table 2). This CLIL course focused on topics that students are usually concerned with in their daily life. Based on the topics, students communicated with each other and did small surveys. Through the class activities, they thought and understood something new through English.

Lesson 1	The Obesity Epidemic
Lesson 2	Guidelines to Nutrition
Lesson 3	Teeth
Lesson 4	The Japanese Diet vs. the Western Diet
Lesson 5	Diseases Related to Diet
Lesson 6	Water
Lesson 7	The Digestive System
Lesson 8	Review and Test

Table 2. An example CLIL course syllabus

CLIL was apparently successful and motivated many students to learn English. Also in other CLIL courses as well as this course, almost all students were active and enjoyed learning CLIL.

The point is that each teacher can select the subject content in accordance with his/her aptitude and interest, such as anatomy, food, nutrition, human body and yoga. One course had 6 to 9 classes in each semester and students selected their favorite topics. Teachers did not have to follow the normal language teaching methodology, but all the five NES teachers did not have sufficient CLIL teacher training or might not understand what CLIL was at the time. They all tried to convey their knowledge and share ideas about health sciences with students through English.

According to the questionnaire survey, most students were satisfied with the CLIL type programmes. The mean score for the students' satisfaction scale for CLIL was 5.1 on a 7-point Likert scale (7 means 'strongly satisified'). That is partly because the topics and the words and phrases being used in the classroom were strongly related to their future professional fields, and their classroom communication activities were closely associated with their future discourse community. Most students thought about learning content and realized how they used English to think and communicate what they think and do in terms of health sciences.

The English curriculum for the 1st-year medical student at Saitama Medical University is almost successful with CLIL as a core course for the moment. In the future, better CLIL programmes will be provided if teachers understand CLIL methodology and attain sufficient knowledge and skills in teaching CLIL.

# **III.** The National Early Bilingual Education Project (EBEP) in Spain

#### Teresa Reilly

In 1996, the British Council in partnership with the Spanish Ministry of Education introduced a pilot Early Bilingual Education project (EBEP) in 44 state schools. Fifteen years later, the project reaches 30,000 children age 3-16 in 120 state schools and serves as a model of good practice for regional governments in Spain who

have developed similar programmes. With close on one million pupils in Spain studying a form of bilingual education, there is a growing consensus that the approach and the results achieved are challenging existing perceptions of how children may best learn a foreign language.

#### **Expected outcomes**

The outcomes for the project specify that by the age of 16, pupils are proficient, literate English second language users, confidently able to communicate with both native and non-native audiences. In addition, in subject areas taught in English (science, geography, art and design) it is expected that the pupils will achieve the same results as their monolingual peers. And finally, though they have less exposure to L1 learning and teaching, student competence in Spanish will be equal to those of their monolingually educated peers.

# **Basic principles underlying EBEP**

The project is designed as whole school approach in primary: there is no selection of pupils and up to 40% of the school curricula is taught through English. Many of the pupils are from a background of social and/or economic challenge. The programme is quite clearly then not aimed at an academic or socially elite educated at international or private schools who may often have access to a form of education which is bilingual. Pupils begin at age three or four and continue up to the age of 16 at which point they can opt to enter for the international IGCSE examinations (generally sat by students whose first language is English). Not all students will necessarily go on to higher education, but all will have access to skills - language, communicative and cultural, which will provide them with opportunities to play an increased role in a more global workplace.

#### Aim of the seminar

This is necessarily a brief paper but what I aim to outline are two key features which have addressed challenges in the EBEP and three tools which have assisted in bringing about achievement, embedment and dissemination. For a more detailed analysis please consult the paper on Bilingual Education for the Jakarta Symposium (Reilly, 2009).

#### **Two major features:**

# 1 Key partnerships and stakeholders

Long term political buy-in, high level commitment to strategic change and good "ground-level" management have proved to be key to resolving challenge over the years. The role of the British Council and Ministry of Education two-person project management team is of particular importance as together they manage the budget allocation, analyse project needs, facilitate training, and collaborate with schools, international examination boards and academic research and evaluation teams.

#### 2 Awareness raising is an on-going process

Sasajima in the accompanying paper to this symposium describes the main concerns in Japan of CLIL/bilingual education as being the view that children should develop language awareness in their L1 before learning other languages: additionally there is a fear that many students will not attain similar standards in subjects if these are taught in English rather than L1. It is interesting to note, that the concerns of stakeholders in Spain, politicians, school management, teachers, parents, inspectors were very similar 15 years ago. Outcomes have indicated in the Spain context that these natural fears are groundless and the perception is now somewhat different. Over the years, there have been constant national and local opportunities to "educate" stakeholders such as parents and inspectors who are encouraged to visit classrooms and observe the project in progress. The project management team look for ways to help all stakeholders understand that education in two languages is a long process requiring patience and support. It is important to understand the underlying principles of language acquisition and how these impact on classroom bilingual education: to be aware that both languages are of equal importance and that appropriately understood and supported, young people benefit from the approach, educationally, culturally and linguistically.

# Three major tools:

# 1 The integrated curriculum

A significant proportion of time (40%) is allocated to teaching through English, providing early access to subjects such as geography and science as well as English language and literacy. Initial concerns raised the issue adaptation that constant and consequent а "dumbing-down" of the Spanish curriculum was not leading to the development of "good practice". Consequently, in 2000, a team of project teachers drawing on their experience and expertise of bilingual education and led by the MoE and British Council project managers designed curricula for the three stages of the project, infant, primary and secondary (Ministerio de Educación, 2006). Evidence gathered from classroom research and from the Evaluation Study (Dobson et al., 2011) highlights the fact that the curricula are essential tools in providing confidence to teachers that they are meeting requirements and to schools and parents that standards are being maintained. Space does not permit a detailed analysis of the curricula, but it is worth commenting that a basic principle, and one which has led to success, has been the emphasis on the early introduction of reading and writing with a focus on the development of authentic literacy skills which help to

promote an underlying competence in language, the acquisition of subject knowledge and the increasing capacity for reflective skills.

# 2 Teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

The CPD courses are not a reflection on teachers' skills, focusing rather on the fact that the bilingual classroom requires different mental framework а and methodological approach that compliments existing teaching skills and provides new tools to meet new challenges. Support in our project is on-going: there is often a mis-match between teachers' expectations and the reality of the bilingual classroom. Overcoming the initial convictions that they "weren't good enough" and that "only a native speaker teacher" could teach literacy and subjects in English has been a challenge but Spanish teachers of English have gradually taken on more responsibilities for teaching, mentoring and now teacher training within the project and often beyond. Again, space does not permit an analysis of 15 years of CPD: One recent example: over the past two years we have focused on raising standards through incorporating the techniques of Assessment for Learning (AfL) into the teaching/learning process. The focus here is on heightening awareness of what and how the individual learns and assists pupils in identifying their strengths, building on areas which require improvement. The focus on CPD changes over the years (Reilly, 2009) but whatever the current need in the bilingual classroom, teachers require time to develop appropriate resources, reflect on their practice, carry out classroom research projects, network, and attend training courses, meetings and conferences.

### **3** External Evaluation

There are issues within the EBEP in Spain which remain to be resolved, there always are and always will be! However, the second external evaluation which the project has undergone lasting three years (Dobson et al., 2011) has concluded that outcomes are largely being met: additionally aspects of "good practice" at different levels within the project are highlighted. The evaluation study itself is a useful project dissemination tool, nationally and internationally. I would recommend that periodic external and high-profile evaluations are built into any innovative kind of project, such as the adoption of an EBE approach.

Every context is different and each one will interpret a bilingual/CLIL approach according to their situation. However, it is hoped that the features described briefly in this paper and the evidence provided may be of interest in Japan where there is a growing interest in sustainable ways to raise standards in language teaching in the early stages of education.

# IV. CLIL Projects at Sophia University and Wako International High School

# Makoto Ikeda

CLIL is an umbrella term referring to various types of content-based language instruction (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008: 12) and so there exist numerous kinds of classroom practice: for some CLIL is an 'approach' which could be regarded as immersion or bilingual education and for others it is a 'methodology' that has its own learning/teaching characteristics. It seems to me that this distinction arises from whether the respective objectives lean towards acquiring subject-matter knowledge or towards improving second language proficiency. In the Japanese EFL settings, where studying other subjects through English is very rare, CLIL is probably more easily accepted as an alternative form of English language teaching, at least at an initial stage. Therefore, the following two programmes which I have implemented with my colleagues primarily aim at providing students with dense and quality experiences to learn English while paying adequate attention to subject matter.

The first CLIL project in which I am involved is the Academic English Programme at my own institution. Starting as one of the endeavors to offer innovative education opportunities to our students, the programme was designed, implemented and evaluated by three applied linguists including me. The core curriculum of the four parallel courses is that in the spring semester (15 weeks) students learn basic academic skills such as note taking, critical reading, essay writing, oral presentation, etc. and then, in the autumn semester (15 weeks), they choose one area from English literature, anthropology, natural science and intercultural communication taught by CLIL. This programme is very popular with freshmen (400 students applied for 100 places last year), very demanding for the participants (half of them dropped out!) and very satisfactory to the survivors (higher than 4.5 on a 5-point Likert scale with 5 meaning 'strongly agree' in categories like 'well-prepared', 'clear goals', 'comprehensible instruction'). However. and we acknowledge that the high dropout rate is an issue that has to be addressed to cater for the needs of weaker students.

The other CLIL programme I am supervising is the cross cultural understanding course at Wako International High School, a state secondary school in Saitama Prefecture. Although the course is entitled 'cross cultural understanding', it actually deals with world-wide problems such as energy, global warming, human rights, poverty, refugees, etc. rather than manners and customs of other cultures. The learners are eighty 17-year-old high school students, who are divided into four groups (20 students each), and they are taught by two Japanese

teachers of English with two ALTs. Each group meets twice a week: in the first lesson of each topic the students are presented a key text orally and visually, which they read aloud, memorise and reproduce both in spoken and written form; in the subsequent session, the students work discussion. on various tasks (e.g. analysis. problem-solving) in pairs and/or groups and they output spoken and written products (e.g. ideas, opinions, solutions, creative writing). In other words, the participants are first assigned exercises for LOTS (lower-order thinking skills: understanding, memorizing, applying), followed by tasks employing HOTS (higher-order thinking skills: analysis, evaluation and creation) (Coyle, Hood and Marsh 2010: 30). All the materials used in classrooms are authentic (i.e. written and spoken texts created for native speakers), adapted and designed by the teachers with much scaffolding (e.g. photos, pictures, charts, graphs, etc.). After each class, the teachers write teaching journals, which are sent to me and discussed online and face-to-face. What we have learnt from the past several lessons is that providing appropriate language support in productive tasks is crucial in doing CLIL successfully in Japanese schools.

Both of the CLIL programmes outlined above are ongoing projects and we do not know until the end of this academic year what kinds of educational effects CLIL brings to Japanese learners of English. However, as Marsh says, 'CLIL acts as a catalyst for change because it provides teachers with opportunities for re-thinking educational practice in both English and other subject teaching' (Watabane, Ikeda and Izumi, 2011: foreword), change is indeed taking place — the quality of teaching is high and both teachers and students enjoy CLIL lessons.

# V. Employment of CLIL in learning how to play baseball in English at a Primary School in Japan Chantal Hemmi

This paper outlines how two teachers from the British Council used a CLIL approach to teach 120 Year 5 children how to play baseball in English at Morimura Gakuen, a private Elementary School in Yokohama. In September 2009, the two teachers, Ledbury and Williams incorporated partial CLIL in teaching the students the rules and the game of baseball over five consecutive weeks where three 45-minute English lessons were used to learn the expressions for instructions on how to play the game, followed by two PE lessons where the subject teacher joined in to play baseball in each class with the English teachers. From here on I shall refer to Ledbury and Williams as the researchers.

The researchers employed this approach due to the needs analysis data gained from a previous series of CLIL sessions whereby the students learnt how to make

welshcakes in the Home Economics classes; The students found these sessions culturally and affectively motivating and thus requested that they use English again to 'learn how to cheer' and 'do PE'. The researchers report that they needed to pay special attention to student motivation, as some were less interested in English than others.

The researchers devised a motivating way in which to involve the students more into using English in the context of both the English and PE lessons, giving children ownership and control over the activities that were designed to increase the use of instructional language, develop children's comprehension in the target language and interact with one another, giving more agency in the action and reflection of children as they develop both their physical, linguistic and social ability to work co-operatively in the class environment. A genuine communication gap was identified as the baseball-loving boys were able to teach the rules of the game to the students and the researchers who were not sure about the rules. Through the lessons taught in class, the students learnt sufficient vocabulary to teach how to play baseball, showing a sense of ownership and responsibility over their own learning.

Here I describe the way in which the activities took place, enabling the students to achieve their goal, which was to play baseball in English.

- Students labeled the diagram of a baseball diamond and elicited names of player positions and equipment with flashcards. New vocabulary was presented to raise awareness that many of the words are English loan words used in Japanese.
- Students played baseball based vocabulary game in the classroom using clues. Teachers recorded the interactional language used by students in L1. This was done to consolidate new vocabulary in a game situation using known vocabulary and also to find out what language the children naturally used in context.
- Students played vocabulary games to review new vocabulary.
- Mimes were used to demonstrate appropriate and inappropriate uses of interactional language so as to teach how to use it in the right context.
- Students matched responses and appropriate picture flashcards on the board and later used matching/ labeling worksheet for consolidation.
- Mimes were used to elicit or introduce other verbs run, hit, catch, throw, drop.
- Finally students played a baseball game with two English teachers and one English speaking Japanese P.E teacher. The P.E. teacher pitched and English teachers played the game with students and asked for help with rules from students.

Interestingly, in the actual PE lesson where the children played baseball in the presence of the subject teacher, the researchers played the role of someone who did not actually know how to play baseball. From time to time, they pretended not to know what to do or took the wrong actions so as to create opportunities for students to use expressions such as, 'No, no! Go! Run! Don't stop! Faster, faster'. Bennett, Wood and Rogers (1997) advocate that a sense of ownership is central to children's learning through play. The researchers observed that the students initiated interaction in English showing a strong sense of agency and control.

A feedback questionnaire was given out at the end of the PE CLIL sessions and the majority of the students gave positive feedback about doing sport in English; 'I learnt English in a fun way while moving round.' 'It wasn't like normal English; We used our bodies so it was really interesting. 'Generally, the students felt that combining PE and English was positive for them; 'Doing it in English made baseball and P.E. feel like something fresh and new'. One student noted that when he was abroad, he thought it would be really good if he could talk about baseball - even just a little bit - with foreigners, so when they did it this time he was really happy. Another student said that she was really surprised because everyone was speaking English more than Japanese. Such comments indicate that student motivation was raised and the focus on substance (content) as opposed to form (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008:30) paid tribute to the success of the baseball CLIL component of the Morimura curriculum.

We are reminded that the four principles, 'cognition, community, content and communication can drive the CLIL model' (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008:31). Abundant reflection-on-action (Schön, 1987) can be observed in student feedback, such as the following:

*'We learnt baseball in English, and it was the first time I'd learnt about baseball.'* 

'What was good was that we managed to study not only English but baseball as well.'

'Getting to do baseball while studying English was good.'

The above comments show that the students are able to 'analyse achievement of learning outcomes independently' (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008:31) and are highly aware of their own development and can monitor their own learning.

The researchers mentioned that the students reacted positively about the fact that the P.E. teacher spoke in English; When the students saw the Japanese teacher using English, the students realised that English is used for communication amongst people for a purpose, and that it is not just a language that foreigners use. Negative comments such as 'I don't understand if it's all in English,' 'Use Japanese sometimes, not just English' and 'I wanted to have more time to study the English we'd learnt' showed that a few students were concerned about the form and the actual achievement in language development itself.

Although there are limitations to a partial CLIL approach in a non-immersion learning environment, in that the language has to be graded substantially to the linguistic skills of the learners, the Year 5 students at Morimura Gakuen were able to achieve the aim of playing baseball in English. The researchers were successful in building on student's existing knowledge, thus allowing the scaffolding of new information to take place in a co-operative way. In future it would be useful to apply a partial CLIL approach to other parts of the Morimura curriculum to boost student confidence in the use of the English language in achieving a content aim combining other subjects such as music and science, as requested by the students in their feedback.

# **VI.** Conclusion

This symposium certainly helps promote the implementation of CLIL in Japan, where CLIL is gradually acknowledged by language teachers and researchers. The cases we present in this symposium are part of the CLIL practices in Japan in association with Spain. Although many teachers may still think it is difficult to do in the Japanese language education context, almost all countries in Europe provide CLIL in primary and secondary education, as shown below in the figure of the status of CLIL provision in Europe (*Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe*, 2008:41).

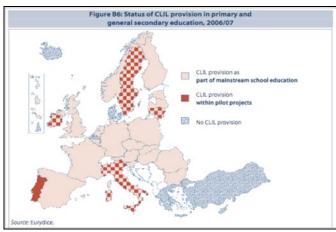


Figure 1. The status of CLIL provision in Europe (Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe, 2008:41)

We know that Japan should be different from European countries, but it is worth trying to teach CLIL in Japan,

because many students were actually motivated to learn the subject and English in the classroom in the cases we report.

Some people even argue that Japanese young children should understand the Japanese language first and develop their language awareness before learning other languages. Or they are afraid that many students would not foster proper subject knowledge or language knowledge and skills, if they studied subject in English. It might be true in some cases, but we believe that CLIL has the potential to change the current situation in Japan. The cases we report in this presentation will show you some practical evidences and provide fruitful discussion regarding better ways of CLIL implementation in Japan.

CLIL is not an elite education nor a special education. CLIL does not disturb children's mother tongue development. If it went well, CLIL could develop language awareness as well. We therefore hope CLIL will be implemented in many schools. For that purpose, more CLIL teacher education, material development and research should be provided in Japan and we share ideas with CLIL teachers and teacher educators in other countries.

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