

12 The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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12.1 Linguistic Situation

The Republic of Macedonia, situated in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula, gained its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. At that time, the existing educational legislation became restrictive for the circumstances. Consequently, priority was given to creating a new normative framework as a logical and necessary step in designing a modern educational system. After the country became a member of major European institutions, especially the Council of Europe, collaboration with these strengthened. The aim was to bring the Macedonian educational system into line with European norms and standards.³⁹

The official language of the Republic of Macedonia is Macedonian, with its Cyrillic alphabet. In the municipalities where there is an ethnic group bigger than 20% of the total population of that municipality, the language of the particular ethnic group is also used. The two foreign languages that are studied the most are English and French. Besides the bilingual schools using the official language of the country and the language of the bigger ethnic groups, there is another group of schools that implement CLIL in their daily teaching practices. The following schools already have a CLIL programme in place:⁴⁰

³⁹ Speech by Dr Sofija Todorova, Minister of Education of the Republic of Macedonia, at the World Conference of Higher Education, Paris, 1998

⁴⁰ All of the CLIL schools in Macedonia, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Macedonia and the Office for Cultural and Educational Affairs of the French Embassy in Skopje were contacted and were given a questionnaire that served as a basis for this article. However, answers from the American School of Macedonia, the American International School, NOVA High School and the Turkish College Yahya Kemal were not received. Hence, data about their schools is not included in this article.

Name of the school	Number of students	Language of instruction	Ownership sector
Goce Delcev High School, Kumanovo	176	French	Public
Josip Broz Tito High School, Bitola	30	French	Public
Josip Broz Tito High School, Skopje	40	English	Public
Kiril Pejcinovik High School Tetovo	120	French	Public
Naim Fraseri School	80	French	Public
Orce Nikolov High School, Skopje	103	French	Public
QSI International School, Skopje	60	English	Private
Rade Jovcevski Korcagin High School	110	French	Public
Sv. Kiril i Metodij High School, Negotino	90	French	Public

* The number of students in class varies from 10 (in the private sector) up to 40 (in the public sector).

12.2 Introduction of CLIL

The main drive for setting up CLIL in Macedonia was to equip students with the necessary knowledge to help them adapt and effectively fulfil their personal goals as well as to respond promptly to the demands of the information age. This concept was directly tied to multicultural awareness as a source of strength and the only way to preserve democratic values for a peaceful life encompassing tolerance and respect. It was taken into consideration that these understandings would help students develop an open attitude towards all people as well as a sense of personal worth and dignity. By using one of the most popular foreign languages as a medium of instruction, schools open their doors to students towards Europe and the world in general. Another motivating factor was to continue the tradition of good French education offered in parts in Macedonia. In 1996, the French Embassy announced a project for promotion of study of the French language in Macedonia. One part of this comprehensive project was the creation of CLIL classes in French. In 1999, the Macedonian Teachers' Association of French Language was founded, while in 2000, ELTAM (English Language Teachers' Association of Macedonia) was established.

Regular meetings between the official representatives of the Macedonian Ministry of Education and Sciences and the French Attaché for linguistic cooperation in Macedonia, along with representatives from the French CLIL schools, have been held throughout the

past few years. Both parties have come to a consensus that an agreement for cooperation between the Educational Ministries of Macedonia and France will definitely provide a legal framework for the status of French CLIL classes in Macedonia. Hence, the text for such a document is being prepared and it should be signed in the near future. Josip Broz Tito High School in Skopje, as a public school, is licensed to offer its IB programmes in English.

12.3 CLIL in Practice

There are three different models of CLIL in Macedonia, depending on the number of CLIL classes students attend. Some schools, through intensive English programmes, immerse their students into CLIL classes as soon as they feel the individual student is ready for it. In the state schools where CLIL classes are taught in English, the students are grouped into special classes in which CLIL is used during their last two high school years. The French subgroup has a different approach. They progressively immerse students into CLIL by exposing them to the content in a foreign language with introduction of one class a month for each subject in the first year of high school education, followed by two classes per month for each subject taught in the foreign language in the second year and so on until the final academic year. In order to achieve good tracking of CLIL students, the directors of the French CLIL group prefer the idea of establishing CLIL classes at the moment the students enrol in their high schools.⁴¹

As in any other programme, CLIL in Macedonia has specific aims identified in various types. For the majority of the schools, they are content- as well as language-oriented. For others, the accent is on content. As noticeable from the table below, mathematics is the most popular CLIL subject, followed by French and Physics/General Sciences. History/Social Studies, Literature and Chemistry are also taught in half of the CLIL schools, while the least common are Computing, English, Visual Arts and Geography. These subjects are chosen either because of the nature of certain programmes (such as the IB) or because of enthusiasm on the teachers' side. As one of the French CLIL schools reported, they chose certain subjects because that particular group of subject teachers was motivated to learn the French language and to use it as a medium of instruction. The director of Sv. Kiril and Metodij High School in Negotino also said that their student body leans toward natural sciences and maths. Hence, the school chose these subjects to be taught in the foreign language. The content in CLIL classes does not change compared with that in the regular classes, but the number of lessons does. Usually, these students have more lessons than the regular students.

Number of schools	Subject taught
9	Mathematics
7	French
5	Physics/General Science
4	History/Social Studies
4	Literature
4	Chemistry
3	Computing
2	English
2	Visual Arts
2	Geography

As mentioned before, the target languages in the CLIL schools are English and French. These are the two most popular foreign languages and the ones that students show most interest in. Another reason for choosing these languages is the availability of trained staff that can successfully conduct CLIL in these languages.

12.4 CLIL Teachers

Most of the CLIL teaching staff are subject teachers who teach language at the same time. Except for QSI International School, there are no other examples of language teachers teaching content. However, it is worth mentioning that in all of the schools the subject and the language teachers confer between themselves, exchange ideas and cooperate. While in the English sector there are no dual-qualified teaching staff (qualified to teach both language and content), in the French subgroup there are educators who are competent in both areas. The French CLIL teachers have gone through a CLIL training programme, while the English CLIL teachers are looking forward to a CLIL course that will possibly be offered to them in the near future. Except for QSI International School, which has English native speakers in its CLIL teaching staff, the other schools have Macedonian native speakers. The French CLIL schools have a French language lector, usually a native speaker, who helps and supports the main teaching staff during their CLIL classes.

12.5 Student Certification

As far as examinations are concerned, students in French CLIL schools have to take a test at the end of high school. If they pass it successfully, the students receive a certificate from the French Embassy in Skopje. These students also receive a graduating diploma with the note 'bilingual'. If the holders of this kind of diploma decide to continue their studies in one of the universities in France, they do not have to take the language test required for foreign students for entrance to higher educational institutions. The Office for Linguistic and Educational Cooperation at the French Embassy in Skopje has also expressed an interest in introducing the exam DELF (*Diplome d'Etudes en Langue*

⁴¹ Report from a meeting of directors of French CLIL high schools, September 2004, Skopje.

Francaise)⁴² within the French CLIL schools. According to them, this will raise the students' linguistic achievements while at the same time it will provide a framework for regional harmonization of the CLIL subsystems at a national level. The French teachers are already involved in a training programme that will help them prepare their students for the DELF. In both the English and French CLIL schools there are specific examinations in the target language; hence the students who take these exams receive a high school diploma different from that of their classmates in the regular programmes.

12.6 Curricula

The English CLIL schools already have a specifically designed curriculum for their programmes. The French CLIL subgroup does not change the regular curriculum when teaching CLIL. These teachers are currently working on redesigning and redefinition of their curriculum. All of the surveyed schools said that they pay special attention to the European/international dimension in their daily teaching practices.

The language CLIL curriculum is specifically designed for the programmes that offer their courses in English. As mentioned above, the French CLIL teachers are currently working on redesigning and redefining the language component of their CLIL syllabus. The students who are enrolled in the CLIL classes have some kind of previous exposure to the target language. There are no specific preparatory programmes planned especially for CLIL students. Rather, they have learned the target language during their foreign language classes in elementary schools. However, once enrolled in a CLIL programme, students follow extra language classes. Headed as Intensive English or Intensive French, these courses offer extra contact hours with the target language. The French CLIL students follow three classes per week during their first two high school years, and two classes a week during the last two years of their high school careers. The students are introduced to CLIL progressively, because a 'zero year'⁴³ is not permitted by the Macedonian Ministry of Education.

12.7 Materials

According to the type of programme, the linguistic as well as the content methodology in the CLIL classes changes appropriately. The materials that teachers use are also adapted to the CLIL context. The materials are usually imported or developed within the school. All of the teachers are free to use materials other than the ones officially recommended by the Ministry of Education or required by the programme itself.

12.8 Setting up CLIL

A school interested in starting a CLIL programme needs to do a few things at the initial phase. First, a school planning committee needs to be identified. This committee is then responsible for coming up with an action plan for the CLIL programme.

As far as teachers are concerned, the English CLIL educators have to have appropriate content degrees and good language capabilities. The French CLIL teachers have a longer scheme. Their teachers first go through language training, followed by a series of preparatory French language courses, led by French language lecturers. The French CLIL educators also benefit from visits to linguistic institutes in France. When they have successfully passed DALF (*Diplôme Approfondie en Langue Française*)⁴⁴, a future French CLIL teacher goes through methodological training and is involved in preparation of pedagogical materials.

12.9 Funding

There is no specific funding available for CLIL classes. English CLIL teachers do not receive any extra finances. However, in their weekly schedules, CLIL teachers have two classes less than their colleagues in the regular programmes. The French CLIL teachers, with a contract between them and the director of the French centre for cultural and linguistic cooperation, are given 32.5 euros per month for their extra working hours.

12.10 CLIL Networks

In the absence of a national network, the English CLIL teachers find ways of communication and cooperation within their schools and during some international conferences. The QSI International School of Skopje annually sends two of its teaching staff to a staff development programme directed by U.S. University professors.

The French CLIL project has better regional networks. For this year, a meeting is planned which will take place in Prague, preceded by a regional meeting in Skopje, with representatives from Albania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Moldova. The French CLIL network is becoming stronger thanks to better communication and coordination between all sides: the Ministry of Education, the French Embassy, the schools and the teachers. Each summer, over 130 teachers work during a summer school in Ohrid. In 2003, a group of teachers went to Lille, France, for a two-week training session. The creation of an internet platform⁴⁵ by an institute in Lille, dedicated to exchange of pedagogical CLIL materials, is a crucial step forward.

42 This is an internationally recognized exam, administered by the French Ministry of Education, which measures the linguistic capabilities of students of French as a foreign language.

43 A zero year is a CLIL preparatory year.

44 Preceded by DELF, this is the second portion of the internationally recognized exam, administered by the French Ministry of Education, which measures the linguistic capabilities of students of French as a foreign language at an advance level.

45 www.frontieres.iufm-lille.fr

12.11 Student and Teacher Motivation

There is a selection process for enrolment in the CLIL schools. The French CLIL schools decide on their student body on the basis of the results of a national competition, the student's French language accomplishments in elementary school and the results of a language test administered by the school. The English CLIL schools look at the students' grades, language capabilities and solving abilities concerning specific logic problems.

Students choose the CLIL programmes in order to obtain an internationally recognized diploma and to receive an education based on European standards. Being equipped with these qualifications, the French CLIL students also expect that the French language will facilitate the unity of the ethnic communities in Macedonia, thus being a factor for their integration into Europe.

Both the English as well as the French CLIL teachers said that they are trained for their positions. The French CLIL teachers recently benefited from a new distance language learning training programme. They also go through methodological training under the mentorship of a French lector. The English CLIL teachers attend courses internationally. Although CLIL teachers have more responsibilities than the regular instructors, they decide to dedicate additional hours, seeing them as steps forward in their professional careers. As one of the CLIL educators said, 'It is a challenge at the beginning, but then you are convinced of the rationality of this project.' The teachers' motivation is derived from the huge benefits they obtain from regional and international meetings, exchange of ideas, experiences, acquaintance with the function of educational systems in other countries, and the benefits their students obtain from a high quality system of education.

Each school monitors its students' learning outcomes. Through persistent work and dedication, the weaknesses of this educational sector are resolved. With a strong belief in the positive impact CLIL makes in students' and teachers' professional lives, educators continue to walk on the path towards its future development in Macedonia.