

STATE OF THE ART REPORT ON CLIL IN GREECE

This report aims at presenting and analyzing data we collected regarding the CLIL approach in Greece as part of the European funded Comenius project CORE (CLIL Objectives Resourcekit for Educators).

We used information provided in the National Curricula for Greek Education, interviews with educators involved with CLIL, as well as a small-scale online survey by means of a questionnaire. We sent the link to the questionnaire to 100 schools (30 secondary and 70 primary schools) and to school advisors for English teachers but only 28 people answered it.

1. Government policy on CLIL

There is no such thing as a central educational policy for CLIL in Greece so far. CLIL is not implemented at a national level in state schools and at the moment there is no plan for such policy. It is, however, applied in various private schools in big cities (Athens, Thessaloniki, Larissa) and in the state primary school which works under the auspices of the English Department of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Dr Mattheoudaki is the professor who oversees the pilot program).

In particular, the subjects involved vary according to the level of education.

- Primary Education: geography, religious education, history (years 5 and 6 for two hours) Arts and Crafts, Environmental Studies (year 4 for two hours).
- Secondary education: Junior High School: Maths and History (grade 7 once a week). Senior high school: 1st grade sociolinguistics are used through projects and team work (once a week for three hours).

Out of the six teachers who answered that they do CLIL only one was a subject teacher and all the others were English language teachers.

2. Local analysis of official regulations on CLIL if they exist: -

There are no official regulations

3. Training and support in CLIL for teachers and other educationalists

There is no systematic and official training or support for educators related to CLIL. However, there have been cases of in-service training conducted by school advisors

out of their own initiative. Some of these cases were in the framework of dissemination activities after CLIL related European training courses.

4. Training programs

-european -

-national – Training seminars were conducted in various cities in Greece by school advisors in cooperation with Ms Dimitra Bechlikoudi (partner of European funded Comenius project (info retrieved from: <http://www.eclilt.net/training.html>))

Generally the duration of the programs varied. It ranged from a one to two-hour introductory seminar. In most cases these seminars were presentations or lectures with the exception of a few workshops.

-local:

a. Pyraeus, Greece. One week training course: The course was a blended course including training through contact hours, independent learning using online materials and guidance in the production of their own materials. It was also part of the European Comenius project mentioned above.

b. Evosmos Pilot Primary School: The teachers involved into the CLIL approach collaborate on a regular basis with Dr Marina Mattheoudaki, Assistant Professor at the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, School of English, Aristotle **University of Thessaloniki** who provides guidance and support.

Sustainability

Under the current circumstances there seems to be no sustainability for this kind of initiative. This is reflected in the findings of the survey we conducted. Most people answered negatively to the question whether the CLIL approach will be easily implemented in Greece. They justified their answer by mentioning, lack of adequate training for teachers, the lack of follow-up support for educators, the current dire socio economic conditions of Greek economy and therefore education. They also brought up other resistance factors such as parents, bureaucracy, lack of material. One participant mentioned that Greek educational system tends to be “unadventurous and conservative”. Another one of the participants who seems to be very knowledgeable about CLIL mentioned that EU CLIL funds have been grossly misappropriated. The lack of collaboration between subject and language teachers was also mentioned by more than one participant. One of the participants also mentioned that CLIL was

implemented in countries such as the USA where there was immigrant population while in Greece immigrants seem to have integrated much faster.

CLIL implementation in initial teacher training

Initial teacher training programs do not include CLIL based approach. The content of these courses is mostly related to general pedagogy and teaching approaches such as project based learning and TBL.

CLIL implementation in in-service-training

As mentioned above apart from some cases of CLIL training conducted by a few English language school advisors there was no other CLIL in-service training. Nevertheless, teachers are encouraged to apply for in-service training in European courses where CLIL is rather common.

The main objective of these introductory training cases was to inform educators and raise their awareness towards the CLIL methodology. More specifically they aimed at clarifying CLIL's goals in education. According to the answers of the people who responded to the questionnaire it seems that those who participated in such training meetings identified the objectives of CLIL explicitly. For example they mention the increase of motivation to use the foreign language in a meaningful context, the promotion of language learning through the teaching of a subject and the promotion of multilingualism. They also mention the promotion of subject learning.

Objectives of CLIL implementation in Greece:

Because Greece is mostly a monolingual country CLIL is used to promote foreign language acquisition, English in particular. It is considered an innovative approach to learning and that is why we see it more often in private schools which are anxious to be competitive and encourage more actively European citizenship and mobility.

Difficulties: In the few and sparse cases where CLIL is applied in Greece (in private schools) educators mention they encountered difficulties. These included administrative issues (school schedules), syllabus design autonomy and the lack of CLIL designed material. This may seem contradictory but it can easily be explained because in Greece even private schools have to abide by the regulations derived from the Ministry of Education, so they have little flexibility and autonomy in syllabus design. Educators mention that they haven't managed to solve all of these difficulties

but they mentioned that they overcame obstacles such as the parents' and students' attitudes and the design of materials.

Outcomes

On these rare occasions where CLIL is implemented most outcomes refer to students' positive attitudes in terms of motivation and linguistic gains.

Out of the twenty three people that answered the questionnaire there was only one hesitant person as to their overall impression. All the others were very positive - even the people who hadn't seen it implemented in classes. They mentioned the innovation element, its contribution to autonomous learning, its usefulness in multilingual environments as well as the motivation factor. In their own words the participants said: "It would be of great assistance for future subject teachers to achieve multiple benefits at a cognitive and linguistic level for their students". "We have thrown out the book and concentrate on real knowledge and learning through doing, not just theoretical citing." "The CLIL approach is content-learner friendly and as such is highly contributive to autonomous learning."

The person who wasn't overall positive claimed that a CLIL approach might interfere with native language acquisition.

Another outcome of these training sessions is that language teachers seem eager to teach other subjects (95% answered positively). The one subject teacher that responded to our survey was also positive.

You can see the analytics of our questionnaire here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/gform?key=0Ah7MvbHOMLOUdEFBYk5Nc1loTFhJLWViVXIhb0ZfeIE&gridId=0#chart>