



CLIL in Higher Education. Towards a Multilingual Language Policy

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Monographs like FORTANET'S have been long-awaited in our national and blooming panorama of research into Language and Education within tertiary environments: it takes one step beyond English-medium instruction (EMI) to grapple with the more ambitious goal of implementing multilingualism through a CLIL-based pedagogy (Content and Language Integrated Learning). Against a backdrop of political ideology regarding the use of English, Castilian and Valencian, the author unfolds a rigorous study that discloses the obstacles and efforts which every multilingual policy entails, rises brilliantly to the challenge of describing the linguistic and educational reality at her institution (Universitat Jaume I in Castellón, henceforth UJI), and paves the way for other universities to follow. The book culminates a coherent research trajectory focused on university internationalization and academic discourse (Fortanet Gómez, 2008, 2011, 2012; Fortanet Gómez & Bellés Fortuño, 2005, to cite a few instances of her work).

Contents are organized into three sections that successively and gradually lead us from a “big picture” of multilingualism and multilingual education to the particular situation of the UJI. While the first part provides a theoretical perspective of basic definitions, features, goals, approaches, conditioning factors and realizations of multilingualism as individual and social practice, the second analyzes its role in higher education at an institutional, regional, national, and supranational level, taking into account the sociopolitical context, so influential on language policies, as well as the linguistic and pedagogical components involved. These two components comprise, respectively, the languages of instruction, research and administration, and a useful review of Foreign Language Teaching currents and trends — CLIL made prominent among them — and of the multilingual policies brought to fruition by different universities worldwide. To the language and pedagogy aspects, the profiles and perceptions of students and academic and

administrative staffs (termed “the human factor”) are added. In the third and last block, much more contextualized, FORTANET scrutinizes the UJI’s case. She scientifically details her research objectives and method and the institutional background, and proposes alternatives for a trilingual policy in several spheres of action and adjustments for assessment, follow-up and evaluation. This investigation is completed with a conclusion that summarizes and justifies the chapters and an appendix gathering questionnaires, data tables, and an extensive bibliography that reflects the thorough documentation process conducted.

The strong points of the volume are indeed many. Firstly, FORTANET realistically advocates explicit instruction in CALP (Cognitive Academic Linguistic Proficiency) and the involvement of all sectors of the university population to achieve a successful implementation of CLIL in tertiary settings. This realism is also patent in her portrait of the UJI’s asymmetrical linguistic scenario, where the predominance of Valencian as L1, due to a feeling of cultural identity, does not automatically mean an overall high CALP competence matching that of BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) in that language. Secondly, lay readers are presented with the essentials and antecedents necessary to understand CLIL and taken gently by the hand to further levels of complexity that enable them to devise and develop their own CLIL projects and models, because one of the messages launched by the author is that there is no single CLIL methodology. In this sense, we readers appreciate her straightforward expression of her own stance: “What I have presented in this book follows a logical line of argument, my line of thought” (page 245) and her cogent exposition of reasons why she is in favour of paying more attention to disciplinary discourses, of training content lecturers in the identification and production of genres and registers relevant to their profession, and of teaching them how to scaffold learning in student-centred classrooms. Scaffolding learning in a student-centred paradigm demands mastering the BICS of everyday interaction between instructors and apprentices, even acquiring strategies to engage with audiences, arouse interest, stimulate participation and group work, and organize, stage, and signpost argumentation according to the ways of the professional community. This standpoint of making language and genres salient is shared by a number of well-known CLIL scholars and overtly emphasized by Lyster and Ranta (1997), Dafouz and Núñez (2009), Airey (2012), Smit and Dafouz (2012), Ball and Lindsay (2013), Hüttner and Smit (2013), Arnó-Maciá and Mancho-Barés (2015), and Basturkmen and Shackleford (2015).

As noted by Basturkmen and Shackleford (2015), content teachers should engage in “language-related episodes” to explain and correct errors in disciplinary utterances and written texts, highlighting their rhetorical sequences and social conventions. This encouragement of linguistic tasks contrasts starkly with the reluctance shown by the Physics teachers interviewed in Sweden by Airey (2012), who elude such mission by claiming “I don’t teach language”. With regard to this clash of impressions, and given my keen interest in teacher education, in FORTANET’s study I have missed some insights into the willingness of content teachers to undertake language tasks and change their current class dynamics in accordance to the CLIL principles. Likewise, I am left wondering how language teachers would react towards undergoing a specific language-in-interaction test of the COME (Copenhagen Masters of Excellence programmes) type, mentioned by FORTANET on page 170, to accredit their lecturing proficiency. If they are the ones to coach content teachers and hold the reins of internationalization together with other members of the educational community at their centres, should not they prove their skills first, to set the example? How gladly would they accept being video-taped and faced with a native’s verdict on their own speech, and with having to respond to a spontaneous round of questions? Who trains the trainers? Because a degree in English Philology, English Studies or Linguistics does not ensure fluency nor pedagogical expertise and today it is not infrequent to find students and content teachers more fluent and conversant with language use than the language teachers supposed to help them overcome EMI difficulties, most often civil servants who for decades have not needed to update their English and have survived with a fossilized idiolect, or who adduce research or management as alibis for not refreshing the language. It would have been certainly illustrative to include some basic statistics and anonymized sound bites to display a range of attitudes and opinions, which would describe this two-way reluctance wave and its impact. Another gap I would have liked to see bridged, but appears acknowledged by the author in the conclusion (page 237), is the lack of data on the benefits exerted by trilingual education (and specifically by CALP in English) on CALP performances in the L1 and L2.

All in all, *CLIL in Higher Education* has much to offer to CLIL and EMI researchers, practitioners, and university authorities. It not only packages well-sourced information about multilingual policies and practices and delivers it in an accessible manner, but is also thought-provoking, inspiring fresh reflections and proposals. And although it may not have been the

original remit of the book, there is a subtle hint at opening a couple of Pandora's boxes (those of language teachers' accreditation and content instructors' discursive responsibilities), which in the long run can only translate into upgrading teaching and learning standards.

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