



20 United Kingdom, England

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20.1 Linguistic and Political Background

English is the majority language spoken in the UK and it is estimated that over 95% of the British population are monolingual. Official minority languages in the UK are Welsh, Gaelic (Scottish), Gaelic (Irish), Scots and Ulster Scots. However, Britain is far from being a monolingual society. At least three million people living in the United Kingdom were born in countries where English is not the national language. London has a reputation as one of the most linguistically diverse cities in the world, and more than 30% of all London schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home. More than 300 languages are spoken in London, with 39 used as first languages. The most common are Asian languages such as Bengali, Punjabi as well as Turkish, Arabic and Chinese. These are often referred to as community languages (Baker & Eversley: 2000).

Whilst in Wales there has been a longstanding tradition of Welsh-medium schools in both Welsh-speaking and English-speaking regions, and in Scotland and Northern Ireland there is some provision for Gaelic-medium schools, these focus on maintaining 'heritage' languages. In England CLIL has until recently been practiced by a small number of pioneering secondary schools using languages such as French, Spanish and German as the medium of instruction. Influenced by the Canadian immersion movement, some successful examples of '*sections bilingues*' in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. Goff's, Mill Hill) encouraged a few other schools in the 1990s to establish bilingual sections and teach subjects such as Geography, Business Studies and History through a 'foreign' European language (e.g. Millais, Heathfield, Hockerill, William Ellis) (Coyle:1996, Hawkins:1996). However, issues to do with sustainability, teacher supply, national examination compatibility and emphasis on a newly introduced national curriculum, meant that during this period, CLIL remained in the domain of the foreign language-promoting pioneers. In the early days CLIL was led by language specialists and teachers looking for alternative and innovative ways of motivating young people to learn and use foreign languages. This trend continues.

During the 1990s national factors including the so-called '*island mentality*' and deep-rooted attitudes militated against a perceived need to improve the nation's language capability through alternative models of modern language study in schools. This was well documented in the national Nuffield Inquiry (2000), which highlighted the crisis involving the decline in the number of young people opting to continue modern language learning

after the compulsory stage in the UK. Foreign language learning was suffering a drastic reduction in take-up at advanced level, despite the governmental policy making the learning of foreign languages in Britain compulsory between the ages of 11 and 16. The national curriculum listed the choice of foreign languages to be studied as those of the European Union. Non-EU languages were acceptable for study only when offered to pupils alongside the possibility of studying an official language of the EU. French, for traditional reasons, remained first choice, with Spanish gaining some popularity, but other languages including German and Italian declined in terms of take-up. Apart from a few isolated incidents, primary schools were not involved in CLIL since there were no statutory requirements for the teaching of foreign languages. Moreover, in the secondary sector, in general, there was no perceived advantage by subject teachers to teach through the medium of another language. Instead, greater emphasis was placed on English across the curriculum in the wake of the Bullock Report (1975), language awareness and more recently interest in literacy, especially in primary schools. Moves towards CLIL, therefore, continued to be led by language teachers in secondary schools, who wished to promote and preserve language learning in the UK.

In the 1990s, the political scene in the UK changed with devolved governments for Scotland and Wales. Yet as the number of demotivated students increased, language learning reached a national crisis point, which led to the formulation of new government strategies. Since the late 1990s, there has been a gradual increase in interest in CLIL. Published in 2002, the Languages Strategy document for England, *Languages for All: Languages for Life*, set out the Government's plans to transform the country's capability in languages. It outlined the initiatives planned to achieve a step change in foreign language competence and to create an 'appetite for learning'. It also outlined plans to broaden and enrich opportunities for language learning at school and beyond.

20.2 CLIL 'Experiments'

Influenced by European advances in CLIL and a small yet growing number of secondary schools which were starting to 'experiment' with CLIL by offering foreign language opportunities in a wider range of contexts, there have been other developments which have led to the concept of CLIL becoming more widely known. Specialist Schools, whilst still in the public sector, are those schools that apply to the government for specialist status and funding supported by additional funds from sponsorship. Language Colleges are one such category. These schools have taken a lead in promoting foreign languages and the introduction of CLIL is starting to attract attention – again led by language specialists.

Whilst it appears that the turn of the century has brought a more positive climate in terms of CLIL in England, it must also be pointed out that some of the early pioneers had to abandon their early innovations because the national examination system at 16 does not offer the possibility of taking subject examinations such as Geography in any language

other than English. Teacher supply and demands arising from national inspections also tended to prevent new initiatives and cross-curricular collaboration from being disseminated more widely.

20.3 CLIP and other Initiatives

Five years on, it seems CLIL is now gaining momentum in the UK, as becomes clear if one traces developments post 2001. Amongst the many initiatives to promote languages, the Ministry, (Department for Education and Skills) financed a national CLIL project – *CLIP* (Content and Languages Integrated Project) run by CLIL, the National Centre for Languages and Research, between 2002 and 2005. This involved pairs of teachers (subject and language specialists) from 8 secondary schools working collaboratively to explore CLIL potential (see CLIP website). A Feasibility Study, carried out by CLIL in 2001 to gain information on which to build CLIP, sought to map existing schemes in the UK, to research effective practice and to establish a national steering group. The Feasibility Study also considered CLIL as a potential vehicle for implementing UK language policy in England: by developing the ability to understand and communicate in other languages and by increasing opportunities for primary aged children to learn languages (Green Paper 14–19). However, the current emphasis on languages in the primary sector, perhaps to balance the reduction to 3 years for statutory language study in secondary schools, has not yet fully embraced the CLIL potential.

The 2001 Feasibility Study found evidence of substantial CLIL activities (past and present) in 47 secondary schools in England alone. Clusters of CLIL schools were identified in the South East, the Midlands and the North East of England, with further work in Scotland (Wales and Ireland were not included in this study). Many, but not all of the schools had specialist language status, although factors such as the expertise and enthusiasm of teachers in individual schools were found to play a crucial role. A few schools had already established bilingual sections using CLIL approaches as the base. The diversity of the CLIL activity reported was such that it was not possible to make any generalisations about the type of schools involved, the subjects or approaches chosen, the 'selection' of learners and their age and ability.

Whilst the predominant CLIL language is French, there is some evidence of activity being carried out in German and Spanish. In almost all cases the CLIL programmes were found to be linguistically oriented, with a wide range of approaches: isolated lessons, bilingual days, modules of work covering several weeks and occasionally year-long commitment. Where CLIL is offered it is likely to be limited to *'one curriculum subject, to a limited range of students and for a limited time'* Seven case studies were highlighted in the Feasibility Study, which give a flavour of the diversity:

School	Subject/s	Language/s	Duration	Learner's age
Bolitho	Geography History ICT	French	40% timetable Up to 7 years	8–14 yrs
Bohunt	PE, Art, Music, History and Geography	French	A few lessons per week Up to two years	9–12 yrs
Anglo-European College	Geography History	French German	Half of lessons in FL; most able students, Up to two years	12–14 yrs
Hockerill Anglo European	Geography History	French German	70% students experience CLIL	12–15 yrs
Haydon School	History Drama & Dance	French Spanish	A few lessons/ modules	
Goff's	Variety	Variety	Master classes A few lessons	
William Ellis	Geography	Spanish	Up to 2–3 years	14–16 yrs

Feasibility Study 2001, CLIL reported in Coyle (2005)

More recently, schools that have started CLIL have tended to opt for the humanities – Geography or History. Of the eight schools in CLIP, 3 focussed on History, 5 on Geography, 2 on PHSE (personal, health and social education) and 1 on art (see CLIP website). More established bilingual sections have also tended to concentrate on the Humanities. The instances of Science offered through a foreign language are limited. In the UK, Mathematics is rarely promoted through CLIL.

20.4 Target Language

Unlike trends in many parts of Europe, the vehicular language for CLIL cannot be English. Instead, it reflects current foreign language trends, since CLIL tends to be led by languages teachers who are seeking alternative means to motivate their students. As has already been discussed, many of the secondary schools involved in CLIL initiatives have Language College status and see CLIL as a means of fulfilling one of the requirements of government funding: to contribute to local and national networks for enhancing students' learning of foreign languages. Not all schools, however, have CLIL programmes initiated by the modern languages staff, and projects such as the national programme CLIP, which promotes collaboration between subject and language specialists, are starting to make a difference. Moreover, as the Specialist Schools Programme expands (see website), so too does the range of specialisms. For example, as well as Languages, there are colleges for Humanities, Science, Technology, Business and Enterprise, Music, Arts, Sports, Engineering etc.

It is perhaps through this development that the future of CLIL may be pivotal to collaboration between the key named departments and foreign language learning.

20.5 Student Certification

Despite the pressure put on the Examinations Boards in the UK, there is currently no official recognition of CLIL study through the national examinations system. The work of the early pioneers in the early 1990s was recognised by one of the national Examinations Boards. Geography through French and Business Studies in Spanish were offered as an option in the General Certificate of Secondary Education. However, these were withdrawn after a few years. The main reason for the decision was given as non-viability owing to minimal numbers of student entrants. Perhaps an underlying concern is that if national examinations were to be offered in European languages, there might be pressure to provide examinations in non-European languages such as Urdu or Gujarati, and this may have influenced the Boards. At the moment, students who study a subject through the medium of a foreign language have to resort to their studies being conducted in English prior to the examination. This clearly has an effect on the length of CLIL study in schools, where currently smaller modules of work are in favour. In an examination-oriented and assessment-led educational system, it is of fundamental importance for CLIL to offer nationally recognised examinations in a foreign language. Since 2005, one of the Boards has been exploring modular GCSE examinations linking Geography with vocational studies in tourism and a foreign language – so perhaps the vocational pathways at 16+ might offer future possibilities.

20.6 Teachers

Since the 1990s, a team of researchers and teacher educators at the University of Nottingham, England, has been involved with researching and developing CLIL both nationally and internationally. A range of CLIL projects, mainly funded by European Commission schemes such as Lingua and Leonardo, has meant that England has been closely involved in leading innovative networks. Such projects include teacher-training developments such as BILD 1998–2001 (Bilingual Integration of Languages and Disciplines), ALPME (Advanced Level Programmes for Multilingual Education) 2001–2003, CDI-BIT (Curriculum Development Bilingual Integrated Teaching) 2001–2004 and CLILCOM (CLIL Competences) 2003–2006. Projects such as these have focussed on methodologies for teaching and learning CLIL. This has resulted in a vibrant teacher and researcher community and the development of classroom pedagogies in CLIL underpinned by rigorous research. It has also led to widespread publication of CLIL classroom pedagogies (such as the 4Cs framework – Coyle: 1999), models for CLIL, fundamental principles for materials development and a broader understanding of competences for CLIL teachers. Such developments have impacted upon national CLIL pre-service and in-service teacher education.

The CLIL teacher-training unit in the University's Faculty of Education trains a small cohort of future teachers of History, Geography and Science to work through the medium of French or German each year (see University website). Trainees are linked to a national network of CLIL schools for their practical course work, which also allows those schools offering CLIL to work closely with those entering the profession. This has led to CLIL trainees either securing posts in those schools or becoming pioneers for starting CLIL projects in non-CLIL schools. Video-conferencing is vital in order to enable the trainees to gain wide experience of CLIL, and the Teaching and Learning Observatory network (see website) has been pivotal to innovating practice and connecting with other European CLIL classrooms. In terms of in-service training the University also runs a Master's programme in CLIL.

Nationally, CLIL is supported by the Ministry, CILT and the Specialist Schools Programme. CLIP was a crucial milestone in the development of CLIL in England. It brought together the key national players, united content and language teachers, promoted CLIL methodology and a framework for materials design, embraced CLIL competences and began to build on CLIL in the primary sector. Whilst the number of pioneer schools initially involved was small, nonetheless the role that CLIP has subsequently played in raising awareness and uniting disparate pioneers is significant.

20.7 Future Developments

To summarise, for many years England has had several 'pockets' of outstanding CLIL initiatives, and teacher training for secondary teachers is established, together with a significant research base (Marsh 2002). More and more secondary schools are cautiously starting to explore CLIL and feeder primary schools are becoming involved. However, the issue remains that it is difficult to draw a national picture owing to the diverse nature of CLIL practice throughout England (Eurydice 2006). This is set to change. A national Advisory Group will be set up and a virtual CLIL Centre will soon be established supported by the Ministry and connecting CLIL schools, CILT, Nottingham University's research and training centre and a range of other interested universities, local education authorities and national bodies. Since September 2006, the Teacher Training Development Agency has also been funding initial teacher training in CLIL through supporting the Nottingham group in launching the national CITT (CLIL Initial Teacher Training) programme, allowing an element of the practical course work to be spent in countries where French, German and Spanish are used.

It seems at last that CLIL in England is becoming connected at all levels.

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