

DESIGNING A CLIL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CURRICULA

Improving the outcomes of education and training by investing in competence-based approaches in general – and promoting language skills in particular – are prerequisites to achieving the European Commission (EC) goal of fostering growth, creating jobs, promoting employability and increasing competitiveness. This can only take place if we provide an appropriate educational environment to cater for the needs of a rapidly changing and increasingly multilingual society. To achieve these outcomes, we cannot depend on traditional monolingual curricula. There is an obvious need for more innovative methods in education within the framework of a competence-based multilingual approach. “*CLIL* is about using languages to learn. It is about installing a “hunger to learn” in the student. It gives opportunity for him/ her to think about and develop how s/he communicates in general, even in the first language” [8, p.109].

The European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education aims to provide a set of principles and ideas for designing CLIL professional development curricula. Additionally, the Framework seeks to serve as a tool for reflection. It is proposed as a conceptual lens and model, not as a prescriptive template.

The framework is the result of a CLIL curriculum development (CLIL-CD) project financed by the Empowering Language Professionals Programme of the European Centre for Modern Languages. As CLIL programmes in the Council of Europe member states differ from country to country, in their organisation, content, intensity and choice of languages, the European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education focuses on macro-level universal competences of CLIL educators. These have been identified through an examination of teacher education learning and curricular needs in CLIL contexts, and through a pan-European process of consultation.

In the literature on curriculum design at least five different functions can be distinguished. These functions are also relevant for the development of a CLIL curriculum:

(1) A curriculum defines *an educational programme*. Curricula list the contents of a programme which the learners are expected to acquire within a fixed period of time. Content is sequenced in the curriculum, i.e. built according to different parameters depending on desired learning outcomes and existing learner competences.

(2) A curriculum is seen as *a source of innovation* by education authorities and/or higher education providers. New subjects or fields can be introduced; already existing content can be renewed. A new curriculum contains renewed learning aims, content and methodological guidelines.

(3) A curriculum serves as *a tool for planning and carrying out teaching-learning sequences*. A detailed curriculum helps teachers, for example, to plan,

prepare and carry out a sequence of learning. An educationally grounded curriculum is fundamental for constructing modules and designing courses.

(4) A curriculum is used as an instrument *to evaluate teaching and learning*. Curricula are issued by ministries of education or higher education authorities. These authorities need to evaluate and assess what is going on in a learning environment. Curricula also serve as terms of reference for the individual teacher to evaluate and improve his/her own teaching, and for students and parents to evaluate student progress and to guide them in planning for improved learning.

(5) A curriculum serves as a means *for regulating, standardising and comparing teaching and learning* at all levels. The curriculum is an important instrument for streamlining standards in a region, country, or collection of countries such as those of the Council of Europe.

Curriculum development is also a means for building high quality CLIL programming. The European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education is intended to serve as a point of reference for providers of teacher training across Europe. It aims to contribute to the development or enhancement of CLIL training that will support teachers in enriching their students' learning experience.

The European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education provides curricular modules that can be adapted to meet the needs of educators working in diverse regional and national contexts. As well, the Framework seeks to provide a conceptual lens and model for situating discussion about CLIL. The Framework can also offer a focus for additional research into CLIL. Such situated discussion and research can assist in the further legitimisation of this educational approach, facilitating its progression from that of an innovative 'project' to that of an even more solidly-rooted and potentially widespread modern educational practice.

The overall major challenge, in the development and implementation of a teacher education curriculum in CLIL, is its integrative nature. This is the case at all levels of education – primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational and adult. CLIL seeks to teach two subjects in one – a content subject and a language. Content subjects, such as mathematics and an additional language, are usually taught separately. With the exception of primary teachers, other educators are often trained to teach just one subject be that a content subject or a language, as opposed to both. Even where teachers are trained in both a content subject and a language, training in the integration of language and content is not widespread. Teachers undertaking CLIL will need to be prepared to develop multiple types of expertise: among others, in the content subject; in a language; in best practice in teaching and learning; in the integration of the previous three; and, in the integration of CLIL within an educational institution.

The European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education cannot focus on all the content subjects which are taught in schools and universities, or on the languages which might be used as a medium of instruction. The Framework as such is neutral with respect to these aspects, and it does not cater for specific competence development in any one content subject or language. Rather, it is focused on the

competences necessary to teach content subjects and an additional language in an integrated manner.

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TASK-BASED LEARNING: THE WORLD CAFÉ FORMAT DISCUSSION

Learning a foreign language in real life situations always brings more pleasure and generates more interest. Students are free to open up, they behave naturally and feel more confident when it comes to exchanging ideas. It has been already proved by scholars that task-based learning (TBL) encourages more cooperation, increases learners' activity and, most importantly, gives students a different way of understanding language as a tool instead of as a specific goal. There are different techniques used for TBL but they are all centered around the idea of a task that