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**CLIL ASSESSMENT: A
review of the literature on
assessing Language in
Content and Language
Integrated Learning**

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Abstract

CLIL assessment is currently one of the most controversial debates due to the lack of guidelines and official regulations in this area. In fact, research on this topic is still in its early stages. Although new approaches are emerging, there are still a number of issues and gaps which need to be addressed urgently. Therefore, the present CLIL assessment review is thus conducted to address the main challenges of assessment, in the hope that CLIL will continue moving forward from theory to practice. Accordingly, this paper is divided into five sections, guided from the most general to the most specific aspects. Initially, the key features of CLIL and assessment will be described. Subsequently, considering the previous sections, CLIL assessment will be reviewed from its main objectives to the current challenges. To conclude, the imminent needs of this area will be explored and a list of guidelines will be provided.

Key Words: Applied linguistics, CLIL, dual focus, evaluation, formative assessment.

Resumen

La evaluación AICLE es actualmente uno de los debates más controvertidos debido a la falta de directrices y regulaciones oficiales. De hecho, la investigación en este tema aún se encuentra en sus inicios. Aunque se están presentando nuevas aproximaciones, todavía existen diversas cuestiones y deficiencias que deben abordarse con urgencia. Por ende, la presente revisión de AICLE se lleva a cabo para abordar los principales desafíos de la evaluación, con la esperanza de que AICLE continúe avanzando de la teoría a la práctica. En consecuencia, este documento se divide en cinco secciones, desde los aspectos más generales hasta los más concretos. Inicialmente, se describirán las principales características de AICLE y la evaluación. Posteriormente, considerando las secciones anteriores, la evaluación de AICLE se revisará desde sus principales objetivos hasta los desafíos actuales. Para concluir, se estudiarán las necesidades inminentes de la evaluación y se ofrecerá una lista de directrices.

Palabras clave: Lingüística aplicada, AICLE, enfoque dual, evaluación, evaluación formativa.

1. INTRODUCTION

The CLIL approach has been essential to bilingual education at dealing with the integration of both content and language. Throughout the last decades, advocates and detractors have commented on the most relevant aspects, models and contexts in CLIL, providing diverse controversial debates. From this reality, “the pendulum effect” (Pérez Cañado, 2020) emerged. What this fact has demonstrated is the continuum character of CLIL, which has been, since its origins, providing new ideas, overcoming the possible shortcomings and promoting an effective and functional approach to reach communicative and competent students in the learning of both content and language.

The dual focus of CLIL has supposed a real challenge at assessing language and content. Doubts dealing with aspects such as when assessing language or when assessing content, the weight given to each part of this dual focus, the assessment criteria, how proficiency could affect the assessing of language are just some examples of how challenging assessment in CLIL is nowadays (Otto, 2019).

Not only doubts have emerged because of the integration of both content and language, but also because of the lack of official regulations, gaps and the absence of specific guidelines. For that reason, this review of the literature is intended to address the main characteristics of CLIL, assessment and finally, CLIL assessment and its present difficulties. Hence, an overview will be conducted and a final proposal of guidelines will be suggested.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 CLIL

2.1.1 *What is CLIL?*

In general terms “Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (Coyle et al., 2010, p.1). Nevertheless, “definitions of CLIL tend to depend on the emphasis that practitioners give to either content or language, or both” (Hemmi & Banegas, 2021, p.5). This CLIL term refers to a wide range of teaching educational models, such as immersion or bilingual education. CLIL thus has been referred to as an “umbrella term” (Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols, 2008, p.12). The flexibility of this approach not only resides in all its possible educational practices but it also allows the adaptation of this content-driven teaching and learning to the different educational realities in diverse European countries and contexts (Eurydice, 2006).

This functional approach, which stems from communicative methodologies (Graddol, 2006), is intended to avoid the mere repetition of concepts with no motivation for the learner and the absence of the development of learners' abilities addressing the resolution of linguistic problems. Its purpose is not to develop native-like learners, but to reach a functional competence by the development of active, intercultural and cooperative learners (Pérez Cañado, 2012; Muñoz, 2002). The aim of CLIL is, therefore, to produce communicative and competent students throughout their exposure to an additional language, which "is often a learner's 'foreign language', but which may also be a second language or some form of heritage or community language" (Coyle et al., 2010, p.1), used as the main tool to teach non-language subjects. Hence, CLIL must not be considered as just one subject but instead, it must be seen as a crucial tool to develop a functional learning in students and avoid the most traditional, repetitive, passive and monotonous teaching approaches. According to the European Commission's White Paper on *Teaching and Learning. Towards the Learning Society* (1995), this approach is, therefore, indispensable to develop European multilingual citizens able to talk in two different languages apart from their mother tongue, following the *I+2 principle* (Council of Europe, 2007). On the whole, CLIL prepares learners to be ready for the real contexts and challenges as "cross-curricular themes and projects usually require social, affective, cognitive and personal interactions with one's surroundings" (Mehisto et al., 2008, p.116) as well as to be in a close and contact with other cultures, while they actively practise and improve their language and intercultural skills.

2.1.2 *Origin and theoretical basis*

CLIL was developed the first time in 1994 by David Marsh, the CLIL term has been gaining force since the 90s up to today. After the term was coined, between 1995 and 2006, it began to appear in papers elaborated by the European Commission, such as Eurydice (2006) or European Commission (2005), "to promote CLIL as a conducive approach to attain their multilingual policy" (Hemmi & Banegas, 2021, p. 1). Then, it was implemented as a pilot project in secondary schools in Austria, Italy, and Spain by "teaching one or two school subjects, or units within a subject, through an additional language" (Hemmi & Banegas, 2021, pp. 1-2). Nevertheless, the origin of bilingualism and multilingualism has been stated to have existed since Ancient Rome where the first multilingual societies were created (Coyle et al., 2010). Linked to this idea, researchers have contrasted that there have been instances of

teaching language through content for 5,000 years (Tejada Molina, Pérez Cañado, and Luque Agulló, 2005; Mehisto et al., 2008).

Concerning the origins of the CLIL approach, the term can be seen as a descendent of French immersion education in Canada, North American immersion and bilingual education programs, as well as of European international schools (Pérez Cañado, 2012; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008). Concerning Canada and the USA, both of them have had a “tradition of bilingual education” since the late 1950s, due to the implementation of French immersion “in the English-speaking community in Montréal” whose attempt was to establish a linguistic understanding in a mostly French-speaking community (Pérez Cañado, 2012, p. 317). As described, CLIL first attempt to introduce an additional language in the learning and teaching of both content and language (Coyle et al., 2010), has resulted in its implementation in different countries through different curricular models.

CLIL has not only been characterised by the different curricular models in which it can be implemented, but also by its flexibility concerning different approaches, practice models and its adaptation to diverse learning contexts. Appealing to the theoretical basis which laid the foundations and influenced the CLIL approach, theories have been proposed throughout history from the socio-linguistic perspectives up to the systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 2014).

Likewise, CLIL has been influenced by Bruner, Piaget and Vygotsky, who developed their theories around a socio-linguistic and constructivist perspective of learning. Other perspectives emerged dealing with multiple intelligences, represented by Gardner and the theories of integration and learner autonomy, developed by Ackerman and Holec, respectively. The perspective of language awareness was defended by Hawkins and the development of language-learning strategies was proposed by Oxford. These founding fathers were essential to develop a balance between the learning theories and the social environment, taking into consideration the second language acquisition (SLA) theories and their relation with both content learning and language learning (Coyle et al., 2010).

Insofar as it has been referred to, the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), has contributed to CLIL by introducing learning through collaboration. This perspective also included the introduction of the term ‘zone of proximal development’ (ZPD) which was defined by his founding father (Vygotsky, 1978) as the distance between the abilities acquired by the learner and those potential abilities that the learner can reach through the guidance from a knowledgeable adult or peer, working by this way, in collaboration.

Hence, this theory explains the relation of ZPD with the scaffolding of content through the use of language in CLIL (Hemmi & Banegas, 2021; Mahan, 2020). Accordingly, the term ‘scaffolding’ was introduced by Bruner in the 1970s. It has been described as a metaphor for Vygotsky’s ZPD by some researchers, while others have preferred to consider it as a tool to use in the classroom, appealing to a constructivist perspective. Notwithstanding researchers’ biased opinions, there is a general agreement towards the purpose of scaffolding, which is the student autonomy, “realised through tailored support from a teacher or more capable peer and involves the responsibility of learning slowly transferring from the teacher to the student” (Mahan, 2020, p. 2). In CLIL, the ZPD and the scaffolding are essential concepts to know the learners’ stage of learning and how to help them to improve their learning skills.

Similarly, Bloom’s taxonomy has been related to CLIL to enhance thinking and problem-solving skills (Coyle et al., 2010). Thus, in CLIL practices, learners move from lower-order thinking skills (remembering, understanding and applying) to higher-order skills (analysing, evaluating and creating), (Coyle et al., 2010; Hemmi & Banegas, 2021; Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Moreover, Bloom’s taxonomy, whose origin dates back to 1956, was updated later on by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001), classifying different types of thinking associated with knowledge (Coyle et al., 2010). The update of Bloom’s taxonomy, from 1956 to 2001 (Table 1), involved the adaptation of *knowledge* to *remembering*, promoting the process of *creation* up to the top of HOTS and adapting *evaluation* to the old position of *synthesis* in the taxonomy (Coyle et al., 2010; Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001). It is also important to highlight that the different types of thinking are interrelated and that LOTS and HOTS are necessary for the development of the learner’s cognitive skills.

Table 1: *Bloom’s Taxonomy*

The Cognitive Process Dimension	
<i>Lower-order processing:</i>	
Remembering	Such as producing appropriate information from memory, e.g. • Recognizing • Recalling
Understanding	Meaning-making from experiences and resources, e.g. • Interpreting • Exemplifying • Classifying • Summarizing • Inferring • Comparing • Explaining
Applying	Such as using a procedure, e.g. • Executing • Implementing
<i>Higher-order processing:</i>	
Analysing	Breaking down a concept into its parts and explaining how the parts relate to the whole, e.g. • Differentiating • Organizing • Attributing
Evaluating	Making critical judgements, e.g. • Checking • Critiquing
Creating	Putting together pieces to construct something new or recognizing components of a new structure, e.g. • Generating • Planning • Producing

(Coyle et al., (2010); adapted from Anderson & Krathwohl, (2001)).

Apart from these theories and perspectives, the Communicative Approach or Communicative language teaching (CLT) has also contributed to CLIL. Wilkins (1972) developed a functional and communicative definition of language and has contributed to help learners to reach an awareness of language regarding their language learning needs. Furthermore, the theory of second language acquisition proposed by Krashen (1981), which was based on the idea that learning and acquisition were different from each other as SLA was a result of an innate process, achieved similarly as the L1. Both theories are relevant in CLIL since Krashen's and Wilkins' perspectives abandon the traditional method focused on form and on memorising rules and instead, they encourage learning by interaction, providing learners with an effective input, one of the key features of the CLIL approach, which is the learning by practice and interaction, avoiding the traditional and passive teaching and learning method.

Finishing this overview dealing with the theoretical basis from the constructivist and sociolinguistic theories to the most functional ones, it is essential to mention the systemic functional linguistics (SFL) theory, developed by Halliday (2014), which consist in the understanding of how language works in different and real contexts (Halliday, 2014; Hemmi & Banegas, 2021). In CLIL, this theory plays an important role to help learners to develop their cognitive skills.

2.1.3 *The three key touchstones in CLIL*

As it has been previously described, CLIL is not only based on teaching an additional language. It is, however, based on teaching and learning both content and language through the use of an additional language (Coyle et al., 2010). From this definition under the CLIL umbrella stems the nature of a dual focussed approach. And thus to reach that goal, content, language and learning skills must be integrated into the teaching planning of this approach.

To integrate the aforementioned components, “three key touchstones” (Bower et al., 2020, Coyle et al., 2010) must be considered in the teaching planning in CLIL: the 4Cs Framework, the Language Triptych and the seven pedagogic principles.

According to Coyle (2010), the 4Cs Framework of CLIL (content, communication, cognition, and culture), is important to understand how CLIL works. Therefore, the 4Cs comprise:

- Content, defined as the learners’ active participation in the process of learning by the creation and understanding of their own knowledge and development of skills. This distinguishes CLIL from other traditional and passive learning practices.

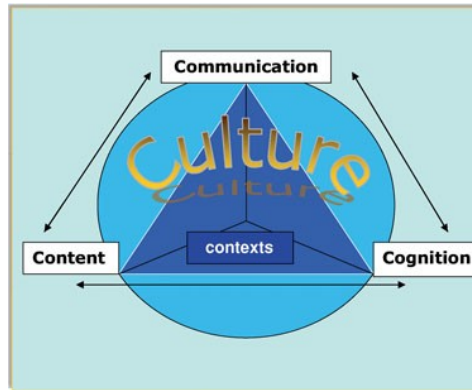
- Communication, described as the learning of content through the use of language, while that language is being learnt. For that purpose, “this language needs to be transparent and accessible” (Coyle et al., 2010).

- Cognition, which consists of the learner’s development of their cognitive or thinking processes to allow learners to make their own interpretation of content. (Coyle et al, 2010)

- Culture is related to the learning of an additional language in which it allows the learners to reach intercultural awareness, such as the knowledge about other cultures, to be tolerant, to avoid prejudices, and to become mediators between both cultures, their own and the additional language speaking countries culture.

Even though, these components have been adapted several times according to different researchers (Hemmi & Banegas, 2021). According to Mehisto et al. proposal (2008), *community* is intended to replace *culture* in Coyle (2010) –see figure 1-. According to Hemmi & Banegas (2021), both components, *community* and *culture*, are related in that “being part of the community requires one to have an awareness of intercultural understanding and sense of belonging to the world” (p.8). Hence, Hemmi & Banegas (2021) model includes both *community* and *culture*, being their adaptation based on the interrelation of the aforementioned components.

Figure 1: *The 4Cs Framework for CLIL*



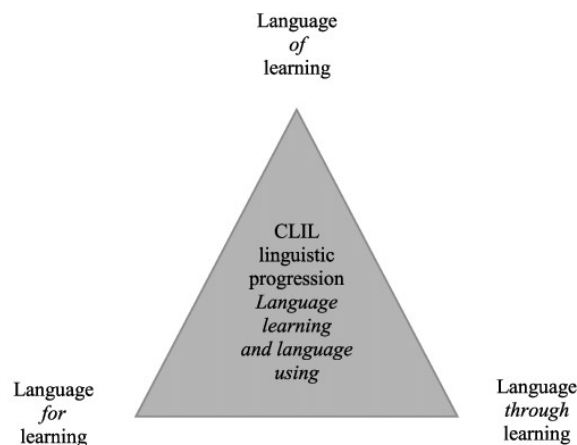
(Coyle, 2005)

The adapted model of Hemmi & Banegas (2021) maintains the 4cs Framework model. Yet other researchers (Ball, Kelly, & Clegg, 2015) proposed a 5Cs Framework, which takes Mehisto et al., (2008) model (content, communication, cognition and community), introducing the development of competences (“the skills used to work on content” (2015, p.52)), as a new component to the traditional model (Diaz et al., 2018).

These divergences are only an example of how CLIL is continuously revising its theoretical basis looking forward to expanding its principles to the practice, the learner’s needs and every learning context.

Regarding the language learnt at learning content through the use of a language, the language triptych (Figure 2) serves as a tool to integrate both content and language learning, to promote the student’s communicative skills and cooperation.

Figure 2: *The Language Triptych*



(Coyle et al., 2010)

The third key touchstone in CLIL is made up by seven pedagogical principles intended to show the ‘how’ of Language and Content integration (Coyle et al., 2010; Madrid Fernández & Pérez Cañado, 2012; Bower et al., 2020). These seven pedagogical principles are enumerated according to Madrid Fernández & Pérez Cañado, 2012 as *theory of learning, the learner’s role, the teacher role, methodology, materials, evaluation and organization-wise*.

2.1.4 *Benefits and challenges*

The language teaching scenario has been in continuous transformation through the last decades. In a world where multilingualism is getting closer to be a reality since contact between different languages is becoming more frequent, CLIL is meant to be a perfect candidate to overcome this challenge (Pérez Cañado, 2020).

As Pérez Cañado (2020) explains, “initially, a very flattering spotlight was shone on CLIL” (p.2). The CLIL approach was at the very beginning a promising change and success in language teaching as “traditional foreign language instruction was not delivering the intended outcomes” (p.2). Critics towards CLIL were thus encouraging and positive. Nonetheless, according to Pérez Cañado (2020), from the last half-decade, the “pendulum effect” has swung to the other extreme and now the criticism has drastically changed, considering CLIL “a scam, a plague, or a total disaster, and they speak of ‘camps’ and ‘battles’ between its advocates and detractors” (p. 2).

Hence, it is necessary to highlight the benefits that CLIL presents, as well as its current challenges, to avoid the growth of myths based on the idea of exploring negative aspects without a realistic and scientific base beyond, misinforming about what CLIL is and how it works. Consequently, the main assets and pitfalls of the CLIL approach will be now briefly summarized.

In compliance with the substantial benefits of CLIL, within the linguistic dimension, one of the major CLIL benefits involves the meaningful exposure to the foreign language to be learnt. Similarly, the learner acquires specific language terminology and improves the overall language competence in the target language without damaging their mother tongue (L1) due to the involvement of both the L1 and the FL in CLIL classrooms. As a result of the frequent and collaborative interaction, communication improves exponentially as well as the learner’s language and fluency reach higher levels of proficiency (Pérez Cañado, 2013).

In relation to content knowledge, the integration of both content and language in CLIL allows the learner to learn the subject content parallel to the learning of the FL, acquiring academic knowledge while improving their language through communicative skills (Pérez Cañado, 2013). Thus, this dual-focused approach allows the learner to get motivated in the learning of the FL and acquire different competences in both content and language. As Tudor (2008) puts it, “the linking of content study with the learning of an L2 may potentially strengthen students’ motivation to learn this language”.

Concerning the learning dimension, the core features of language are developed and put into practice in meaningful contexts. The learning is focused on a natural language learning acquisition and its learning is focused on meaning and not simply on form (i.e. grammar). Linked to this idea, the cognitive dimension enhances the learner to reach other competences and skills apart from the communicative ones, such as problem-solving and interpersonal abilities. Moreover, socially, CLIL advocates for diversity, for the inclusion of every learner regardless of the economic situation or even the social class, giving the same learning opportunities to everyone. Culturally, CLIL allows the learners to reach the intercultural competence and the understanding of other cultures different from their own. This also distinguishes CLIL from the traditional learning scenario. CLIL also “prepares students for internationalization and EU integration, for future studies and/or working life, and for lifelong learning” (Pérez Cañado, 2013, pp. 6-7).

CLIL is thus a fundamental tool to promote the learner’s learning autonomy. For that reason, it is important to link CLIL to ICTs, not only because technology is a reality nowadays, or because it facilitates the teaching of content in real contexts through practice, but also for the autonomy that it allows students to reach.

As regard the difficulties and challenges (Mehisto et al., 2008; Lasagabaster, 2008; Tudor 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008; Pérez Cañado, 2013, Ruiz Gómez, 2015), it is worth mentioning that while benefits affect learners, the difficulties and challenges mainly affect teachers.

For teachers, the principal challenge to face stems from the novelty of the CLIL approach, which leads to misconceptions or false myths. According to Mehisto et al. (2008), one of these commonest misconceptions is that CLIL “is suitable only for the brightest, most academically inclined students” (p. 20), appealing to false elitism, since CLIL has been implemented in different contexts including every type of learner, without distinction as it has been aforementioned, demonstrating its inclusion and egalitarianism. Furthermore, projects

directly addressing and advocating the attention to diversity have emerged, such as the ADiBE project (<https://adibeproject.com>).

As Pérez Cañado (2013) puts it, the insufficient qualification of teachers, the lack of support they receive and the shortage of teacher training programs suppose a real challenge to address the root. Another pitfall is the lack of materials for this approach, which forces teachers to prepare their own materials.

In compliance with the integration of both content and language, some difficulties can arise if the learner is not familiarised with the minimum knowledge of grammar or specific vocabulary, which can result in the learner's loss of relevant information, communicative interference and frustration. Hence, a pre-task stage including activities to introduce the new grammar in context and practising it with the content of the specific subject is paramount to surpass this difficulty. On the contrary, subjects with limited grammar structures, such as Mathematics can also represent a challenge to the learner to reach the main communicative skills (Ruiz Gómez, 2015).

The student has also to tackle the cognitive challenge that CLIL involves to the learner. The difficulty of this approach resides in the assimilation of both content and language at the same time, which may be overwhelming to the student or even affects the learner's confidence (Pérez Cañado, 2013). Tudor (2008) also remarked that idea: "CLIL involves students assimilating complex and potentially unfamiliar academic material" (p. 49). This challenge is inevitably related to the syllabus or content, which has been described as sternly reduced or even the opposite, excessively concerned with teaching (Pérez Cañado, 2013).

Yet other pitfalls and challenges derive from the methodology and assessment processes. Tied to this idea, Ruiz Gómez (2015) showcases "the absence of a solid teacher training programme" since the bilingual teaching staff are required to master "a sound set of methodologies which would also enable them to put theory into practice" (p. 16). As a result, learners' communicative competences are uneven. Regarding assessment, Ruiz Gómez (2015) pinpoints the current heterogeneity of the assessment process and considers self-assessment mandatory, including in his study some descriptors to accomplish a dual assessment procedure that takes into consideration the capabilities of both subject-matter and communication.

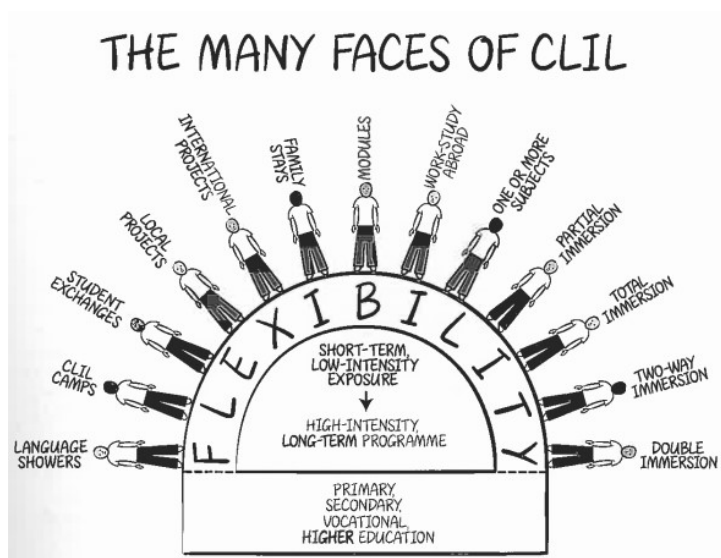
Concerning the evaluation, Pérez Cañado (2013) introduces some questions which are essential to consider in implementation of CLIL: "How can content and language be evaluated simultaneously? Should the focus be primarily on one or the other? To what extent? And with what instruments?" (p. 20).

On the whole, this is the purpose of this study, to address the main challenges and questions that assessment presents to overcome these shortcomings and to continue moving forward on the CLIL approach, from theory to practice.

2.1.5 Curricular variations

Due to the fact that one model does not fit all contexts; CLIL as an umbrella term (Mehisto et al., 2008) encompasses a wide range of educational models. Precisely, Mehisto et al., (2008), discern among *immersion*, *bilingual education*, *multilingual education*, *language showers* and *enriched language programmes* (Figure 3). Moreover, these eclectic educational approaches allow low and high intensity exposure to the FL.

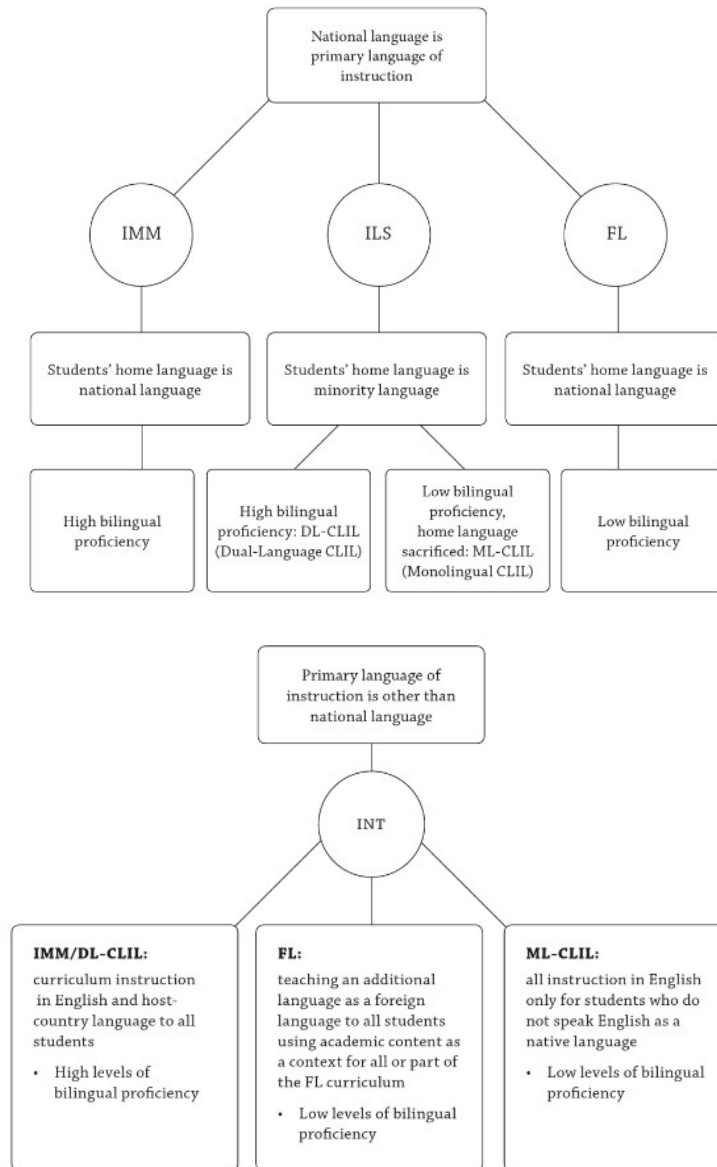
Figure 3: *The Many Faces of CLIL*



(Mehisto et al., 2008)

In relation to these criteria, Genesee & Hamayan (2016) suggest four educational contexts to understand in depth the CLIL approach and its flexibility, adaptation and diversity. These four contexts involve: Immersion (IMM), education for immigrant and indigenous-language students (ILSs), foreign language (FL) programmes, and international schools (INT). In the following self-explanatory figures 4 and 5, the core features of each programme can be appreciated and distinguished, offering a complete summary of each educational context.

Figures 4 and 5: Four educational CLIL contexts.




(Genesee & Hamayan, 2016)

Considering this, Coyle et al., (2010) emphasize the need of taking into consideration the operating factors and the CLIL scale before implementing one of the educational approaches in classroom. Namely, the operating factors involve the teacher availability, the proficiency level of teachers and students in the target CLIL-language, the amount of time available to the teaching and learning of the CLIL-language, the integration of content and language and the assessment processes. As for the CLIL scale, two types of instruction are

distinguished: extensive instruction through the vehicular language and partial instruction through the vehicular language.

Other key aspects must be considered to reach a total understanding of CLIL. To begin with, closely related to the time operating factor is the differentiation between soft CLIL and hard CLIL. This differentiation is, therefore, based on the variation of the amount of time devoted to the teaching and learning through the target language. Thus, soft CLIL has been described as teaching content through a FL, from a language-led teaching perspective. Conversely, hard CLIL has been referred to as subject-led model. Language awareness is, however, present and taught in the curriculum of hard CLIL, in the same way as in soft CLIL content topics are also included to reach the linguistic objectives. A third modular CLIL model has been included. This subject-led CLIL model devotes less hours to the teaching in the target language and allows schools or teachers to decide the parts of the syllabus which are going to be taught in the CLIL language (Bentley, 2010; Ball, 2015).

Table 2: *CLIL models.*

Soft CLIL	Type of CLIL	Time	Context
	Language-led	45 minutes once a week	Some curricular topics are taught during a language course
	Subject-led (modular)	15 hours during one term	Schools or teachers choose parts of the subject syllabus which they teach in the target language
	Subject-led (partial immersion)	about 50% of the curriculum	About half of the curriculum is taught in the target language. The content can reflect what is taught in the L1 curriculum or can be new content.
Hard CLIL			

(Bentley, 2010)

Concerning the eclectic nature of CLIL, it is necessary to distinguish this type of instruction from other types of programmes which share the feature of teaching content through an additional language. This is the case of content-based instruction (CBI) whose origins are related to Canadian immersion programmes. By the same token, CBI involves different types of immersion and other types of teaching. Besides, it can be developed in all educational levels, from preschool up to higher education and applied in total immersion or in content-based themes in language lessons. Considering this, even though, CLIL and CBI could look like synonyms, CLIL is differentiated from immersion and therefore, from CBI.

Hence, CBI and CLIL encompass diverse programmes, being both of them considered as an “umbrella term”. Nevertheless, each of them owns different manifestations. Differences also occur in terms of methodology and materials used in their instruction. Most importantly, both of them involve immersion in their approaches (Cenoz, 2015). Under these circumstances, immersion must be distinguished from CLIL.

As Lasagabaster & Sierra (2010) point out, similarities between CLIL and immersion reside in that second language acquisition in both types of programmes is similar to the L1 acquisition, since the language to be learnt is new to students in both cases. Other similarities involve the final objective of developing the knowledge of both L1 and L2, the presence of bilingual teaching staff and the communicative approach used to enhance the learner’s communicative skills.

Along with dissimilarities, Lasagabaster & Sierra (2010) remark that the language of instruction differs in both programmes inasmuch as the language used in immersion can be found in the learner’s context (i.e. home or society), while the language of CLIL is not a language spoken in the student’s local context but a foreign language. The contrast can also be seen in the presence of native teachers in immersion programmes. For its part, CLIL needs more support from institutions to offer teachers the appropriate teaching training and materials. As for the starting age, while immersion instruction is implemented in the starting age, CLIL is usually implemented to students who have previously been exposed to the foreign language in their primary education. Additionally, a huge difference is that immersion is destined to reach L2 proficiency, equivalent to a native speaker. On the contrary, CLIL goal is to develop communicative, competent and functional learners.

As a final point, CLIL shows its wide range of programmes and its adaptation to different situations and learners. Under this umbrella term, it can be appreciated the flexibility of the CLIL approach and the impossibility that one model fits every situational and educational context. The controversial balance of the dual focus in these diverse curriculum models is also noteworthy. While some models are language-based, others are more inclined to be content-driven. Even though, all the possible models used in CLIL integrate both content and language and agree in using the additional language as a tool to learn content. The exposure to the foreign language also varies in immersion, content-based instruction and CLIL. Other dissimilarities concerning methodological approaches, materials or teacher training is also worth mentioning. At any rate, in all these cases, assessment is still not defined and well guided. The lack of research in this area, the diversity of opinions in the measure of weight of content and language in CLIL and even the lack of official regulations

makes essential the need to overview the term ‘assessment’ and its implications in the following sections of this research paper.

2.2 ASSESSMENT

2.2.1 *What is assessment?*

Similarly to the CLIL overview procedure, assessment can be defined in general terms as “the documentation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs, usually carried out in a way that is measurable” (Ball, 2015, p. 209). Even though, Leontjev & deBoer (2020) current observations designate assessment as the combination of “various instruments and approaches aiming at yielding insights into learner abilities” (p.2). Additionally, they remark the importance of assessment to attain “what information is obtained, how it is obtained, how it is interpreted, and more importantly, how it is used” (p.2). As a result, this information serves teachers as a self reflection to tailor their teaching planning to the learner’s needs and allow students to become aware of their learning process as well as to reach their learning skills successfully.

It should be noted that from this definition stem different assessment processes, each with its own characteristics and differences. By the same token, in CLIL different types of formative assessment (formative assessment, alternative assessment, dynamic assessment, assessment *for* learning, classroom-based assessment, teacher-based assessment and learning-oriented assessment) are developed. Even though, all these models share their opposition to the traditional evaluation, which is based on selective and grading purposes. Besides, they differ in nuances in the same way as they stem from different theoretical basis (Leontjev & deBoer, 2020).

Briefly, assessment involves a deeper conception than just testing, attempting to help learners to improve their performance and to reap the benefits of their learning process.

2.2.2 *Assessment and Evaluation*

Along with the distinction between assessment and evaluation, it should be highlighted how both terms, although usually confused, allude to two unlike processes. On the contrary to the assessment definition, the evaluation term can be described as the “systematic appraisal of merit, value, and significance against a standardized set of criteria” (Ball et al., 2015, p. 209). As it can be appreciated, assessment is intended to collect the data to reach awareness of the student’s learning process, while evaluation is devoted to measure, judge and score the student’s performance. It is also noteworthy that assessment normally occurs during the

learning process, while evaluation is used at the end of it. Despite their differences, both assessment and evaluation often coexist in the educational programme. Their feedback is, however, dissimilar since the assessment feedback is from the learner to the teacher while the evaluation feedback comes from the teacher and is given to the learner.

That being the case, one could wonder why these two terms are assiduously interchanged. Ball et al. (2015) assure that “these terms are often used synonymously, especially by speakers of Romance languages” (p.4). An example of this is the Spanish term ‘evaluación’, which addresses both processes. Notwithstanding, the literature about assessment not always use these terms distinctively.

2.2.3 *Types of assessment*

As assessment is a broad concept, in this section, a brief overview of the term will be offered for the sake of clarity.

When dealing with assessment, a main distinction in terms of function needs to be made between formative and summative assessment. On the one hand, formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) is related to a continuous process which takes place during the student’s learning programme. This assessment process includes several subtypes such as self-assessment, portfolio, peer assessment and assessment for learning, between others. Moreover, it has been described as diagnostic since formative assessment can determine which students will need additional support and can identify the main weaknesses and strengths of students. Summative assessment (assessment *of* learning), on the other hand, is focused on the learner’s achievements, associated with the evaluative testing at the end of the learning process (Ball et al., 2015). Therefore, at the end of the course, students receive a grade. It is also necessary to remark that even summative assessment can include a formative function. Thus, a test can serve as summative assessment if the purpose is to score the learner’s performance or formative if the test is conducted by teachers to collect information about those aspects where learners need reinforcement (Leontjev & deBoer, 2020).

Concerning formative assessment and its main types, as Ball et al. (2015) put it, emphasis is put on students ‘doing things’. This feature of formative assessment is essential in CLIL courses. As a result of this, different types of formative assessment can be commented on. As for *self-assessment*, it is based on students’ monitoring of their own progress and later reflection on their performance (assessment), checking those weak aspects to improve and their own strengths which will be enhanced. Another well-known type is the *portfolio*, which is characterized by involving learners in the process of elaborating a dossier of their work

during the course and therefore, they collect information of their knowledge about the subject and the development of their learning skills. Additionally, *performance assessment* is based on “the observation of a range of classroom tasks to assess how well learners perform against a set of explicit criteria” (2015: p. 211). The later most well-known type is *peer assessment*, described as the feedback which comes from students and is given to their own classmates. This assessment is guided by explicit assessing criteria and help learners to learn from each other.

Similarly, Dolin et al. (2018) highlight “it is important to recognise that formative and summative refer to different purposes of assessment and not to different kinds or forms of assessment” (p. 55). As a result, “summative and formative functions of assessments co-exist in the classroom, summative and formative functions of assessment activities not seen as a dichotomy but rather as a continuum” (Leontjev & deBoer, 2020, p.5).

An additional type or assessment purpose called ‘diagnostic assessment’ (assessment *about* learning) could be added to the formative and summative ones. The purpose of this type is to ascertain the learners’ level, their strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of the course to adapt the lesson planning to the students’ needs, beforehand, anticipating the possible challenges and difficulties that learners may have. It also identifies the impact of the teaching planning on students giving teachers an evidence of those aspects to improve or enhance. Additionally, this assessment can make use of testing or other methods, such as the observation or the collection of students’ works during the learning process (Leighton & Gierl, (2007).

2.3 CLIL ASSESSMENT

2.3.1 *Formative Assessment in CLIL*

Given these points about CLIL and assessment, it is high time to consider the main aspects of CLIL assessment as a whole. Throughout the last years the emphasis has been put in assessment (Ball et al., 2015; Genesee & Hamayan, 2016; Dolin et al., 2018; Otto, 2019; Leontjev & deBoer, 2020) since the lack of guidelines and assessment tools as well as the challenges derived from measure both content and language, between others, have emerged. These gaps of information have created a controversial debate. For that reason, to begin with, it is crucial to appeal to the formative assessment, a distinctive characteristic of the CLIL approach. Then, other difficulties as how to assess content and language altogether, the

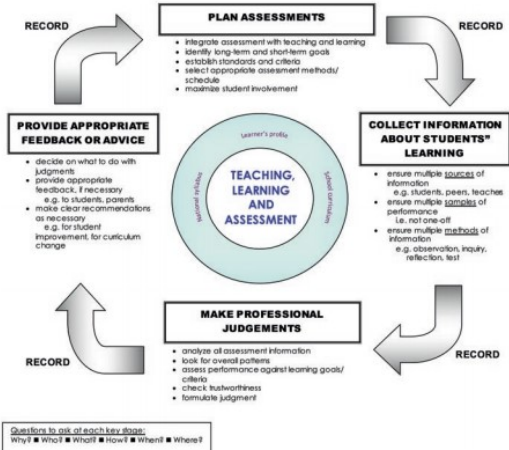
possible linguistic perspectives towards evaluating and the lack of guidelines will be described and commented on.

As Leontjev & deBoer (2020) put it, “assessment in CLIL should provide insights into learner content and linguistic knowledge as well as strategies used to learn both content and language in order to identify student progress and needs” (p. 1). Consequently, assessment *for* learning oriented to the learner’s needs and learning process is, needless to mention, paramount in CLIL. For that reason, Leontjev & deBoer (2020) outline the importance of classroom-based assessment to promote learning. This type of formative assessment is defined by a wide range of benefits such as the involvement of peer- and self-assessment, the inclusion of unplanned assessments and the oriented feedback and advice of the assessment to the promotion of the student’s learning. Indeed, in classroom-based assessment learning, teaching and assessment are considered together.

Returning to the subject, although assessment *for* learning is focused on the student, the reality has demonstrated that “the focus of assessment often stays on learner performance on disconnected assessment activities” (Leontjev & deBoer, 2020, p.6). This affirmation verifies that the focus is usually put on the learners’ scores and that activities are not always connected between them, complicating the students’ learning process. As a consequence, this reality confirms the intricacy and challenge that assessment *for* learning supposes nowadays.

Linked to these ideas, Davinson (2008) developed the classroom-based assessment cycle (Figure 6), which contextualizes the main features and the relationship among learning, teaching and assessment.

Figure 6: Classroom-based assessment cycle.



(Davinson, 2008)

The idea beyond implementing either formative or the combination of formative and summative assessment in classroom is to promote learning and put the focus on students to reach their learning skills and improve their learning process. Hence, teachers have an important role, not only at making clear the goals of their teaching planning and assessment, but also at communicating students the goals and what and how is going to be assessed in the CLIL programme. This would make learners aware of their learning goals and guide them to attain their learning skills.

In CLIL, assessment triggers a real challenge since the goals and assessment of both content and language must be clear and well guided to accomplish the integration of this dual focus.

2.3.2 Dual Focus in CLIL Assessment

Subsequently, as it has been noted, “because of this dual focus, the assessment process in CLIL becomes more complex” (Leontjev & deBoer, 2020, p. 1). Owing to the fact that assessment of the dual focus in CLIL is vastly arduous, this area deserves special attention. For that reason, Otto (2019) has devoted her research to consider assessment in relation to a functional perspective, apart from the most traditional discrete and integrated assessment. Thus, in this section, both discrete and integrated processes will be described to provide an overview of how dual focus has been assessed up to the most recent linguistic perspectives.

Afterwards, according to Otto (2019) discrete assessment is characterised by considering content and language, distinctively. In this perspective, language has an important role not to demote the linguistic skills at dealing with content. To prevent muddled assessment in this approach, researchers agree on the relevance of distinguishing those linguistic aspects related to content from those corrective features. The consequences of muddled assessment reside in the overlapping of tasks. Hence, discrete assessment must clarify which aspects are linguistic-related and which of them refer to content in order to succeed. Provided that point, Otto (2019) wonders if language is taken into consideration in the final grade of discrete assessment and resolves, appealing to other researchers (Frigols, in Megías-Rosa, 2012), that although both content and language should be considered, the linguistic proficiency in the FL is not determined to lower the content grade. Therefore, linguistic aspects must be communicated to students with the purpose of improving them, but not marked down in the final score.

By way of contrast, Otto (2019) points out that integrated assessment involves assessing both content and language concurrently. With this fact in mind, language is used as an instrument inasmuch as it serves as the vehicle through learners reach the content knowledge while they learn the FL. For this purpose language objectives are related to content ones. These language objectives encompass the development of content-related vocabulary and the correct use of tenses (form) in relation to the subject content to ensure communication. These linguistic objectives are conducted to develop the student communicative abilities and content knowledge in the subject and specific topic. Consequently, in this instrumental approach both content and language are assessed. CLIL models also need to be taken into account since models which high exposures (hard CLIL) are mainly concerned about both content and language, with special emphasis on content. On the other hand, in low exposure models (soft CLIL) the focus is put specially on language. However, the lack of a curriculum which determines the role and weight of language in this type of CLIL assessment is a real challenge. This lack of curriculum and official regulations is one of the major pitfalls at dealing with CLIL assessment, as it will be developed later on. That is the reason, why as expressed by Otto (2019), some researchers have proposed to compensate this obstacle by establishing the weight of the target language in a 25%, while others have suggested “to parallel language proficiency and academic achievement so that content objectives can help us define the academic language required for achieving content standards” (p. 313). Thus, subjects as Art require less language production than subjects such as Science. Considering this, the role, weight and assessment instruments of the language production must be clear in this type of CLIL assessment.

Likewise, to integrate content and language in CLIL assessment, Otto (2019) introduces a new perspective on language literacy based on the systemic functional model developed by Halliday & Hasan (1985).

2.3.3 Linguistic perspectives towards CLIL assessment

Due to the new introduction of the functional perspective, an overview of this new vision of language literacy will be now expounded on. Some researchers have contributed to CLIL from a sociolinguistic or discursive analysis perspectives of the approach. Nevertheless, these perspectives still present some methodological deficiencies at focusing on form and not in meanings. This fact confirms the need of introducing a systemic functional perspective of CLIL to come to fruition.

As Otto (2019) puts it, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is focused on the language function. It considers the use of different genres and the specific vocabulary in each subject to reach content knowledge. Moreover, taking into account these aspects also helps to attain hints of how to assess language in CLIL. As learning the subject content through a foreign language without outstanding language proficiency is a real challenge, assessment criteria and language-related aspects must be clear and well-guided. For that purpose, language should be linked to content-based learning objectives and consider external language standards from the CEFR. Furthermore, these language goals must be communicated to students and teachers must consider the level of learners according to the CEFR and take into consideration the students' language proficiency. Hence, as Otto (2019) pinpoints, language descriptors must be well-known to teachers to attain the appropriate language assessment in CLIL (table 3).

Table 3: *Language competence descriptors in CLIL.*

Recall subject-specific vocabulary
Operate using functions, i.e., appropriate language structures and forms- to discuss, disagree, ask effective questions and for clarification, etc.
Listen and read for meaning
Present or discuss effectively
Demonstrate thinking/reasoning in the CLIL target language
Show awareness of grammatical features in the CLIL target language

(Otto (2019), adapted from Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010))

Therefore, Otto (2019) explains that to assess language in CLIL, despite the weight of linguistic aspects, teachers should define the features of language which will be assessed. Most importantly, teachers frequently doubt about which linguistic aspects should be corrected since language should not be marked down because of low language proficiency. The answer to this question suggests that correctness or incorrectness will depend on functional terms and not on grammatical issues. This point confirms the concern of SFL to preserve communication in real contexts above the mere knowledge of grammatical forms which little importance gives to meanings.

Concerning the vehicular language used in CLIL assessment, there is a gap as a consequence of the lack of guidelines. For that reason, Otto (2019) highlights the importance of implementing English as the language of instruction, taking into consideration the use of

L1 in concrete occasions. These occasions will be determined by the need of promoting interlingual work between the two languages or to enhance the understanding when necessary, especially in monolingual contexts. Accordingly, a plurilingual approach is promoted by the use of the target language and the mother tongue.

Dealing now with the assessment of language in specific CLIL genres, Otto (2019) suggests teachers to use Polias’ (2006) model for text analysis (see table 4). By this way, teachers are able to assess learners’ tasks according to the text type and structure (genre), the type of lexis (field), the level of expertise and objectivity (tenor) and the coherence and cohesion of a text, taking into account spelling and punctuation marks as well (mode).

Table 4: *Polias’ model for text analysis.*

Genre
Stages and phases of the text are logically organized according to the genre and the task
All the stages and phases are included
Each of the stages and phases achieve their purpose
Field
The text includes all the field knowledge expected
Students’ vocabulary is varied and adapted to their level
The student has expanded the nominal groups in relation to his/her level
The level of technicality and/or abstraction in the text is appropriate
Tenor
The student shows appropriate level of expertise in the academic field
Appropriate level of uncertainty is used
Appropriate level of objectivity is used
Mode
The student chooses theme (orientation) appropriately
Conjunctions are well selected and facilitate readability
Text is presented in a cohesive way
Grammatical elements are accurate
Spelling is accurate
Punctuation is accurate and facilitates the text readability

(Otto (2019), adapted from Polias (2006))

With regards to this model, Otto (2019) spells out that “one of the strengths of the model is that teachers can use it not only for product-based assessment, such as essays, project work and oral presentations but also for the process-based assessment tasks recommended in CLIL contexts” (p. 320).

Regarding this new perspective, some gaps concerning the assessment of language in CLIL can be tackled. Even though, the lack of guidelines, the gaps concerning bilingual

education and the weight of both content and language in official regulations are factors which are expected to be considered attacking the root of the problem.

2.3.4 *Assessment regulations in CLIL*

As it has been remarked, the lack of guidelines, official regulations and assessment instruments to measure the integration of content and language in CLIL has been now brought up for discussion because of the urgent need of action in this area.

With regards to this urgency, assessment regulations in CLIL must be overviewed so as to highlight the main flaws and the possible ways of overcoming them. For that purpose, the current educational law in Spain (LOMLOE, 2020) will be taken into account. Thus, this section will be conducted to comment on the most relevant aspects, gaps and changes concerning assessment in Spain in relation to CLIL assessment. The concept of competences will be also mentioned and related to the matter of fact. The focus will be put on the hope that assessment takes place in the practice in an urgent and close future.

The history of assessment has demonstrated the process of moving from a summative to a formative assessment process since its origins, among other changes. In Spain, this process dates back to 1970, when the first educational law called ‘General Law of Education’ (LGE) was implemented. From that time onwards, eight educational laws (LOECE, 1980; LODE, 1985; LOGSE, 1990; LOPEG, 1995; LOCE, 2002; LOE, 2006; LOMCE, 2013 and LOMLOE, 2020) have followed the LGE. As it can be noticed, throughout the last years educational laws have been adapted and changed several times. The predecessors of LOMLOE (2020), -namely, LOE (2006) and LOMCE (2013)-, are examples of this fact.

In the LOE (2006), assessment in primary school is contemplated as a continuous (formative assessment) and global process which takes into account the learner’s progress in all areas (LOE, 2006: article 20). Moreover, a diagnostic assessment is also considered at the end of the primary and secondary school stages. In secondary school, the article 23b (LOE, 2006) allow for individual and cooperative work in the learning of skills during the course. In the linguistic aspect, the article 23i (LOE, 2006) considers as learners’ objective to reach the understanding and the ability of expressing themselves in one or more foreign languages in an appropriate manner. Still on the subject of assessment, in secondary school, the assessment process is specified to be continuous and to depend on the particularities of each of the subjects to be assessed (LOE, 2006: article 28.1). Hence, teachers are delegated to make decisions about the assessment instruments according to each subject (LOE, 2006: article 91b). Most importantly, although formative assessment is explicitly promoted, there are not

specific guidelines concerning this aspect. Similarly, there are not specific guidelines for bilingual education.

Concerning the assessment of competences, the article 6.1 (LOE, 2006) makes reference to the basic competences included in the curriculum. The article also encompasses basic objectives and contents for each subject. In the Annex 1 (LOE, 2006), the law alludes to the development of these basic competences appealing to those skills necessary to reach the learners' personal fulfilment, their active participation in the society, joining the adult life and the development of a lifelong learning. On the whole, the curriculum involves the following eight basic competences: 1. Competence in language communication, 2. Mathematical competence, 3. Competence in knowledge and interaction with the physical world, 4. Information processing and digital competence, 5. Social and civic competence, 6. Cultural and artistic competence, 7. Competence to learn how to learn, 8. Autonomy and personal initiative.

These competences are paramount in CLIL since the assessment instruments and the methodological decisions are required to reach the integration of both content and language. Therefore, these competences must be taken into account to assess the learners' development of skills.

In the LOMCE (2013), the assessment also depends on the Autonomous communities altogether with the Government (LOMCE, 2013: article 2). As for the curriculum, the article 6 (LOMCE, 2013: article 6.2c) alludes this time to competences in a deeper and more descriptive way by distinguishing and categorizing them into the different subjects (cross-curricular learning). This point contrasts to the LOE (2006: article 6.1), in which competences are included in the curriculum without distinction of subjects. In the LOMCE (2013), assessment is given more importance than in LOE (2006).

Hence, in the article 20 (LOMCE, 2013), the formative and continuous assessment is described and special emphasis is put on the adaptation of assessment for remedial measures and for advocating to diversity and learners' needs. In the article 28 (LOMCE, 2013), assessment in secondary school is explicitly described as "continuous, formative and integrative". Therefore, the formative aspect is highlighted in this law in comparison to the LOE (2006), in which this formative character was mentioned to a lesser extent. Besides, the article 28.7 (LOMCE, 2013), in the hope that the learning objectives and competences can be achieved, appeals to the reinforcement measures. These measures must be guaranteed and revised periodically. Indeed, the achievement of these objectives and competences must be communicated to parents and to students. To ensure the achievement of the objectives and

competences, assessment and evaluation are considered essential (LOMCE, 2013: article 29). For this purpose, external evaluation is taken into consideration. In summary, this educational law enhances formative assessment and the achievement of competences. However, there is still a lack of guidelines for bilingual education and the specific assessment for this area.

Along with the current LOMLOE (2020), the relevance of formative assessment is also promoted, the central Government delegates powers to the Autonomous Communities to make decisions about assessment guidelines. The law also highlights the integrative, continuous and formative character of assessment and the importance of achieving the basic competences. In the article 20 (LOMLOE, 2020), the assessment criteria does not present new perceptible changes. More attention is paid to reinforcement and attention to diversity in order to adapt the assessment to every learner's needs. Even though, general assessment criteria remain unchanged. Diagnostic assessment is carried out similarly to the previous educational laws, with emphasis on the formative character as it has been aforementioned. The use of ICTs is also promoted in the learning of subjects (LOMLOE, 2020: article 57.5).

The most outstanding change concerning the assessment of the second language is the adaptation of the methodology and assessment criteria for those learners with specific needs. Therefore, their proficiency in comprehension and expression will not mark down their final scores. The content learnt will prevail over language proficiency (LOMLOE, 2020: article 34.9). Otherwise, in the article 36.1 (LOMLOE, 2020), it is emphasized that assessment will be continuous and differentiated depending on each of the subjects. Although more emphasis is put on linguistic aspects, this educational law does not offer specific guidelines about bilingual education and assessment in this bilingual context.

Regarding the Autonomous Communities, the educational law of Andalusia gives more specifications about the bilingual education in terms of organization, but methodological aspects and assessment are not developed and specified. The law mentions what is CLIL but there are not concrete guidelines about assessment in the bilingual educational context.

3. A PROPOSAL OF GUIDELINES TOWARDS CLIL ASSESSMENT

Due to the lack of curriculum, official regulations and the challenges and difficulties mentioned throughout this CLIL assessment review, this proposal of guidelines is conducted to pinpoint the main obstacles and their possible solutions. In the hope that CLIL moves forwards to overcome the present shortcomings, as it has been doing since its origin, the main concerns towards CLIL assessment will be now briefly expounded on.

To begin with, this literature review has demonstrated the absence of research papers on this topic. This fact is due to the huge challenges which suppose the lack of official guidelines. These gaps of information have to do with the little attention paid from all these educational laws to bilingual education.

Given these points, this proposal suggests giving importance to content in CLIL assessment as, in general terms, CLIL is more content-driven and language proficiency should not mark down the final scores of those non-linguistic subjects. Even though, language must be given high relevance in terms of a functional perspective, as the inappropriate use of language suppose an obstacle to reach the communicative competence, which is paramount in CLIL. Errors impeding the appropriate communication must be informed and assed without marking down the final score. This must be clear since content is learnt through the FL. So, language is a core feature which must be always taken into account.

For assessing both content and language, rubrics are highly recommended, inasmuch as they use can-do descriptors to measure the basic competences and learning skills which must be achieved following the educational laws and which also takes into account the level of proficiency following the CEFR. Placing students in specific CEFR levels can help teachers to know the students' level of language proficiency at the time of assessing and informing them of their weaknesses and strengths. By this way, they can distinguish those corrective errors from those which impede the appropriate communication. The first ones must be informed, but not taken into consideration for the final score. Conversely, the latter must be informed and assessed. In fact, learners must know how and what they are going to be assessed beforehand and what their mistakes or errors are due to. Consequently, the functional model suggested by Otto (2019) should be considered mandatory to reach these goals. Besides, for this formative approach, self-assessment, the portfolio and peer assessment, between others must also be bearded in mind.

With this fact in mind, research is also urgently called upon to search for solutions to questions such as the weight given to language and content in CLIL integrated dual focus, since some researchers have stated that it should be 50:50 while others have asserted that the weight given to the target language should comprise about the 25%. For this matter, there is not yet a common understanding or specifications. The cooperation of content and language teachers in CLIL assessment must be also developed in detail. Furthermore, assessment instruments in each subject must also be considered since nowadays, teachers are adapting their assessment criteria and assessment instruments without specific guidelines. Although in some of these aspects Otto (2019) has offered some insights, more research is expected to

support this functional perspective on language literacy to be able to solve the deficiencies which can occur in both theory and practice because of the lack of official regulations.

Under those circumstances, there is an urgent need for institutions and educational laws to elaborate a set of guidelines taking into consideration the reality of bilingual education. In a world even more closely to be multilingual, attention must be oriented on improving the bilingual system and the assessment criteria, which has been scarcely taken into account through a methodological perspective, since educational laws have only considered assessment in terms of organization.

4. CONCLUSION

This CLIL assessment review has dealt with the main objectives and characteristics of CLIL and its huge relevance in the present day. Then, the main assessment aspects have also been overviewed reaching a wide perspective of what CLIL and assessment involve, independently. Finally, the interwoven relation between CLIL and assessing language in content and language integrated learning has been described. Moreover, its main difficulties and deficiencies have contributed to outline some future lines of research in CLIL.

Concerning CLIL assessment it has been remarked how teaching training, the CLIL context, the collaboration between content and language teachers and the development of competences and learning skills are paramount at dealing with the CLIL approach. The functional perspective has also been pinpointed and supported to focus on meanings, functions and definitely the communicative approach, abandoning those perspectives focused on forms which presented some deficiencies. Therefore, CLIL assessment has been oriented to a model which develops functional, competent and communicative learners. Language thus, has been given importance, trying to prevent language related aspects from becoming forgotten in CLIL assessment. Finally, a list of suggestions has been formulated so as to continue moving forward on the CLIL approach.

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