ANALYSIS OF CLIL METHODOLOGY: STRATEGIES AND TEACHERS´ ROLE.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Content and language integrated learning is based on the teaching of subjects through the medium of a second language. This characteristic implies the development of specific strategies to achieve the goals intended. The mixture of learning both a second language and the contents of the subjects can undergo a series of problems and difficulties if every aspect of the learning process is not perfectly designed, structured and studied. For this reason, this project will be aimed at the analysis of teaching and learning strategies which should be considered by the teacher and learner for both to be assisted and attain the desired success in this process but previous to the deepening into such strategies, we will devote some time and space to place the ongoing work in context.

It is important to define the concept of CLIL in order to be aware of the possible difficulties rising from the implementation of this programme. Subject contents and a
second language together as part of the same teaching and learning process require an exhaustive study of every aspect involved. In order to do this, some attention must be paid to the theoretical background from which CLIL methodology and strategies have their origins so as to understand the starting point as well as the development and influence of the programme in question. It is not unusual to reflect on Immersion Programmes, Content-Based Language Teaching/Learning and Language across the Curriculum since they could be regarded and defined as precursors of CLIL. Such programmes fostered the use of a second language as the medium to teach subject content.

Once the theoretical background has been mentioned to understand the origin of CLIL, we will focus on the analysis of CLIL methodology with special emphasis on learning and teaching strategies.

2. ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL INTEREST OF THE TOPIC:

CLIL is an innovative programme introduced in many countries around the world in order to enhance the learning of both content and language. The difficulties involved imply criticism and distrust on the part of some people engaged in the teaching/learning field as Georgiou, I. 2012, p. 497, who stated:

CLIL has been misapplied or the content factor watered down. Without sufficient training and guidance teachers are not able to deliver CLIL programmes effectively. As with all teaching, communication and sharing good practice are key. CLIL is also local and as such one programme cannot be exactly replicated to fit another context. Herein lies another problem, commercially produced materials often fall short of the needs of the teachers.

The complexity of combining content and language in the teaching/learning process gives rise to uncertainty as how to carry out the project successfully. However, many educational centres and professionals are really interested in solving all the evident difficulties since CLIL would contribute to minimize the current lack of success when learning languages creating a motivating atmosphere with the aim of getting a good command of such language subconsciously and contents would be acquired at the same time. In addition to this, this programme tries to achieve lifelong learning in a more autonomous way and with permanent results.

Motivation and reasons to implement CLIL are supposed of being plenty of positive aspects which are worth fighting for. But what about practice? Is there a key to reach success and not harm students with the possible weak points of this programme? These are the issues whose answers made me feel motivated and resulted in this project.

There exists an evident search for the most appropriate way to make learners get immersed into the learning of languages and content at the same time. But it is an undeniable fact that the current situation in Spain in the educational field does not contribute to improve the results obtained in such field. Moreover, if we take as a reference the command of English shown by learners in secondary education, particularly in Castilla la Mancha, it may be thought that the strategies employed to teach and learn this language are not the most appropriate ones. For this reason, when reflecting about CLIL before studying MLAEILE, the answer was clear; how are teachers going to combine language and content trying to be successful if the results
are not good enough when teaching and learning language and content in an isolated way?

Another reason why I felt uncertainty about this programme is because of my experience as a teacher in educational centres where CLIL was supposedly implemented. In these cases neither content nor language reached the minimum contents required by law. There was a lack of motivation on the part of both the learners and the teachers, which is one of the vital factors to achieve this goal. The learners’ feeling of not being prepared and not having enough knowledge of the subjects they were being taught through English was present. Similarly, some teachers involved in this programme felt unsure about teaching specific content through a language which they did not feel comfortable with because of the lack of knowledge.

This fact could be due to a lack of initial organization or knowledge of the different strategies that can be used to support CLIL and to a lack of preparation of those teachers who are required to participate in this programme. In addition to this, it cannot be ignored the lack of resources, materials and staff that education in Spain is facing and that are part of the teaching/learning process. For all these hitches and given the scale of the obvious difficulties that the implementation of such programme entails, we must be aware of the huge responsibility and professionalism required to achieve success. However, some of the elements cited above are out of our reach, so our role should be centred on employing the best strategies and methodology to benefit learners.

This research will be devoted to analyze some of the controversial aspects which could be considered the cause of sometimes an unsatisfactory programme. It will be carried out by a deep reflection and analysis of some studies made to contribute on a proper implementation of CLIL, as the one carried out by Cross, R and Gearon, M (2012) in their Research and Evaluation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Approach to Teaching and Learning Languages in Victorian Schools. By considering different experiences and points of view, a conclusion with the most valuable factors to achieve success in this area is expected. Every analysis and investigation should be welcomed and valued since we are on the way to achieve a wished outcome. With this project, strengths are expected to be potentially increased and weak points removed in order to get students learn the subject content through English.

3. OBJECTIVES

It is possible to differentiate two types of goals which constitute the foundations of this project. As a general objective, this paper is designed “To analyze CLIL methodology focusing on teaching and learning strategies in secondary education.” In other words, we will pay special attention to examine the strategies used in CLIL and the results obtained with the aim of improving the weak points and reinforcing the strong ones. Having a clear image of this programme in a real context will allow us to study alternative strategies to take a maximum advantage of CLIL.

However, there is also a clear need to consider other aspects which play an essential role in the teaching and learning process and must be analyzed as well. Both the teacher’s and the learners’ roles will be considered as a vital part in the development of a successful methodology for Content and Language Integrated Learning. As specific objectives it is important to remark the following ones:
- “To describe core features of CLIL in order to deeply know the programme being implemented”
- “To analyze teaching strategies used in CLIL programmes for the first year of Compulsory Secondary Education.”
- “To analyze learning strategies used in CLIL programmes for the first year of Compulsory Secondary Education.”
- “To analyze the role of language teachers in CLIL.”
- “To describe additional strategies to cover the gaps resulting from the implementation of such a complex programme.

This study focuses on the study and analysis of one of the most important parts of the learning process; the methodology used to teach content through language. It is not a traditional method used in our country, so I will focus on this fact taking as a reference other countries where this programme achieves good results. The objectives previously remarked are to try to obtain the most benefits through the use of strategies employed both individually and in groups and get some keys to carry out this programme in Spain guaranteeing excellent results. Therefore different factors must be analyzed to be aware of the weaknesses and strengths of CLIL.

The methodology should be aimed at achieving an active participation on the part of learners, multiple focus take part in this process, authentic material is expected to be used and the scaffolding technique is a remarkable part of CLIL. The goal of CLIL is clearly identified; however the way to reach it is the subject of many discussions and researches. For this reason, in this project we will take into account those methodological strategies which are more likely to be successful.

In CLIL programme, as in every teaching-learning process, different aspects such as the social environment, the ages of students, economic resources, the technological resources and the material of the centre where this programme is going to be implemented are crucial to carry it out. However, with this project we will deepen into the roles of both teachers and learners which are especially relevant.

Concerning teaching strategies, teachers play an important role since they must develop special skills and knowledge about the language of their subject. Furthermore, they should be able to design and develop tasks with the aim of offering learners access to the language and to the content of this subject. It is essential that subject teachers work with the assistance of language teachers who will help them to design appropriate activities for students according to both the level of knowledge of the language as well as the subject. The language teacher should guide the subject teacher about interesting and beneficial activities such as warming-up activities, how to exploit a text, how to deal with new vocabulary, how to promote oral and comprehension activities among others.

It be would be ideal the complete implementation of CLIL in all levels and places of Spain. However it is fair to say that some aspects which are not properly or clearly designed make some teachers feel some kind of uncertainty.
4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This project will be carried out taking into account previous programmes which have been carried out and can be regarded as precedents of CLIL. When Content and Language Integrated Learning is thought, it is not unusual to reflect on Immersion programmes, Content-based language teaching/learning and Language across the curriculum.

4.1. Language immersion

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Language Immersion can be defined as “a method of learning a foreign language by being taught entirely in that language.” That is, the learner’s second language (L2) is the medium of classroom instruction. They study school subjects in their L2 and the main goal is to develop learner’s communicative competence in the second language in addition to the native one; that is to say, to foster bilingualism. Influential authors such as Swain, M. and Johnson, R.K (1994) among many others take part in this programme by collaborating to analyse the characteristics and developing more ideas about it.

These programmes were first implemented in Canada. In Quebec English speaking children were taught in French, the official language of this country in 80s and 70s. It was the result of middle-income English-speaking parents who convinced educators to establish a programme focusing on a French immersion which enables the learners to appreciate the traditions and culture of French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians. With this method, they tried to create an atmosphere in which language, content and culture were combined in an integrated way. The immersion programme has the following characteristics according to Shaban Barimani-Varandi, 2012, p.954 in her paper Immersion Program: State of the art.

- The curriculum of immersion programmes is the same as the local or non-immersion programmes. The same contents are required in every subject studied for learners linguistically immersed or not immersed.

- All the contents are taught in L2 and there is no choice to re-taught something in the learners’ first language.

- L2 is not taught explicitly as a language; it is used as the medium of instruction to teach other subjects.

- It is expected that at least 50% of the content instruction is in the target language.

This kind of programmes is really appealing but there is no key to be successful because of the big amount of components to take into account. To focus our attention on the features of immersion programmes, Swain, M. and Johnson, R.K. 1997, p.15 add the following features to the characteristics cited above:

- The programme aims for additive bilingualism.
- Students enter with similar (and limited) levels of L2 proficiency.
- The teachers are bilingual.
- The classroom culture is that of the local L1 community.

Once the characteristics of the immersion programme have been described, it is interesting to refer to the different types of immersion which can take place. Four
groups can be differentiated depending on the age of learners at which the programme is initiated. *Early immersion* is that in which learners who are 5-6 participate. *Middle immersion* refers to the group of learners who start at 9-10. *Late immersion* takes place when students are at secondary school and are between the ages of 11-14 years old. And finally *Late late immersion* is the one which is carried out at university level.

However, the age of students is not the only factor which takes part in this programme. The extent, that is to say, the percentage of curricular content covered by L2, is seen as the other factor which divides immersion programmes into two groups. Learners participate in *Total Immersion* when 100% of the curricular content is taught in the second language. Target language is the medium of instruction and if some difficulties in communication are found and comprehension is not achieved, teachers must apply specific techniques to ensure comprehension such as definition, use of realia, dramatization,... so as to help learners to master the target language. Nevertheless, not all educational centres are prepared to participate in a total immersion programme due to the lack of resources and materials, proper preparation of teachers, adequate level of language proficiency on the part of learners,...That is why, sometimes *Partial Immersion* is preferred or even seen as the starting point to implement this programme. In Partial Immersion half of the class time is in the target language; that is, at least the 50% of the curricular content is taught in L2.

According to Krueger and Ryan (Eds), 1993, Immersion programmes can be divided into three different models which are named Theme-Based model, Sheltered model and Adjunct or Linked model. These three models are characterized by certain features which differentiate one from another.

- **Learning focus and purpose:** Each model has a different purpose. In theme-based model learning the second language is focused over mastery on content. In sheltered model the focus is on content. However, in adjunct or linked model the purpose is to learn both content and language.

- **The role and responsibility of instructors regarding language and content instruction:** In the first model mentioned, the instructors teach language besides content. In the second model, the instructors teach subject through L2. And in the last model previously mentioned each instructor teaches his/her own course while he/she cooperates with the other.

- **Level of proficiency:** Regarding the sheltered model, the learners are required to have an advanced level of listening and reading skills in order to avoid some difficulties found because of the complexity in the subjects. Just the opposite happens in the theme-based model in which learners are not required a specific level of proficiency. In adjunct or linked model, Britton *et al.* 1989, p. 11, believe “the presence of native speakers makes it necessary that L2 speakers have even higher proficiency levels”.

To conclude with this part, it would be interesting to mention the types of goals which immersion programmes have. Short range goals are those by which learners are helped to understand language used as the medium of instruction. It is tried to make the content be comprehensible for learners. Long range goals refer to develop high levels of language proficiency, develop positive attitudes towards native speakers and their culture, gain mastery in skills, concepts and content and understand and appreciate other cultures.
It cannot be denied the positive effects that immersion programmes have on learners; learning curricular content and culture using L2 as the medium of instruction allows students to be involved in a complex process but obtaining great benefits. However, the learners’ exposure to the target language and the complexity of studying the same curricular contents as other students who are not participating on immersion programmes in L2 can cause certain levels of uncertainty on the part of both teachers and learners. This can be due to the lack of specific preparation of language teachers regarding specific curricular content and of subject teachers with regards to the application of accurate linguistic rules. Apart from this aspect, too much focus on content can cause low attention to formal linguistic rules and cultural misunderstanding may be considered another problem derived from the implementation of immersion programmes.

Having described the most remarkable characteristics of this programme, it would be interesting to continue this paper by focusing on Content-based language teaching/learning.

4.2. Content-based language teaching/learning

CBLTL is "...an approach to language instruction that integrates the presentation of topics or tasks from subject matter classes (e.g., math, social studies) within the context of teaching a second or foreign language" (Crandall & Tucker, 1990, p. 187). In this case, USA is the country which dared to introduce subject content in language courses with immigrant students in the 80s. It was due to a need to promote simultaneous content and language learning for a growing number of English language learners in the schools. This way, immigrants would be taught curricular contents and language simultaneously being helped by teachers who are encouraged to give them the assistance to comprehend and use the target language in order to achieve the command of curricular content.

Although it is most often associated with the genesis of language immersion education in Canada in 1965, content-based instruction is hardly a new phenomenon. We know that "until the rise of nationalism, few languages other than those of the great empires, religions, and civilizations were considered competent or worthy to carry the content of a formal curriculum" (Swain & Johnson, 1997, p. 1).

Content-based language teaching is regarded as one of the most representative and influential contribution to foreign language instruction or pedagogy. It is a way of learning the subject contents developing and integrating the four language skills in the process and learning the target language in a natural way. Moreover, they are in contact with authentic material reading authentic texts and speaking about the content. Later, they are required to do some tasks which ensure the comprehension of such content. According to Madrid, D. y García Sánchez, E. 2001, p. 116 in Content-based Second Language Teaching with this programme, it is assumed that:

- The use of TL as the medium of instruction learning curricular content is the most efficient way to improve the level of proficiency of such language.

- As the intralingual and content-based dimensions are integrated in the process, the learners are supposed to develop the linguistic competence and general education at the same time.
- CBLT can be considered as being related to constructivism and cognitive theories since it aims to provide meaningful learning by connecting new information with students’ previous experiences.

- It primarily relies on intralingual, experiential and implicit teaching and learning techniques and considers them more efficient to develop the student’s education.

As mentioned before, the principles and techniques proposed by this programme are not new; they are based on features which can be found on different approaches existing along the history of language teaching such as the communicative approach, the natural approach, cognitive theories or the LSP movement.

Content-based Language Teaching uses the TL as the medium of instruction and through it, a variety of curricular content is taught. This is a common feature of bilingual programmes. The most influential examples of bilingual programmes are in Canada and in the USA, as mentioned above.

The main aim of CBLT is learning about something through a second language instead of learning about language in an isolated way and the key of success lies in the relevant contents and tasks that are provided, since the students are primarily focused on the meaning rather than on the language. But the approach combines the experiential and integral techniques with other teaching and learning strategies which are more explicit, analytic and formal.

Having analysed the most general aspects of Immersion Programmes and Content-Based Language Teaching, it is necessary to devote some time and space to make a reference to Language across the Curriculum (LAC)

4.3. Language across the curriculum

According to Vollmer, H. J. in his paper *Language across the Curriculum*, the following programme can be regarded as:

A concept which acknowledges the fact that language education does not only take place in specific subjects explicitly defined and reserved for it, such as mother tongue education, foreign language education, second language education etc.). Language learning and education also take place in each and every subject in school, in each and every academic/mental activity, across the whole curriculum – whether we are conscious of it or not.

LAC underlines the importance of developing a comprehensive understanding of language learning which takes place across all subjects in addition to the central role of language as a subject itself and consequently all that it involves. In order to understand the significance of language in itself and for the rest of the curricular content, it would be interesting to mention the basic principles on which LAC is based. They are (cf. Corson 1990, 74):

- Language develops mainly through its purposeful use (domains to be broadened).

- Learning (often) involves talking, writing, shaping and moving (normally in reaction to perceptions)
- Learning often occurs through speaking or writing as much as through shaping and moving.

- Language use contributes to /is a pre-requisite for cognitive development.

- Language is the medium for reflecting on learning, for improving it, for becoming (more or less) autonomous as learners.

In other words, the goals of LAC are to assist and support every learner with the appropriate techniques to develop language in all domains of language use, in every activity which is carried out and to provide them with some feedback about their progress. It should not be forgotten that when talking about language, eight modes of human activities are considered to involve it:

- Listening: comprehending oral input/intake.
- Speaking: constructing meaningful utterances.
- Reading: understanding written texts.
- Writing: producing written texts/discourse.
- Viewing: attending to visual signs/information.
- Shaping: using visual means of expression.
- Watching: attending to the movements.
- Moving: using the whole body/person.

When reflecting on the word “language”, many people think of the four basic skills. However, multiple factors play important roles in the definition of such concept and therefore, must be taken into consideration. The concept of Language across the Curriculum also claims that language and learning are closely linked to language and thinking. That is why, the importance of developing learners’ autonomy is emphasized. They must be assisted to develop it step by step creating an active, constructive and potentially autonomous learning environment.

In line with cognitive linguistics and constructivist pedagogy, the basic functions of language are acquired in L1 education and they should be extended and widened in a conscious process of language use as well as a language reflection in every subject. It is not as simple as it can seem and that is why it is not rare to find situations in which subject teachers assume that certain competences have already been acquired through L1 teaching. However, when they centre on their specific subject realise that there can be found a series of deficiencies because of a lack of reflection about the meaning and use in different contexts of linguistic items already learnt. For this reason, subject and language teachers must work in tandem with each others when a programme of such characteristics is implemented. Similarly, subject teachers must have a clear idea of what they want to reach with their students in terms of language goals in connection with their specific goals.

As the programmes previously mentioned, LAC implies great benefits for learners if it is properly implemented. However, it is a complex process which requires a radical change in the mentality and attitudes of the teachers who participate in LAC. Every teacher has to be prepared and trained to work with academic language use, both oral and written, for teaching it within their specific subjects. It cannot be forgotten that one of the principles of LAC is that it focuses more on learning than on teaching. For this reason, the learning process must be analysed carefully in order to obtain the great benefits expected.
As a consequence of this programme, a variety of it has been developed and is being extended around the world; it is Cultures and Languages across the Curriculum (CLAC). This movement tries to “make global competence a reality for students and to create alliances among educators to share practices and find ways to incorporate an international dimension in curricula and to achieve internationalization goals.” Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum.(n.d). Retrieved from http://clacconsortium.org/.

The general principles of CLAC are:

- A focus on communication and content.
- An emphasis on developing meaningful content-focused language use outside traditional language classes.
- An approach to language use and cross-cultural skills as means for the achievement of global intellectual synthesis, in which students learn to combine and interpret knowledge produced in other languages and in other cultures.

This programme is sometimes implemented at universities. It could be mentioned the University of Richmond that promotes international education and dares to include CLAC. In this case, this programme offers courses on a variety of languages and small discussion groups that are taught by a faculty member with appropriate qualification to carry out this task or by international or bilingual students who are called CLAC assistants. These courses can focus on each specific area of the curriculum; arts, politics, science, literature and business administration among others. The aim is to ensure that their students acquire cross-cultural competency through the use of their language skills in the context of another discipline. It should be regarded as a way of enriching students’ competences and international culture using L2; this fact will lead them to improve their L2 linguistic competence at the same time.

4.4. CLIL: State of the art

Having reflected on the theoretical background of the programme on which this paper is focusing and analysed the features in common among the methods mentioned before, it would be important to move on to deal with the state of the art in Content and Language Integrated Learning.

“CLIL is an umbrella term covering a dozen or more educational approaches (e.g., immersion, bilingual education, multilingual education, language showers and enriched language programmes” (Almenta López, E.) (n.d) p. 2.

CLIL involves a process by which learners are exposed to the teaching/learning process of curricular content through L2 increasing the intensity of this exposure step by step. Its aim is to promote linguistic diversity and creates an educational and linguistic common framework across Europe. But in spite of having a common goal, the difficulties inherent in this programme make complicated to progress along the same path. The duration of CLIL is highly variable across Europe; a general rule cannot be established due to the organizational autonomy of each educational centre. Something similar happens regarding the choice of subjects taught in CLIL since it depends on the centres’ needs and available resources such as the teachers’ qualifications. Fortunately and because of the great interest that this programme generates, there exist a series of formation and orientation courses devoted to improve the process of
implementation of CLIL. In addition to this, these courses are designed to enhance the motivation on it.

“CLIL teachers should be proficient in the content area and at the same time have a broad knowledge of foreign language learning, thereby providing optimal conditions for student communication” (Marsh, 2002). This implies special training for teachers since their formation must be more specific than if they are not participating in CLIL.

Taking it into consideration, there has been an interesting response to solve the existing problems on these aspects. As an example, it would be remarkable to cite the Emerald Cultural Institute which is a language school for students and professionals. This centre offers courses designed to develop language skills for CLIL. They are addressed to teachers of secondary education or in older levels of primary school who wish to teach their subjects through English. There exists the possibility of English teachers who wish to work with non-English teachers who need to teach through English. In addition to CLIL sessions and specific workshops to improve their skills, the participants of these courses are offered a cultural programme of seminars and excursions to make the most of this trip to Ireland. When they arrive in Dublin, each participant is assessed on their English language skills and these assessments will be used to create groups with specific contents to suit their needs.

This programme lasts two weeks and includes a cultural programme which allows the participants to visit and get into contact with the most typical places of the city and therefore, to get immersed in every aspect associated with the language in question. Similarly to the course mentioned above, it is possible to find other courses available for teachers participating in CLIL or with the intention of doing it which can be subsidised by Comenius funding.

These courses enable them to prepare for it with other European colleagues following the same programme and dates, sharing their professional experience and expectations of their training. Some sessions are devoted to refresh the experience of being a student since this can be a gap in the relationship between teachers and students and can cause difficulties because of a lack of empathy. Each teacher is placed on a live English as a Foreign language class where they can observe the skills taught in the methodology classes. In addition to the consequent increase in personal fluency to give more confidence in lessons delivery, the teachers become more aware of learning difficulties from a student’s point of view. Moreover, essential techniques for teaching CLIL are also covered in other sessions; peer and group opportunities for foreign teachers to learn to use the strategies and techniques are provided. This type of courses shares a common interest in practice; the main focus is on the use of strategies and activities in the classroom and the theory to support the techniques is used where appropriate.

As it can be regarded, some preparation for teachers to participate in CLIL is offered with the aim of taking advantage of every positive aspect included in this programme. CLIL is offered in most European countries, in almost all educational levels and in a wide variety of subjects. For this reason, the courses mentioned above focus their attention on creating groups of teachers from different countries in order to enrich such groups with their own experiences.
It is obvious that the implementation of this programme results in groups of teachers with specific training needs both in the content and the target language. The teachers participating in the programme should be “proficient in the content area as well as having a broad knowledge of foreign language learning, thereby providing optimal conditions for student communication.” (Marsh, 2002).

Taking into consideration the dual needs required for the appropriate preparation of CLIL teachers, we are facing a programme in which teachers must have a specific profile with a double specialisation. Besides teaching qualification, some countries require teachers to have certificates that prove the level of knowledge of the target language in CLIL programme. Nevertheless, none of these certificates required is related to CLIL teaching qualifications; that is to say, teaching principles and methodology. As a consequence, it must be said that due to the difficulties found when implementing this programme, CLIL is sometimes not well developed in some countries and only exists for some time as a pilot project.

Notwithstanding the above, some countries are developing certification to establish specific training in CLIL. This way, these certificates can be considered as an added value to take part in such programme as a teacher. According to Almenta, E. in *CLIL Teacher Training* the existence of this certification “fosters the implementation of CLIL programmes with greater assurance, given the consideration that one of the main obstacles to the success of this type of education is the shortage of qualified teachers.”

One of the aspects which catches my attention is that in spite of offering training courses for teachers to participate in CLIL in some countries, it is not a requirement to select the teachers, as it happens in Austria, the Netherlands or United Kingdom. In Spain, the “Teachers Training Courses” are in charge of CLIL teachers training. This training includes specific courses on methodology, on integrating content and language, on preparation of teaching materials and on teacher cooperation. There are also refresher language courses for non-linguistic areas teachers and Teachers can also apply for courses abroad to improve their language and methodological skills.

Some mobility programmes are set up both for teachers and students. EU programmes such as Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig and Minerva are exploited to their full potential to develop teacher training schemes, to facilitate periods of overseas immersion for teachers, to increase student exchanges and work experience opportunities, to promote school-twinning initiatives, to support curricula development and to expand the possibilities for adult education and lifelong learning. In addition to this, in some European countries, students can have the advantage of having the presence of assistants who are native speakers of the CLIL target language. This way, teachers and students can benefit from exposure to a native language model, which is essential for the improvement of the command of the language.

It can also be mentioned the creation of websites and online teachers communities with the purpose of training CLIL teachers; the number of physical and virtual platforms is higher and higher and its development continues growing in order to assist teachers.

Regarding training projects funded at European level, MOBIDIC (2000-2004), involving Germany, France, Poland and the UK (England) can be remarked. “Its goal was to create modules for initial and in-service training of teachers of non-linguistic areas imparting their subjects in a foreign language.” There is also the CCN Project (*CLIL*...
Cascade Network, 2008), which is configured as a multilateral network financed by the European Commission. “It aims to promote skills development and teachers training, and to build local CLIL competencies. “ This network has also published the so-called "CLIL Teacher's Competence Grid" (Bertaux et al., 2010), which sets out the basic skills and competencies to be developed by CLIL teachers.

It cannot be denied that several programmes and courses are available nowadays to train ourselves as a key element in the teaching/learning process if success wants to be reached in CLIL implementation. Most courses are addressed to provide teachers with knowledge and skills development in using CLIL methods and materials, assessment tools, project-based networking and teacher professional development paths. The methodology to be used is based on hands-on constructivist and experiential methods as well as site visits. Having a look at some courses derived from CNN project, it can be seen that they are divided into several stages where the notions provided are the following:

- Approaching CLIL - Core Features of CLIL methodologies - Insights into the added value of CLIL
- Uncovering CLIL - Which Model suits my school? - What do I need to know and do to make it work?
- Operating CLIL - Looking at CLIL in action - Transferring good practice
- Consolidating CLIL - using assessment tools - Check-listing core features for success
- Using international networks and joining partnerships - internet-based resources and materials

This way, most controversial areas are covered and teachers are provided with certain information to develop their work properly. But it would be important to take into account a fact which can be seen in the headlines day in and day out and which is closely related to the subject of this paper.

In Spain, the educational system is regulated by the central government, but every Autonomous Community can decide on some educational aspects. This fact is being constantly questioned because of the situation in some regions such as Catalonia and Basque Country where their own languages come into play and it is subject of great controversy. CLIL is also present in the educational area of these regions, among others, since there is a struggle for the normalisation of Basque and Catalan as official languages. When the Basic Law on the Standardisation of Basque was passed in 1982, three linguistic models were established to ensure that every student had the possibility to learn in Spanish and/or Basque.

- Model A: all subjects, apart from the Basque language and literature and modern languages, are taught in Spanish.
- Model B: both Spanish and Basque are used to teach all the subjects.
- Model D: all subjects, except Spanish language and literature and modern languages, are taught in Basque.
In addition to these models, the Department of Education of the Basque autonomous community implemented CLIL models geared to promote the knowledge and use of a foreign language; English or French. It gives the opportunity to learn an additional language; in this case the third one, since Spanish and Basque are already included in the curriculum, without requiring extra time in such curriculum. In the Basque country, different types of school exist on the basis of their use of Basque or Spanish as the medium of instruction. However, in Catalonia most teaching in state schools is carried out in Catalan. Subject content has a high degree of the use of Catalan in educational centres depending on the school and in some cases, on the choice of the students’ parents who can decide in some occasions the amount of subjects they want to be taught using Catalan as the medium of instruction. With the appearance of CLIL, these Autonomous Communities have another language to take into account if they want to participate in the implementation of this programme focusing on the teaching/learning of a foreign language.

Having taken a “tour” of the theoretical background which could be considered as the theoretical and practical foundations to develop and implement CLIL, it is interesting to keep in mind the attractiveness of programme with some attention paid to the hitches found in such complicated process.

Several years have been spent trying to centre an important area of the education on the use of a foreign language to teach/learn subject content; either with immersion programmes or other programmes with similar aims such as Content-Based Language Teaching/Learning or Language across the Curriculum. However, in spite of the great efforts made and the numerous professionals and learners who have been part of these programmes, no infallible key is provided to reach success.

This fact can be the result of the complexity of a process in which multiple elements contribute to make every lesson a singular moment; no student or teacher have the same characteristics as another, no classroom environment is similar to another and factors such as motivation, preparation, support, materials, techniques and assistance make every group as unique. For this reason, although professionals must take into consideration some key elements and patterns to implement CLIL, they must also have the ability and capacity to adapt the techniques used to suit the learners´ needs to achieve the goals desired.

5. METHODOLOGY

Concerning methodology, it is important to bear in mind that we are dealing with the simultaneous teaching of subject and language and the obvious promotion of both. Therefore, an active participation and committed involvement on the part of teachers and learners are expected. It is vital to get learners´ engagement and autonomy and make them feel motivated with this programme and of course, the learning environment must not be forgotten.

It is precisely this concept of a modern learning environment based on constructivist principles which, in the view of CLIL methods, also best does justice to the demands of integrated subject and foreign language teaching. The best way to combine subject and language work is to integrate them in a learning environment of this kind. (cf. Wolff 2003, p. 198)
One of the remarkable aspects of CLIL which is worth mentioning is the relation with real contents. For instance, when learners are being taught History contents through English, the contents they are facing are real. Therefore, it is necessary to remember that the use of L2 is the means of instruction in the process of teaching other subjects and in order to encourage students, speech acts should play a central role in the lessons regardless of the subject we are dealing with in each moment. Describing or explaining certain concepts can be regarded as part of these speech acts.

Due to the complexity involved in the process of implementing CLIL, it is important to be supported by certain theories or concepts proposed by illustrious linguists and professionals who have devoted time and effort on this field. This study is going to be based on Do Coyle’s 4 C’s framework because of its consistency, but also because it fits with the curriculum requirements.

According to Coyle, D. 2008, p. 97 in *CLIL – A Pedagogical Approach*, the 4 Cs framework for CLIL starts with content and focuses on the interrelation between content (subject matter), communication (language), cognition (thinking) and culture (awareness of self and otherness) to build on the synergies of integrating learning (content and cognition) and language learning (communication and cultures).

With this concept, it is possible to find a link between learning theories, language learning theories and intercultural understanding.

- Subject matter is not only about acquiring knowledge and skills, it is about the learner constructing his/her own knowledge and developing skills. (Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978)
- Acquiring subject knowledge, skills and understanding is related to learning and thinking (cognition). To enable the learner to construct an understanding of the subject matter, the linguistic demands of its content must be analysed and made accessible. (Met, 1998).
- Thinking processes (cognition) need to be analysed for their linguistic demands (Bloom, 1984; McGuiness, 1999)
- Language needs to be learned in context, learning through the language, reconstructing the subject themes and their related cognitive processes, e.g. language intake/input. (Krashen, 1985; Swain, 2000)
- Interaction in the learning context is fundamental to learning. This has implications when the learning context operates through L2. (Pica, 1991; Van Lier, 1996)
- The relationship between cultures and languages is complex. Intercultural awareness and learning is fundamental to CLIL. (Byram, Nicols and Stevens, 2001)

5.1. *A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodology?*

So as to carry out this study, we will focus on a type of research methodology which enables us to take advantage of all the data within our reach. Basing this paper on either qualitative or quantitative research may bring about a gap between general theory resulting from studies and individual experiences. It is worthwhile combining both methods to achieve as much information as possible collecting data; this is what we will do.

When developing a research, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the way through which data is going to be collected; having an overall orientation to research and the types of claims that will be made for the study so it is important to differentiate between quantitative and qualitative research.
If quantitative data collection is chosen, it will be based on measuring variables, verifying existing theories or hypotheses or questioning them. The results obtained by the data collection about diverse variables will generate new hypotheses on which we could centre our study. However, often collections of statistics and number crunching are not the answer to understanding meanings, beliefs and experience, which are better understood through qualitative data.

Qualitative research is aimed at understanding meanings, describing and understanding experiences, ideas, beliefs and values which are intangible. These results can be defined as being more subjective; that is why other type of data collection and method must be used.

This is the reason why a combination of both methods is thought to be able to give us more extensive and specific information in order to carry out a more exhaustive study. This is a common approach which helps you to ‘triangulate’, i.e. to back up one set of findings from one method of data collection underpinned by one methodology, with another very different method underpinned by another methodology - for example, you might give out a questionnaire (normally quantitative) to gather statistical data about responses, and then back this up and research in more depth by interviewing (normally qualitative) selected members of your questionnaire sample in order to obtain more specific and subjective information that may not be found in a questionnaire. That is why, we will use both methods to collect as much information as possible.

5.2. Research tools.

Questionnaires can be seen as an easy option to collect information; however they are quite difficult to design. The first step should be focused on the type of questions that we want to appear; that is to say, open or closed questions; previously reflecting on the kind of information is going to be received and its utility. Diverse types of questions can be designed when dealing with questionnaires; those that offer a variety of answers to one single question where the closest to your opinion, experience,… must be chosen and those that offer close answers as yes/no as well as the ones which offer to choose a response on a scale 1-5 to express the frequency or the level of satisfaction or commitment.

It is interesting to remark the difficulty found by people to complete them and hand them in. So this problem should be previously predicted and have looked for a proper solution. If not, we will be using an appropriate research tool with no results. Moreover, a number of factors to take into account when elaborating a questionnaire to collect data should be remembered; it is important not to create a long questionnaire which could cause boredom, disengagement or a lack of commitment, we should ensure that questions are clear and we have reliable ways of collecting and managing the data. Setting up a questionnaire that can be read by an optical mark reader is an idea proposed by experts of this field if collecting large numbers of responses and analysing them statistically is desired rather than reading each questionnaire and entering data manually.
Different research methods and processes of analysing data are available but in this case, we will focus our attention on analysing every single answer in depth. Some tips when developing and using a questionnaire are proposed:

- Identify your research questions.
- Identify your sample.
- Draw up a list of appropriate questions and try them out with a colleague.
- Pilot them.
- Ensure questions are well laid out and it is clear how to 'score them' (tick, circle, delete).
- Ensure questions are not leading and confusing.
- Code up the questionnaire so you can analyse it afterwards.
- Gain permission to use questionnaires from your sample.
- Ensure they put their names or numbers on so you can identify them but keep real names confidential.
- Analyse statistically if possible and/or thematically.

Regarding qualitative research methods, we will centre on interviews which enable face to face discussion with human subjects. If interviews are the method which is going to be used, the way to record the answers must be chosen; we can take notes, tape the interview, rely on our memory or we can write in the answers.

The first step will be to draw up an interview schedule of questions which as previously said can be open or closed or a mixture of both. Closed questions tend to be used for asking for and receiving answers about fixed facts, they do not require speculation and they tend to produce short answers. These questions can be used to give the interviewee a small selection of possible answers from which to choose in order to get the aim desired. Doing this, the data will be managed more easily. Nevertheless, this type of questions have a weak point which is that they limit the response the interviewee can give and do not enable them to think deeply or test their real feelings or values.

If, on the contrary, we decide to use open questions, we will be able to elicit much more information, an endless number of responses. This way, it is easier to receive information about people’s feelings and ideas because it would enable them to think and talk for longer and so show their feelings and views in depth. However, it also has a negative side and it is the difficulty found to quantify these results and categorise them after having received them, or merely report them in their diversity and make general statements, or pick out particular comments if they seem to fit your purpose. As previously seen, some tips are also provided when interviews are decided to be part of the research:

- Identify your sample.
- Draw up a set of questions that seem appropriate to what you need to find out.
- Do start with some basic closed questions (name etc.).
- Don't ask leading questions.
- Try them out with a colleague.
- Pilot them, then refine the questions so that they are genuinely engaged with your research object.
- Contact your interviewees and ask permission, explain the interview and its use.
- Carry out interviews and keep notes/tape.
- Transcribe.
- Thematically analyse results and relate these findings to others from your other research methods

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods are going to play a central part in this study by using questionnaires, interviews and tests; it is the way through which some personal and individual information will be achieved so as to guide it. In addition to this, it is essential to take into consideration hypotheses and theories supported by linguists and professionals which can be used as a reference and the starting point to develop the study; theoretical foundations will give us the necessary notions to be able to carry out this research properly.

Besides these methods aimed at acquiring and achieving all the knowledge and information available, this paper will show the emphasis given in this study to the experience. In other words, a central part will be devoted to reflect on the experience with teachers and learners involved in CLIL since there is no better way to know behaviours, feelings, reactions, failures and achievements involved in this teaching/learning process when CLIL is implemented.

6. STUDY

Carrying out any research involves the use of a series of tools in order to support the conclusions reached and the results obtained. On this topic, CLIL, several aspects are being analysed in detail such as the most appropriate and beneficial learning and teaching strategies that should be used in order to be successful. Due to the wide scope of methodology, the roles of the participants in this programme; teachers and learners must be subject of study as well. So as to place the ongoing study, the participants and the place where this project has been carried out will be taken as the starting point.

6.1. Context description

The study is carried out in a small village near Ciudad Real. There are 10000 inhabitants who mostly survived through agriculture and building; nowadays it is difficult to make a living in these areas, especially in building due to the economic crisis existing in our country. This fact leads to the growing number of people who are now unemployed and consequently the lack of resources for a lot of families living there and whose children are our pupils.

There is only one educational centre for compulsory secondary education in this village and students from the nearest villages come here to study. In this centre, learners can study from 1st to 4th year of compulsory secondary education as well as Bachillerato. It is interesting to mention the possibility for professional training offered here which is aimed at the field of IT. By the same token, it must be added that a programme called Initial Professional Qualification Programme (PCPI) is also available for those students who have not got the Compulsory Secondary Education Course in order to give them a “second chance” to be prepared for their future professional life. The school staff is composed by 63 teachers who work as specialists in each area. There are 710 students in total in this centre but turning our attention to European sections, which is the subject of this study, it is important to remark the most important features participating in this programme.
CLIL started in the academic year 2008/2009, in the first of the four year of Compulsory Secondary Education cycle with students who are 11-12 years old. Nowadays, 168 students, who are divided into the four academic courses of Compulsory Secondary Education, are considered to be part of bilingual instruction. Different subjects and consequently different subject teachers are involved in each course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1\textsuperscript{ST} CSE</th>
<th>2\textsuperscript{ND} CSE</th>
<th>3\textsuperscript{RD} CSE</th>
<th>4\textsuperscript{TH} CSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences (Geography &amp; History)</td>
<td>Social Sciences (Geography &amp; History)</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>P.E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>I.T.C</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P.E</td>
<td>Civic Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen before, it can be noticed a progressive increase in the number of subjects taught and learnt in L2 as the courses progress. This is organized in the line of reasoning since it is supposed that the more advanced in the course they are, the more proficient in L2 the students will be.

Seven subject teachers are directly engaged with this programme. Obviously, they are supported by the English language teachers of the centre and the essential help of a native assistant who plays an important role in the proper development of these sections. The figure of the native assistant must be remarkable due to the knowledge and skills that this person can provide in such a complicated process as well as the comfort and self-confidence that both teachers and learners feel when she plays an active role in the class.

It is worthwhile mentioning that the interest in participating in European sections is constantly increasing. More students (and their families) are stimulated to become part of this project maybe because they are becoming aware of the importance of learning languages in this society. The same happens with teachers who are striving for getting the best preparation and forming part of it.

6.2. Corpus and data collection and research tools used

This study has been fulfilled taking as the basis my own experience as a language teacher participating in European sections. A lot of information has been extracted and analysed from every aspect present in a programme such as CLIL emphasizing the strongest and weakest points with the purpose of improving and trying to ensure, as far as possible, the desired success.

As being part of the study, the possibility of working from inside leads us to be able to obtain detailed and inside information about those aspects which do not work properly according to both students and teachers’ opinions, those aspects which motivate both parts because of the attitudes or results obtained, strategies used to reinforce weak points, maximise strengths or to solve problems on the part of both teachers and learners, difficulties found by subject teachers who do not have the ability to transmit their knowledge in L2 and those found by students who do not feel capable of concentrating and following lessons due to the additional effort required to learn a particular subject in a foreign language.
It must be mentioned that the data has been collected from classes studying the same topic in their mother tongue, Spanish, as well as from native speakers of Spanish of the same age studying the same subject in a foreign language, English. The general aim is to follow the CLIL groups through the four years of Compulsory Secondary Education to be able to offer a picture of achievement at school leaving age of our groups. However, in this study, we concentrated on the first year of ESO which is the starting point in secondary education so as to try to solve the possible difficulties or mistakes found from the very beginning.

We worked in this study with two classes belonging to the European Sections and two other groups of students who are not included in this programme. The teachers involved in the first year of ESO, as shown before, are the Social Science and the Art teachers. They are both graduate in their own specialities having a degree in History and Art respectively with good knowledge of English accredited with the B2 certificate in English.

In this part, we will look at three types of data; spoken interaction in whole class discussions, where we compare features of the teachers’ discourse with her students’ production, the language of some students in oral interviews and written texts by these same students. This gives the reader a picture of both general classroom production and specific information on individual students, especially those who may be less likely to intervene in the class sessions and who represent the achievement of weaker students since the participants in the interviews were chosen by their teachers to represent three different levels of oral proficiency in the classes: good, average and poor. Two students for each level and from each class (participating in European sections and not doing it) took part in the interview.

6.2.1. Interviews (Qualitative)

Such interviews were aimed at having a clear idea of those aspects of the teaching/learning process which are carried out properly enhancing students’ motivation and learning content and language as well as those which can cause uncertainty or even anxiety on learners and teachers. In addition to their own impressions, the knowledge obtained on particular subjects, those involved in the programme, are also measured in order to produce a clearer picture of the preconceived notion related to not acquiring the same level of knowledge regarding content as students do in their native language.

An essential aspect to remark is that the Social Science and the Art teachers who are involved in CLIL are the teachers of the other classes not participating in this programme; this way the comparison will be more interesting and the results obtained more reliable. Furthermore, as fortunately being the English teacher of the groups mentioned, we took the opportunity to interview the chosen students in an informal way trying to extract the information needed for this study. The intention is doing it in such a way that they are not conscious of being doing an interview with the aim that they are sincere and not being put under pressure. Such interviews were designed to be carried out taking into consideration students’ impressions, attitudes, likes/dislikes and fears. (See app. tab 1.1)

The questions were asked to the students but not in a systematic manner but in an informal way trying to make them feel comfortable as in a daily conversation. Teachers
were also interviewed due to the central role they play in the teaching/learning process since their experience and impressions are key factors to take into account when dealing with the strategies used.

6.2.2. Questionnaires (Quantitative)

Another way to collect the information required to complete this study is the use of questionnaires so as to obtain other kind of knowledge about the teaching/learning process. Working differently to the previous step to collect data, all the students who are participating in CLIL and all the students in the other groups mentioned are the subjects of this task in order for them not to feel isolated or the ones interviewed pressed. The questionnaires were designed to be as concise and brief as possible including a combination of the possibilities available for this method; those which are limited to yes/no answers and those questions whose answers are classified into degrees of agreement or disagreement. (See app. tab. 1.2 & 1.3)

The questionnaires will provide us with additional information about the impression of students participating in CLIL and those who do not concerning the advantages and disadvantages of learning curriculum content through a foreign language and do it in your first language.

6.2.3. Other methods used of data collection

In addition to the previous methods used, more information has been tried to be extracted from students aiming at the results obtained when they are asked to reproduce curricular content that they are supposed to have previously learnt. In other words, a different task has been proposed to the students selected before for the interviews in order to establish a comparison and study the achievements and failures. This task consists of a test in which students had to show the knowledge that they have acquired in the subjects which are integrated in CLIL, that is to say, the selection of students participating in European sections and those who are not, were given a test that they had to complete simply by answering some concrete questions about historical facts previously studied in Social Sciences. The special feature is that they were asked to answer in Spanish, their native language. This way, regarding curricular content both groups of students should be under equal conditions and the use of the first language does not suppose a difficulty for any of them. The learners were expected to show all the knowledge they acquired about particular points. (See app. tab. 1.4.)

Similarly, another task has been designed to show the improvement or not of English and the students were asked to write a story in English following some patterns. This way, the level of English language is assessed.

Apart from these methods, as it has been said from the beginning, the present study is carried out basing some aspects on my own experience as an English teacher in CLIL, therefore, it must be mentioned that one of the methods of data collection considered as the basis is classroom observation. Through direct observation in class, we can be aware of the feelings produced on learners every part of the lessons designed as well as the teacher and mates’ attitude, the materials, activities, etc. Moreover, spoken interaction in whole class discussions is closely analysed because we can compare
features of the teachers’ discourse with his/her students’ production. For this reason, this aspect is considered as an essential requirement if we want to reach success.

To analyse all the data collected, note-taking was the tool used due to personal preference; all the interviews were carried out with no recording not to cause them to feel self-conscious and uncomfortable. Some note-taking was made when a particular aspect was remarkable. The same happened with the tests proposed and questionnaires which were analysed with no use of special devices, only by the teachers making some notes of the points which were worthwhile emphasizing.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we will focus on showing the results which achieved from the analysis done on the methodological field of CLIL, specifically on teaching and learning strategies. The goal of this paper and the methods used to be aware of those aspects that work successfully and those which do not, is to achieve the best way to reach success in such a beneficial programme for our students. It cannot be denied that more and more educational centres are including CLIL in their programmes and more and more students, families and teachers are interested in participating in it; but sometimes the results are not the expected ones and failure is evidence. For this reason, I have tried to delve into those aspects which could be the cause of not getting our objective. Obviously, CLIL offers an ideal combination of factors which are supposed to be the basis for a successful formation.

![A curricular framework for CLIL (Zydatiβ 2007, 16)](image)

This is what we aim to achieve, however when the preparation of students, their impressions as well as the teachers’ ones are the factors taken into account, we must pay attention to the difficulties found during the process. Therefore, in full awareness of the responsibility that a teacher has, we are fighting for solving them and thanks to the direct observation and the methods used (interviews, questionnaires…) to collect all the data needed, it has been possible to focus on the strong and weak points of CLIL programme.

7.1. Interviews results

Taking the interviews as the starting point, it can be assumed the teaching and learning strategies which are working properly and those which are required to be improved. In a similar way, the role of teachers is also questioned, so some clues are provided with the answers obtained. It can be observed that low average and average
students in CLIL feel, on some occasions, uncertainty and insecurity about the curricular content that they are learning. They admit to feel some anxiety when a new unit is coming until the activities designed by the teacher are done (which are said to be the key to get relaxed and clarify the possible doubts). Here, it can be seen two extracts from the interviews of the most significant aspects remarked:

Extract 1 (average student):

Teacher:… What do you think of studying Social Sciences in English?
Student: I was expecting that the teacher was going to translate but she didn´t.
Teacher: And how do you feel about this?
Student: I have become more accustomed to these lessons but sometimes I easily distracted because this class takes an extra effort.
Teacher: And what do you do when it happens?
Student: I try to get involved into the class again but I get relaxed because when the teacher finishes the theory, she always prepares very funny activities and worksheets that help us to understand the unit and she usually tries to explain the unit using pictures.
Teacher: What about Art?
Student: It is easier because there is not so much theory to study and the classes are more dynamic.
Teacher: Do you think that you have improved your English?
Student: I think so, I think that I speak English better than my friends who are not in this programme.

Extract 2 (low-average student):

Teacher:… What do you think of studying Social Sciences in English?
Student: I don´t understand many things.
Teacher: And how do you feel about this?
Student: I don´t like these classes because I feel nervous and I don´t understand what the teacher and my mates are saying.
Teacher: And what do you do when it happens?
Student: I ask my mates for help but I start to understand when the teacher uses pictures and mimics to explain some things. I like some activities that we do.
Teacher: What about Art?
Student: It is easier because the teacher does not have to explain for a long period of time and I can ask my mates.
Teacher: Do you think that you have improved your English?
Student: I think so.

Having analysed the interviews, it can be concluded that when students do not have a very good level of English, they do not feel comfortable in CLIL subjects due to the fear they feel to be exposed to a foreign language as the medium of instruction to learn curricular content. However, as a really positive aspect, all the students emphasize the methods used by the teachers to ensure comprehension and get the students to be involved in the subjects and the programme in general through activities especially designed to guarantee a comfortable learning environment for all the learners and boost the students’ motivation in class and beyond.

7.2. Questionnaires results

With regard to the questionnaires used in this study, similar weaknesses and strengths have been the subject of their answers. The following questionnaire focused on the students’ impressions about the benefits or not of this programme and their
feelings about their own progress. Students chose their answers using a five-item Likert scale (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = Average, 4 = good, 5 = very good).

As it can be observed in the chart, the answers between students participating in CLIL and those who are not, are quite uneven showing a difference of at least one point in every aspect. When they are asked about the level of English (E.L), CLIL students consider it as quite good in contrast to non-CLIL ones who chose somewhere between poor and average. The question related to the knowledge they have about Social Sciences and Art (Co) establish a new difference between both groups whose answers show that it is on average in CLIL students and good in non-CLIL students. Concerning their own progress (Pr), it is reflected a very positive view on CLIL students who almost reach the maximum point scoring their progress as pretty good whereas non-CLIL ones consider to be on average. When the materials used (Mat) and the activities prepared (Act) are analysed, the CLIL students have a clear answer; they are very good, giving them the highest score. Once again, the contrast is obvious because non-CLIL students do not remark these aspects holding that they are on average.

The previous results could be assessed as a parallel reality lived by two groups of students with the same characteristics but the exception of being part of the CLIL programme which encourages and motivates learners and teachers to learn curricular content through a second language. The only remarkable aspect for CLIL students which must be studied and solved is the idea that they have about the content they are learning in the subjects involved in the programme which could be considered as insufficient. The other aspects are assessed in a very positive way gaining special significance the work of teachers to assist and support learners with interesting material and activities which engage them in the programme and that will be detailed later.

In addition to the previous questionnaire, the learners were provided with another one in which they were required to answer only in an affirmative or negative way obtaining the following results:

**CLIL students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>YES answers</th>
<th>NO answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to express yourself in English?</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to understand content in English?</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you improved your English?</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you feel able to tell to your mates the last unit studied in Social Sciences in Spanish? 65% 35%
Have you learnt cultural aspects about other countries? 90% 10%
Do you feel more confident and resourceful after this academic year? 83% 17%
Do you feel better prepared for further studies in Spain or in the wider world? 78% 22%

Non-CLIL students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>YES answers</th>
<th>NO answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to express yourself in English?</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to understand content in English?</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you improved your English?</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to tell to your mates the last unit studied in Social Sciences in Spanish?</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you learnt cultural aspects about other countries?</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel more confident and resourceful after this academic year?</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel better prepared for further studies in Spain or in the wider world?</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These percentages show big differences between these two groups of students about their own skills and those capacities that they feel to have developed and improved. Analysing CLIL students’ answers, it can be noted that the points related to content and the subsequent understanding of it through the second language are the ones with the lowest percentage of affirmative answers which are in close connection with a lack of confidence in this aspect. In contrast, the highest percentage found in affirmative answers when non-CLIL students’ answers is the one referring to content in Spanish; this fact shows one of the most controversial aspects of CLIL programme.

Concerning the highest percentage found in affirmative answers in CLIL students, those related to the second language as the improvement of it, the capacity to express in it and the learning of cultural aspects are the most valuable for them. These same aspects obtain the lowest percentage in affirmative answers for non-CLIL students. With the support of these questionnaires, it can be noticed the deficiencies and positive points offered by each educational programme and their consequences.

7.3. Other methods used results

As the methods previously exposed were aimed at being cognizant of the most psychological side of participating in CLIL and the variety of feelings emerging as a consequence of the programme in which they are immersed, we designed a different task to be aware of the students’ skills more objectively. In order to do this, the learners belonging to both groups (CLIL students and non-CLIL students) were proposed to fulfil some test designed for this purpose. In this part, the skill playing a central role was writing; through this skill the students are asked to show the comprehension and the content acquired about some of the subjects involved in the programme, in this case...
Social Sciences. The choice was made taking into consideration the information extracted from the interviews and questionnaires which made clear that the challenge was to feel completely comfortable with the fact of learning curricular content through English especially in Social Sciences, whose theoretical part is more extensive than in Art.

To carry out this task, a test about the units already studied in the subject has been designed with the purpose of checking the knowledge that CLIL students have acquired in comparison with non-CLIL students who are supposed to be learning this content in a traditional way. As it can be previously seen, the test consists of three different parts in which students must show their knowledge about specific questions; in the first part, a difference between two terms must be explained and placed them into the appropriate Prehistoric time. With this question, it is intended the students to note the differences existing and explaining them; this way, they are required to show their command of the concepts as well as the ability to express them properly.

Studying this part of the test, we realise that CLIL students’ answers reflect some difficulties to translate and express what they have learnt in English into their native language. Such specific terms led them to be confused when they have to express it into a different language although it seems that they know the concepts. As a curious fact, I would like to comment on the use of some English words in their answers on the part of some students when they appear not to find their equivalent in Spanish. This makes us aware of a gap existing between the second and native language as well as the knowledge of content and language.

In the second part, the learners are facing a more extensive question about the Prehistory age in which they must classify the key stages according to the material used to make their tools. This led them to use their writing skills to develop their knowledge in a more general and autonomous way. Here, more confidence can be noticed and they do not show special problems to develop their knowledge since they are working more independently but it would be interesting to remark the use of English words while writing in Spanish to name some tools. It can be considered as a unconscious fact since previously or later they use the term in Spanish.

Finally, the last part is devoted to define some concepts such as Neolithic Revolution, city-state or polytheist in their own words. This time, the answers are reduced since the concepts are more specific and it can result in special difficulties. Here, CLIL students show some hitches when they have to define such concrete concepts, they appear not to have a clear idea to be able to explain them except for the last one. However, it must be added that non-CLIL students present the same difficulties in this part not being precise and concrete with their definitions.

If the writing task in English is evaluated, most CLIL students show a great command of English. Their writings present more independence, fluency and comfort than their mates’. When they are given the chance to expose what they know, they feel proud of their improvement and their command of the second language and advantage with respect to most non-CLIL students is evident. Fluency, a wide range of vocabulary, syntax and creativity are the key features which differentiate most of the writings presented by CLIL and non-CLIL students. Even when they were doing the activity, CLIL students show more motivation.
Taking the results obtained from these methods as the basis for this study, it can be concluded that some aspects of CLIL programme must be reinforced or even changed due to the uncertainty and anxiety caused on learners and possible gaps existing on curricular content. Besides interviews, questionnaires and tests, the direct observation during the classes can identify possible difficulties which cannot be seen through the other methods. According to this, it must be stated that such observation has confirmed what we knew; the attitudes shown were the same as those reflected in interviews, questionnaires, etc. The only additional aspect which could be considered as new is the oral skills, especially production, which have been assessed by being a witness in class.

Before introducing features and strategies, it is important to pay attention to create quality learning environments; if the quality of teaching wants to be improved, the most effective place to do so is in the context of a classroom lesson. “The challenge now becomes that of identifying the kinds of changes that will improve student learning.” (Stigler, J & Hibbert, J. 1999).

Taking into account the following paradox “in subject matter learning we overlook the role of language as a medium of learning, and in language learning we overlook the fact that content is being communicated.” (Mohan, 1986), we have a hard work to do to achieve our goal.

7.4. Core Features of CLIL

To familiarize with the context in question, the first thing to do was to concentrate on the core features of CLIL in order to be aware of the possible necessities derived from the characteristics of such programme. It would be interesting starting by referring to the multiple focus involved in CLIL; it implies the integration of several subjects. The combination of language and content and the difficulties involved supposes supporting content learning in language classes as well as language learning in content classes. Similarly, careful organization of learning cannot be forgotten and an interesting way to do this is through cross-curricular themes and projects.

With the aim of achieving good results, another aspect to take into account is to create a safe and enriching learning environment. Some key elements to get this goal are concentrating on building student confidence to face the combination of content and language; the use of routine activities as well as authentic materials and environments can be a good choice. But it is important to remark the acceptance of errors as part of the learning process, emphasizing the benefits of them in such process.

As cited before, the term authenticity plays a primary role in this programme since the connection between learning and students’ lives increases motivation on the part of learners. In order to do this, current materials from the media can be used; this can allow learners to ask for the linguistic items they could help. The learning process in CLIL must be centred upon learners; that is, it is essential to achieve active learning. The main role must be played by students, not by teachers who now will act as facilitators. Learners communicate more than the teacher and peer and group working are favoured.

To close this section it is necessary to cite an essential concept in CLIL which is scaffolding. Students were provided with some kind of support; by building on learners’ existing knowledge, skills, experiences,... fostering creative and critical thinking and
encouraging students to take a risk and not just be in the safe side. Focusing on these features, the lessons were designed to meet all these requirements expecting to build the base to reach success focusing on the most important aspects of this programme.

7.5. Teaching Strategies

The teachers participating in CLIL face a different way of instruction; content and language are not two independent elements anymore, they are now interrelated. For this reason, the methodology used must be in accordance with the needs that students could have. To do this, a series of teaching strategies have been designed and decided trying to cover the possible gaps and taking as a reference theoretical foundations.

One of the first aspects that we put into practice was to promote active teaching, a concept which some traditional teachers had forgotten. So as to do this, the teacher had the function of “giving instructions clearly, accurately describing tasks and maintaining learners´ engagement in instructional tasks by maintaining task focus, pacing instruction appropriately and communicating their expectations for students´ success.” (Adapted from Navés et al. 2002)

Another function to be mentioned is presenting new information in a particular way to avoid misunderstanding or even the lack of comprehension as we have been able to see in the results obtained from the methods carried out. This information must be presented by demonstrating, using visuals, rephrasing, outlining, scaffolding, building redundancy and linking new information to learners’ previous knowledge. As it has been proved, one of the weakest points of this programme is the exposure of learners to curricular content through a second language; that is why, the techniques used by teachers are especially cared and examined to benefit learners as much as possible and to adapt to this new methodology required.

It must be remarked the importance of language and content teachers working together to establish the appropriate link in such a complicated process of teaching. In this study, I would like to mention the types of activities which have been the basis of this process.

- **Warming-up activities.** (Brainstorm ideas/knowledge about a particular topic, games to extract previous knowledge about something that will be studied, eliciting information about units that will be learnt, drawing pictures about what the teachers describe).
- **Word activation.** (Things they already know about X, 2 things they’d like to know about or learn more about, and 1 question related to the key concept or learning. Give students the key word/concept which will be addressed in the lesson, ask them to write a detail or descriptor with which they are already familiar that starts with each of the letters of the key word/concept)
- **How to exploit a text.** (Introduce a text presenting the topic that will be dealt familiarizing students with new concepts and lexis. Working with this text by eliciting information about this and accompanying it with pictures to support learners. Promote oral activities using the text as point of departure to talk about this topic)
- **Comprehension activities.** (These activities can be derived from a text or from a listening activity and are carried out by presenting them as skimming or
scanning or both. We also have the possibility of asking for the students to synthesize the information received.

- **How to deal with new vocabulary** (New lexis is mainly introduced by using visual images, pictures since it seems to make the students feel more confident. It can also be worked by matching concepts with pictures being accompanied with a short description).

- **How to promote oral activities**. (They can be regarded as the most difficult task, however, it constitutes the basis of this programme since oral skills have a high percentage of presence in these classes. Debates, descriptions, analysis of concepts and terms, arguing, expressing their opinions about a particular topic, narrations, expositions, explanations, presentations, instructions, argumentations and persuasions are an essential part of the lesson with the purpose of developing macrofunctions).

- **Turn-taking, conversational skills**. (These aspects are worked in the previous activities where teachers give them some guidelines to be appropriate when expressing. As said before, they are practiced in the multiple debates that are carried out as well as in argumentations, persuasions, etc).

In addition to these strategies to get the students involved in the lesson, we all know that one of the most important aspects is to make them feel comfortable and motivated. For this reason, all these activities are considered to be a key element in this innovative programme but we cannot forget that motivation can be reduced because of monotony, failure, boredom or simply with no apparent reason so teachers must be on the alert to avoid this problem. In order to do this, other kinds of strategies have been thought of and are in connection with the continuous learners’ encouragement to use FL in the classroom by:

- **Rewarding FL use** (Stimulating to continue using language offering them advantages depending on their own preferences)
- **Creating oral games** (Such as the broken telephone, theatre plays, trivial, etc.)
- **Using yellow and red cards to show when something is wrong or is right.**
- **Encouraging peer correction.**
- **Encouraging students’ learning autonomy** (They must feel that they are capable of working autonomously and this is achieved by enhancing their strengths)
- **Promoting pair/group work.** (Each unit includes a project which always has to be done in pairs or groups; this way team work is reinforced and they are better prepared for their professional future).

These are the strategies used in this study to ensure comprehension and learning as well as to motivate learners to participate in their own process of learning actively and autonomously. According to the outcomes got and the data collected from interviews and questionnaires, great results have been achieved with the support of the cited teaching strategies among other aspects. Moreover, it is really interesting to mention the recognition and gratitude of students for such well-designed activities, tasks and strategies which have helped them to be active participants of the class.

### 7.6. Learning Strategies

The role of learners is another indispensable element in the teaching/learning process to get the desired goal or, on the contrary, to fail. Similarly to teachers, students have a series of functions to participate in this process and maximise the
possible benefits which could be obtained in learning. Now, it is time to focus on these strategies which could be positive for students and support them in the process.

Extracted from www.thoughtfulclassroom.com by Bunda, J.

As explained before, this study is based on our own experience as teachers in CLIL but preceding the implementation of it by an in-depth research of the theoretical foundations and the strategies appearing in the chart were the ones applied. It is interesting to highlight some of the strategies used in relation to the skill which is being practiced:

1. **Strategies for reading:**
   - The **Visual Imagery Strategy** is a reading comprehension strategy for creating mental movies of narrative passages. Students visualize the scenery, characters, and action and describe the scenes to themselves.
   - The **Paraphrasing Strategy** is designed to help students focus on the most important information in a passage. Students read short passages of materials, identify the main idea and details, and rephrase the content in their own words.

2. **Strategies for writing:**
   - The **Sentence Writing Strategy** programme constitutes a strategy for recognizing and writing 14 sentence patterns with four types of sentences: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex.
   - The **Theme Writing Strategy** focuses on the fundamental skills associated with writing themes and provides learning sheets to accompany instruction.

3. **Strategies for studying & remembering information:**
   - The **Paired Associates Strategy** is designed to help students learn pairs of informational items, such as names and events, places and events, or names and accomplishments. Students identify pairs of items, create mnemonic devices, create study cards, and use the study cards to learn the information.
- The **LINCS Vocabulary Strategy** helps students learn the meaning of new vocabulary words using powerful memory-enhancement techniques. Strategy steps cue students to focus on critical elements of the concept; to use visual imagery, associations with prior knowledge, and key-word mnemonic devices to create a study card; and to study the card to enhance comprehension and recall of the concept.

4. **Strategies for improving assignment & test performance:**

- The **Test-Taking Strategy** is designed to be used while taking classroom tests. Students allocate time and priority to each section of the test, carefully read and focus on important elements in the test instructions, recall information by accessing mnemonic devices, systematically and quickly progress through a test, make well-informed guesses, check their work, and take control of the testing situation.

5. **Strategies for effectively interacting with others:**

- The **LEARN Strategy** was designed to enable students to work in teams to learn together. Each step promotes creative cooperation; students think together to generate ideas to help them learn.

6. **Strategies for motivation:**

- **Possible Selves** is designed to increase student motivation by having students examine their futures and think about goals that are important to them. Students think about and describe their hoped-for possible selves, expected possible selves, and feared possible selves. They set goals, create plans, and work toward their goals as part of this programme.

All the strategies mentioned above are essential in the learning process. The key element of reaching success when learning content, language or both is not only dependent on the role of the teacher and the strategies used to get closer to students, but learners must be instructed and encouraged to use those strategies which may allow them to achieve their aim easier. The strategies previously described were introduced to learners while studying the units; they discovered the benefits of them by doing the above activities. They were not said that they were going to learn clues to improve their learning, but they were exposed to them and taught inductively to make them aware in an autonomous way of how a simple image or song can help them to remember a historical fact. The main idea is that they indentify all the methods from which they could take maximum advantage with no previous knowledge of what they are being introduced to.

It is important to add that in this study there is an essential emphasis on the development of receptive skills on the part of learners; they have been allowed to respond in a wide variety of ways based on Navés et al, (2002):

- Non-verbal responses.
- Responding by doing.
- Demonstrating.
The emphasis is put on learners showing comprehension; sometimes they are not capable of expressing with their own words what they have learnt in spite of having done it. For this reason, and working step by step, other kinds of responses are available for them and equally appropriate. That is why, in the process of learning, cognitive abilities and processed such as comparing, inferring, drawing conclusions, identifying and finding similarities and differences, have been developed helping to mature learners and reinforcing their capacities. As a consequence, the study has been based on a combination of different types of learning which can result in more benefits for students participating in CLIL or not doing it. The project suggested:

- Collaborative learning. It is a method of teaching and learning in which students work together to investigate or explore a significant question or aspect introduced or to create a project. An example of this could be a group of students discussing about a particular topic and drawing conclusions. By doing it, they can share their strengths and reinforce their weaker skills, as well as developing interpersonal skills. This type of learning can lead them to improve their understanding of the subjects or topics worked. However, it must be taken into account that the learning environment must facilitate the process and in order to do this, students need to feel safe but also challenged, the groups must be small to allow every student to contribute and the task in question must be clearly defined not to cause uncertainty.

- Autonomous learning: It is also called student–centred learning or flexible learning (Taylor, 2000) and it is related to the change in focus in the classroom from the teacher to the student (or from the teaching to the learning). This is based on a constructivist theory of learning where each individual student constructs their own understanding based on their prior knowledge and current learning experiences (Kember, 1997). This way, the learner become responsible of his/her own learning by setting goals, monitoring his/her own progress and even evaluating his/ her success or failure.

- Self-directed learning: The learner possesses the ownership of learning (articulating learning gaps and setting goals), the extension of own learning (applying learning in new contexts and learning beyond the curriculum) as well as the management and monitoring of his/her own learning (exploring alternatives and making decisions, formulating questions and generating own inquiries, planning and managing workload and time and reflecting on his/her learning and using feedback to improve his/her schoolwork.) Extracted from: The ITC Connection (http://ictconnection.edumall.sg)

These types of learning have been the basis of the teaching/learning process always aiming at obtaining the best results and trying to assist and support learners by offering them new methods and strategies previously unknown.

7.7. The role of language teachers in CLIL

It has been previously stated that CLIL is an innovative programme which differs substantially from traditional methods in methodology, goals, the roles of learners and teachers, etc. This is the reason why so many aspects must be exhaustively studied and prepared before implementing this programme. Once the core
features and teaching and learning strategies have been subject of research and analysis, it is time to move on to deal with the role of language teachers.

It is widely known that CLIL implies the collaboration and close connection between content and language teachers because of integration of both factors in this programme and the search for acquiring knowledge (curricular content) through language. First of all, I would like to concentrate on the functions established for language teachers in this study. They must:

- Support content teachers.
- Assist students to know the language required to manipulate content from the other subjects.
- Introduce and teach the lexis which will be necessary for other subjects.
- Helps to develop learning skills.
- Work through cross-curricular themes and projects by introducing content into language classes, not simply learning language for language’s sake, but for concrete tasks.
- Content goals must be supported by language goals.
- Foster the development of creative and critical thinking by emphasizing the concepts of associating, comparing, defining, describing, predicting, observing, imaging, role-playing, separating and selecting among others.

These functions, which at first sight could be regarded as a logical part in the implementation of CLIL are found to be more complicated to carry out than previously thought. The reason is that multiple factors are involved in these functions and not all the teachers feel capable of being prepared for this since specific content knowledge is required in order to reinforce the teaching of such and a strict coordination between subject and language teachers should be necessary so as to be efficient. The difficulties found could be caused because of the traditional conception of language teachers devoting the time available only to specific language goals and the same with content teachers. Now, this idea must be changed and the relation of both figures must be and work as close as possible considering their subjects as a whole, but it must be admitted that this is not an easy task.

The teacher coordination was aimed at organizing interdisciplinary projects, developing common projects to introduce cross-curricular topics, developing intercultural skills and abilities, developing a general common linguistic competence, emphasizing collaborative work and the role of language teachers as assistants to coordinate all the subject teachers participating in the programme and helping them to prepare material, plan lessons and methodology. Once a week, all the teachers involved in CLIL have a meeting to discuss about the negative or weak points we find in the project and try to solve them by using strategies. In this moment it is time to express our impressions about the process of teaching and learning and the results that we are obtaining. In addition to this, the following week lessons are designed in order to be coordinated when teaching content and language items and guide our students. Language teachers must have a clear idea of the contents that are going to be worked on the subjects so as to prepare themselves with the appropriate information, if needed, and participate in the process. On the other side, subject teachers must express their deficiencies on the language field to teach the content in order to be assisted by language teachers. Both together must choose the most beneficial activities and tasks to ensure comprehension and achieve the learning of content and language as well as analyze the possible
difficulties that could appear and the most appropriate solutions. Moreover, they design the projects to be carried out by learners which, as explained before, will focus on cross-curricular topics and multiculturalism.

It is worthwhile adding that, as previously mentioned, we have been lucky to have the support of a language assistant who has been a key element to strength the role of teachers and that of learners. She has got involved in the project showing a great respect and interest in it and this feeling has led to enhance the motivation of the rest of participants. Her role is based on offering assistance to both teachers and students in aspects related to language. However, she has also contributed to encourage and improve many other aspects by suggesting new strategies, activities and even attitudes to get our learners to be successful in CLIL. After a deep reflection, the consensus reached was that the role of the language teacher must focus on a series of functions considered as essential in this process:

- Anticipate lexis, linguistic constructions and grammar that will be necessary to understand subjects.
- Promote students’ linguistics reflection.
- Promote oral expression by expositions, debates,…
- Teach students to summarise and identify the main ideas in texts providing them with some strategies.
- Develop writing skills.
- Develop communicative skills to deal with content area texts.
- Develop cognitive skills.
- Use FL contents related to foreign culture.

All these functions were regarded as crucial elements to achieve the goals expected; however, although the theory can be seen as logical and feasible, the practice involves more difficulties.

One of the foundations of CLIL methodology could be based on the development of oral skills and continuous practice of it; however, the classrooms ratio does not facilitate either the realization of as many oral activities as desired or the group works. This is due to the complexity of being in control of such a big group of students working together and the decrease of possibilities to practice oral skills if they are more and more students since they will have to share the time available for a lot of learners.

To conclude with this section, I would like to remark one of the most important features of CLIL and which could differentiate it from traditional teaching methods; it is the role of the teacher as a guide, as a facilitator, not as the instructor and only active element in a lesson. This fact enables students to become more independent and autonomous and develop their cognitive skills, what will lead them to transform the learning process by not being simple witnesses of their own learning, but the most active part in it.

7.8. Other strategies used to achieve the expected results.

It is not an easy task to decide which strategies are going to be always successful or which ones are absolutely inefficient. To start with, we should not forget that not all the groups of learners are similar and even not every student needs the same things as his/her mates, for this reason it would not be appropriate to state that a series of strategies are the ones that all teachers must use to reach success in CLIL.
On the contrary, every group must be analyzed taking into consideration the individual students’ needs and the needs as a whole in order to decide which strategies must be used according to their strong and weak points and be able to suit their needs. In this paper, we are going to concentrate on the strategies which have really been successful with the groups subjects of study:

- **Dramatization**: It has been used not only to present new material, but to check comprehension. It also gave us the chance to practice collaborative learning and be able to check, confirm and identify what they have learnt by working with others. The goal of this type of activities is not dramatization, but the physical representation of meaning. For example, in Social Sciences, it was used to dramatize Prehistoric times.

- **Routines**: They have been quite useful to establish a pattern of behaviour for the lesson, providing patterns of interaction with which students may become familiar. We put into practice this strategy by beginning each lesson remarking a concept previously studied in the subjects implied and explaining in their own words what they remembered about it.

- **Visual aids**: This strategy is one of the most commonly used and in this case, it has been used achieving great success; in fact, this is the best scored by students. This is useful not only to check students’ comprehension but to facilitate the understanding and learning of new concepts or facts. For example, a project designed in Social Sciences was the elaboration of a comic representing the Prehistoric times by using drawings and the most important linguistic items of the unit in order to reinforce content and lexis. Moreover, visual aids were also used as part of the explanation of some concepts which were supposed to be more likely to cause misunderstanding or difficulties for learners. The teachers used posters, pictures, drawings and even films or documentaries to support the explanation.

- **Three-stage lessons**: The lessons have been divided into three parts; the first one was devoted to revise the content and language learnt in the previous lessons, later new vocabulary and content was introduced and in the last part of the lesson we devoted some time to revise and reinforce the content and language presented in this lesson.

These four strategies can be named as the most successful used in our groups; not only for the results obtained, but also due to the enhancement of motivation observed in students when they were carried out. They felt more optimistic and participative when these strategies were present in the lesson and their attitude was completely positive. Focusing on language, language teachers were also conscious of the need of using strategies to reinforce this part. By observing in class and analyzing theory (cf. Dalton-Puffer, 2007), there are language competencies which are developed more than others and participate in the learning process positively as shown below:
Taking this into consideration, the competencies on the left would be reinforced and those on the right would have to be worked on harder emphasizing the development of writing skills by proposing writing production activities, paying special attention on pronunciation when doing oral activities and introducing informal language.

To conclude with this part, I would like to comment on a noteworthy point mentioned by students in their interviews and questionnaires; it is the material used. This aspect has been very much appreciated because it enables them to acquire the necessary understanding to continue being immersed in the process even when there are some difficulties with the language. They express that this material normally solves the existing problems and help them to feel more motivated and gain confidence about the content that they are learning. It is remarked that in spite of finding some hitches, the teachers show a great interest in the preparation of lessons and this is transmitted to them.

8. Conclusions

The fact that Spain finds itself in the penultimate position in the ranking of EU countries in terms of second language knowledge, a figure offered by the latest demolinguistic reports of the continent (Council of Europe, 2005; Grin, 2002), has wounded the credibility of the educational system and was seen as a real threat to future growth and development. As a result, authorities have started to focus on the promotion of L2 competences as vital for modernization and prosperity; a rationale that has already fostered aggressive and successful language planning and educational policies in other regions both within and beyond the European borders, such as Finland or Singapore. The ideal envisaged, in line with the underpinnings of Europeism, is to make students move beyond national characters and incorporate a person who interprets language diversity as no threat to internal cohesion.

The study carried out has allowed us to be aware of the necessity of updating our teaching methods and the changes involved in the process. What cannot be denied is the need for students to be in contact and learn foreign languages not in an isolated way, but using them as the medium of instruction as it is the case of Content and Language Integrated Learning. Obviously, it is not an easy task as it has been shown in the present Action Research, but the collaboration and cooperation among teachers, students, parents and institutions can facilitate and ensure the achievement of the goals proposed.

Focusing on the aims got, it should be mentioned that the time spent in this project, the methods and strategies used, the role of teachers, the activities proposed and material designed have brought about an increase in the learners’ autonomy; a really valuable factor in teaching and learning. In addition to this, the learners have been introduced
and exposed to *multiculturalism* by doing relevant projects with the aim of getting them closer to an unknown world as well as enriching their culture and taking advantage of it. Second *language proficiency* is another aspect which is worthwhile remarking since the constant use of it both producing and receiving it has led to a notable improvement of the command of the second language; this fact enhances the students’ *motivation* since they are aware of their own advances and feel prepared to continue working.

*Content* is one of the factors which requires more attention since some weaknesses have been observed and new strategies must be included in order to reinforce the acquisition of it. The students show some uncertainty with regard to this aspect since they do not consider having a strong command of it until it is worked using visual aids, group work activities and materials especially designed for CLIL.

CLIL offers more positive than negative aspects and the benefits obtained both by teachers and learners are so, if doing it properly, that it is worth trying it. That is why, it is interesting to include a plan of action in this paper which focuses on the future activities, tasks, objectives, time and people involved in future lessons having in mind the strengths and weaknesses observed in the present study. A plan of action is designed to describe the way in which the group will use its strategies to meet its objectives; it allows us to understand what is and is not possible for the organization to do, to be sure that we do not overlook any details, to save time, energy and resources and to increase the chances that people will do what need to be done.

### Short-term plan of action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>TIME REQUIRED</th>
<th>PEOPLE INVOLVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September-December, 2014</td>
<td>Staff meeting</td>
<td>Revision and completion of the plan of action.</td>
<td>One hour a week if no unforeseen events.</td>
<td>Language teacher, subject teacher, coordinator of CLIL and language assistant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2014</td>
<td>Research tasks</td>
<td>State of the art research. Identification and analysis of existing resources and models.</td>
<td>Time needed (one month)</td>
<td>CLIL team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September-December 2014</td>
<td>Development and preparation of CLIL.</td>
<td>Planning sessions on cooperation. Designing particular tasks and projects for this month.</td>
<td>Time needed</td>
<td>CLIL team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2014</td>
<td>Staff meeting</td>
<td>Analyzing results obtained in tasks, projects and tests.</td>
<td>One hour</td>
<td>CLIL team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October-December</td>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>Analyzing results and exposing remarkable</td>
<td>One hour</td>
<td>CLIL teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2014</td>
<td>Central workshop: Introduction of new resources (media) and methods. (linguistic exchange)</td>
<td>Three days</td>
<td>CLIL team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2014</td>
<td>Staff meeting Analizing results and impressions about new factors introduced.</td>
<td>One hour</td>
<td>CLIL team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2014</td>
<td>Evaluation of methods and resources. Evaluating the resources and materials used as well as the strategies to know the most or least suitable to suit the students’ needs.</td>
<td>Two hours</td>
<td>CLIL team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my experience as a language teacher participating in a CLIL team, the plan of action would be elaborated as the one shown above. Staff meetings are completely necessary to be highly coordinated since if this principle is broken, CLIL is not likely to work successfully. The combination of language and content means that if both factors are not closely linked, the whole will be weakened. The same happens if students and their opinions are not included in the exhaustive study which is being carried out; they are a vital part of this programme and consequently of the teaching/learning process, for this reason they must be listened to with special attention as it has been done in this research if the difficulties want to be solved.

The materials, tasks and projects are other elements that cannot be forgotten; if we remember the results obtained in the interviews and questionnaires done to the learners, they emphasize the excellent preparation considering them as a vital support. That is why, they must be carefully designed and in coordination with subject and language teachers in order to avoid gaps.

To conclude with this paper, I would like to comment on the especial interest on the part of teachers participating in CLIL, despite the difficulties involved, as well as the positive attitude shown by learners. A hard work is required to find the key to always find success but if professionals stay in the path they are on, learners will be likely to note great progress in relation to their formation.

As previously stated, this paper has been based on my own experience as a teacher, but it must be added that it has also been the result of a previous research on theoretical foundations and studies carried out by reputable linguists.
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APPENDIX

Tab. 1.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do you feel when it is Social Science’s time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. And when it is Art’s time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What differences can you find regarding your attitude and feelings between Social Science lessons and Spanish language lessons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In which lessons do you feel more comfortable? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Which lessons are your favourite ones? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel nervous before or during any lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Which activities are your favourite ones? Why? In which lessons do you practise them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If you had to participate in a contest related to one subject, which subject would you choose?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. In your opinion, in which subject do you deserve the highest mark?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What would you like to do better in class?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 1.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider your level of English?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider your knowledge in Social Sciences and Art?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider the help given to progress in CLIL/class?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider the materials used?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider the preparation in Social Sciences and Art in comparison to your mates who are not in CLIL or viceversa?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider your progress?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you consider the preparation of activities in class?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tab. 1.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to express yourself in English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to understand content in English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you improved your English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel able to tell to your mates the last unit studied in Social Sciences in Spanish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you learnt cultural aspects about other countries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel more confident and resourceful after this academic year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel better prepared for further studies in Spain or in the wider world?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 1.4.

**Test**

1. Explica que diferencia hay entre la economía productora y la economía cazadora-recolectora. ¿A qué periodo de la Prehistoria corresponde cada una?

2. Enumera las tres principales etapas de la Prehistoria según el material con el que fabricaban sus herramientas, indicando su cronología aproximada.

3. Define los siguientes conceptos con tus palabras:
   - Revolución Neolítica:
   - Ciudad-Estado:
   - Politeísta: