



10 Hungary

Judith Kovacs Et Ágnes Vámos

10.1 Linguistic Situation

Hungary was the first to accept the Council of Europe recommendation to contribute to the set-up of a nationwide language policy profile. It was produced jointly by the Ministry of Education and the Council of Europe's experts' team, including Ágnes Vámos, President of the Association for Bilingual Schools.

Language policy in Hungary is based upon the following principles:

- to promote linguistic diversity;
- to support the individuals' right to language learning;
- to offer a balanced language choice in public education.

Hungary's recent strategy for language learning and development ('World – Language' Program), among others, aims at promoting vocational language teaching, the dissemination of good practice, and supporting teacher training and mobility. There are two methods of content-based language teaching in Hungary: a) teaching in order to gain competence in the language (enrichment form), and b) teaching ethnic minority students in their own language. Both forms are successful and integral parts of the Hungarian educational system.

10.2 Introduction of CLIL

CLIL started as a result of the Education Act of 1985, which made it possible to carry out education in a language other than Hungarian. Secondary CLIL (1987) was a Ministry-initiated, top-down innovation. The purpose was to offer quality language teaching all over the country. Primary CLIL (1989) was a bottom-up innovation. The first set-ups coincided with the change of political regimes, and were highly motivated by the opportunity to offer a more balanced (and early) language choice for young learners.³⁴

10.3 Laws/Regulations

In 1997 the Ministry of Education declared some guiding principles for all schools where education is carried out in a language different from Hungarian. The requirement criteria for CLIL schools are determined as follows:

- an adequate number of lessons must be devoted to language development;
- CLIL schools have to adapt a specific language syllabus;

- the civilization of the target language countries must be taught;
- 3 subjects must be taught in the target language;
- the target language must be present in 35–50% of the students' time-table;
- the school must employ at least one teacher whose native language is the target language of the programme.

Schools working under the above conditions are entitled to receive additional per capita financial support from the educational budget.

10.4 Structure and Aims

In Hungary, CLIL is carried out over a relatively long period of time (at least 4 years). In 2002 the modular system was also encouraged, but its presence is still modest. For timeframe details please see point 3. Note: There is one institution (kindergarten + primary) in Hungary with a different framework. It has been working in a two-teacher (one Hungarian, one English) system per classroom. The programme is run by a foundation, and it is a pay school, while all other CLIL programmes are free.

CLIL programmes are both linguistically and content-oriented.

10.5 Statistics

Academic year	1996 – 1997	2002 – 2003
Number of CLIL secondary programmes	51	121
Number of CLIL primary programmes	9	56
Total	60	177

Chart 1: The number of CLIL programmes in Hungarian public education in past years. (Sources: Vámos 1996, and own research).

Academic year	All primary schools in Hungary	Number of schools running CLIL programmes	Proportion
1996 – 1997	3,765	9	0.24%
2002 – 2003	3,421	56	1.64%

Chart 2: The proportion of CLIL programmes at the primary level of Hungarian education. (Source: Statisztikai Tájékoztató, Alapfokú Oktatás 1996-97 Bp. 1998, MKM, Statisztikai Évkönyv, 2002/03 <http://www.om.hu>).

³⁴ Between 1949 and 1989 Russian was the only language taught at primary level.

	1996 – 1997	2002 – 2003
Number of participants in secondary bilingual programmes	7,420	12,798
Number of participants in primary bilingual programmes	1,597	10,528
Total	9,017	23,326

Chart 3: The number of participants in CLIL education programmes in Hungary in past years.
(Sources: Vámos 1996, and own research).

Academic year	Total number of pupils	Number of pupils participating in bilingual programmes	Proportion
1996 – 1997	965,998	1,597	0.17%
2002 – 2003	930,386	10,528	1.13%

Chart 4: Proportion of pupils participating in primary CLIL programmes in Hungary.
(Source: Statisztikai Tájékoztató, Alapfokú Oktatás 1996–97 Bp. 1998, MKM). In 2002–03 the total number of primary schools in Hungary was 3421 (Statisztikai Évkönyv, 2002/03 <http://www.om.hu>).

10.7 Subjects

At primary level (grades 1–4), as a rule, cognitively less demanding subjects, such as P.E., Singing, Art and Craft, etc. are mostly involved in CLIL-type teaching. Science, starting in grade 3, represents a smooth link to upper primary grades owing to its visuality and descriptive character. Besides Science, upper primary curricula include subjects such as History, History of Art, British and American Civilisation, and Information Technology. The three latter subjects are advantageous because none are regular curriculum subjects, and thus they place less demand on both teachers and learners to cope with requirements. Biology also used to be a CLIL subject but it proved to be too difficult. History is a great challenge. In most programmes only international parts are taught via the target language. National history is delivered in the mother tongue.

At the secondary level the range of subjects is even broader. Any subject (in vocational schools: vocational subjects) except for Hungarian language and literature can be taught in CLIL.

10.8 Languages

Target language	1996–1997		2002–2003	
	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary
English	16	3	53	24
German	24	6	46	31
French	6	0	12	0
Italian	3	0	4	1
Spanish	1	0	5	0
Russian	1	0	1	0
Total	51	9	121	56

Chart 5: Distribution of bilingual programmes according to target language.
(Sources: Vámos 1996; Kéttannyelvű Iskolák Egyesülete (KIE) 2004 ; and own research).

Target language	Secondary level	Primary level
English	5,618	3,534
German	4,827	6,948
French	1,232	0
Italian	357	46
Spanish	570	0
Russian	194	0
Total	12,798	10,528

Chart 6: Distribution of learners according to language choice
(Sources: Vámos 1996, and own research).

10.9 Teachers

The education system in Hungary, as a rule, produces dually qualified secondary school teachers. It allows combination of a subject matter with a foreign language. This qualification enables them to teach. Primary curricula, besides providing general training, allow for specialization in primary foreign language teaching as well. Primary teacher training colleges have been running such programmes since 1991 both in German and English. The latter have been supported by the British Council, Hungary (Lower Primary Project, 1991–1999). Twenty-three native English experts were placed at different colleges throughout Hungary. The Council also sponsored M.Ed. studies in TESOL for Young Learners for 14 Hungarian college tutors and mentor teachers at the University of Leeds, U.K. Materials development was a third area where primary teacher training received support. Intercultural as well as topic-based teaching materials have greatly

contributed to shaping attitudes towards content-based teaching.³⁵ Some research findings mention initiatives for content-based teaching in Hungary as well.³⁶ Native teachers are involved mostly in teaching the language, not the subjects.

There are plans for pre-service teacher training programs to be launched at kindergarten and primary levels at ELTE Teacher Training College, Budapest. In-service teacher training for CLIL started in 2004, run by ELTE University, Budapest.

10.10 Certification

CLIL students' extended competence is acknowledged at the final (GCSE-type) examinations. Students receive a bilingual certificate of secondary education plus a C1 stage language certificate if they do well at the exams and complete part of them in the target language.

10.11 Curriculum and Content

CLIL schools share the curriculum for regular schools except for their language curriculum. The requirements for all subjects (with the exception of the target language) are the same. The civilisation of the target countries is an additional subject for CLIL students. European/international dimensions are given specific attention, which is reflected in the guiding principles (see also point 3).

10.12 Language Curriculum

The language curriculum is specific in CLIL classes. It was worked out by the Association for Bilingual Schools, and as such is published in the Appendices for the Guiding Principles (1997). At the primary level there are 5 language development lessons/week throughout the 8 years (contrasted to 2–3 lessons/week in regular programmes in which foreign languages are started much later). Most CLIL schools offer a preparatory year for language learning. The results from CLIL schools have inspired regular secondary schools to launch preparatory language programmes. Recently, this involved 12 000 students in 408 schools.

At both levels the target language is taught in groups, where the maximum group size is 15, and with the involvement of a native speaker teacher.

10.13 Methodology

The balance between methodology and language is a delicate question. The weight of each element has not been officially declared. In general, the methodology used in CLIL classes reflects the methodology of foreign language teaching as regards the roles of visual aids, monolingual explanations, and non-verbal ways of teaching.

35 Laidlaw, C. 1999 *Intercultural Learning*, Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, Enever, J. et al. 1999 *Teaching Primary English (Theme-pack)* Budapest: British Council Hungary.

36 Rixon, S. 2000 *Young Learners of English: Some Research Perspectives*. London: Longman.

10.14 Materials

In CLIL classrooms specific materials are used. Since there is no official recommendation on materials to be used, each programme or school has the right (and duty) to develop their own material. Throughout the 16–18 years of their existence, some CLIL-type schools have developed into material-writing centres specializing in certain subjects. They designed and piloted their own materials, then started to disseminate these materials all over the country. They also sell their products to other schools. At the beginning, translations of foreign schoolbooks were not uncommon, but they proved to be unhelpful. The quality of translation was poor and inadequate, and the material was too difficult. Imported materials are commonly used at both levels.

There are some individual materials/writers as well as teams with promising results. One of them is a book (in English) on ancient and medieval history for 11–12 year olds written by an ELTE university professor. A bilingual foundation has also started to publish bilingual schoolbooks for primary classes, in which one page is written in English while the other page is in Hungarian. The contributors are Primary Teacher Training College tutors. A third valuable source is the in-service CLIL teacher training course, in which participants are required to hand in an assignment. Some of these assignments are own material developments in various subjects at both levels.

10.15 Logistics and Coordination

In Hungary a professional network called the 'Association for Bilingual Schools' has been in existence since 1991. It has 24 kindergarten and primary schools (ISCED 0,1), 57 secondary schools of which 19 are vocational, and 3 individual members (ISCED 2,3).³⁷ This is a civil organization with the aim of coordinating the work of CLIL schools on a national level, and it caters for their specific needs and interests. The initiator was Ágnes Vámos.

10.16 Student Recruitment

Students are selected to both school levels. Young learners wishing to enrol have to pass an oral 'filter' examination beforehand. This is in order to assess general intelligence as well as communicative skills, exclusively in their mother tongue. No foreign language knowledge prior to school is required. Each applicant is treated individually by a team consisting of primary teachers, a psychologist, and a speech therapist. Children are dealt with in relaxed surroundings. While waiting for their turn, enjoyable activities are arranged for them in a playground.

Secondary schools carry out their selection on the basis of primary results in the mother tongue and in mathematics. No prior language learning is required. As a rule, students

37 According to December 2004 data.

start their studies with a preparatory 'zero-year', which is a very intensive language development programme (20 hours/language/week) to enable them to start CLIL the next year.

10.17 Expectations

A recent research project on CLIL for young learners³⁸ in Hungary lists the following:

Parents find CLIL desirable for the following reasons:

- a it may contribute to finding a better position in society;
- b international values have become more prevalent in our culture;
- c knowledge of languages is a must in the current world;
- d English has become the world language; and
- e knowledge of languages serves other educational aims as well and has a positive impact on the learner's personality. Secondary students' expectations are almost completely un-researched. They might share young learners' expectations.

10.18 Teacher Training

For pre- and in-service programmes, see points above.

CLIL teachers are expected to have an above-average command of the target language.

Some schools have access to grants for their teachers in order to send them to the target countries.

10.19 Quality and Research

CLIL programmes have so far been relatively un-researched. The fields that have already been researched include topics such as the role these schools play in the education system, the motives behind the set-up of such programmes, the distribution of programmes throughout the country, and the issue of code-switching.

10.20 Future Developments

Primary CLIL programmes show an increasing tendency. Secondary grammar school programmes do not show significant changes, while the number of secondary vocational programmes is decreasing.

References

- Enever, J. *et al.*: (1999) *Teaching Primary English* (Theme-pack) Budapest: British Council Hungary.
- KIE (Kéttannyelv Iskolák Egyesülete) statisztika 2004.
- Kovács, J. (2004) *Primary Bilingual Programmes in Hungarian Public Education*. University of Pécs, Hungary. Unpublished PhD dissertation.
- Laidlaw, C. (1999) *Intercultural Learning Budapest*. Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó.
- Rixon, S. (2000) *Young Learners of English. Some Research Perspectives*. London: Longman.
- *Oktatás-Statistikai Évkönyv 2002/03* (www.om.hu)
- (2001) *Statisztikai Tájékoztató. Alapfokú Oktatás 1996-97*. Budapest: Oktatási Minisztérium.
- Vámos, Á. (1996) *Magyarország Tannyelvi Atlasza*. Budapest: Keraban.

³⁸ Kovács, J. 2004 *Primary Bilingual Programmes in Hungarian Public Education*. University of Pécs, Hungary. Unpublished PhD dissertation.