RESEARCH – RECERCA – INVESTIGACIÓN

PAINTINGS IN EFL AND CLIL: RESEARCH RESULTS

PINTURA EN CLASES DE INGLÉS Y AICLE: RESULTADOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

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1. Theoretical framework

CLIL is an educational approach that is not simply education *in* an additional language but education *through* an additional language. The research of different scholars have pointed to strengths and weaknesses of this type of provision (Bentley, 2010; Coyle, 2007; Coyle, Hood & March, 2010; Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2007; Eurydice, 2006; Klipplel, 2003; Lasagabaster & Huget, 2007; Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009a&b; Marsh, 2000; Mehisto & Marsh, 2011; Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols, 2008; Muñoz, 2007; Navés, 2009; Swain, 2001). Other scholars have proposed suggestions regarding CLIL strategies and methodology (Coyle, 2007, 2008, 2011; Mehisto *et al.* 2008; Sierra, 2011; Swain, 2001 or Bentley, 2010).

Various documents from different European organizations show the increasing interest in arts education:

- The Director General of UNESCO made an appeal to all stakeholders in the field of arts and cultural education to do what is necessary "to ensure that the teaching of

the arts gains a special place in the education of every child, from nursery school to the last year of secondary school" (UNESCO 1999, quoted in Eurydice, 2009: 7).

- The Council of Europe published a White Paper in 2008 which pointed to educational organizations such as museums, heritage sites, kindergartens and schools that have the potential to support intercultural exchange, learning and dialogue through arts and cultural activities (Council of Europe, 2008).

- The Eurydice network produced in 2009 a survey called *Arts and Cultural Education at Schools in Europe* (Eurydice, 2009) that gives a valuable overview of how visual arts are taught in all 30 European countries at one point during compulsory education.

- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) points to free-time and entertainment (e.g., exhibitions, museums, intellectual and artistic pursuits, paintings, sculpture) as communication themes or topics to be covered when learning foreign languages.

- The Council of Europe has official websites such as '*Art Exhibition*' or '*Artist for Dialogue*' to promote appreciation of art and to encourage co-operation between artists.

- The European Parliament and the Council of Europe proposed a recommendation through a reference tool on '*key competences for lifelong learning*' which points to eight key competences suggested by the European Commission in 2002 (European Commission, 2002). These European key competences have been incorporated into the Spanish Educational curricula through a law (*LOE: Ley Orgánica de Educación, 2/2006*) which states that each curricular subject has to contribute to the development of these key competences. Three of these competences namely, communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages and cultural awareness and artistic expression are at the core of this research.

Given the relevance of CLIL and art, this study sets out to analyze the response of both EFL and CLIL learners to the stimuli of paintings.

2. Research hypotheses and research questions

- H1: The attitude to writing will be more positive in CLIL than in EFL learners.

  RQ1: How do CLIL and non-CLIL students experience the skill of writing in English?

  RQ2: What are the difficulties CLIL and non-CLIL students find when writing in English?

- H2: The general attitude towards using paintings as stimuli to develop the four skills and to learn about content will be more positive in CLIL than in EFL learners.

  RQ3: What is CLIL and non-CLIL participants' general attitude towards using paintings as stimuli to write?

  RQ4: To what extent do paintings awaken the need to develop other skills (listening, reading or speaking)?

  RQ5: Are paintings a good resource to teach and learn English and content (according to CLIL and non-CLIL subjects)?

- H3: CLIL learners will do better than EFL learners in the following variables: syntactic complexity, fluency and accuracy.

  RQ6: Do CLIL learners write more grammatically complex sentences than EFL learners?

  RQ7: Do CLIL learners write more fluently or write more in the same amount of time than EFL learners?

  RQ8: Do CLIL learners write more accurately, or produce fewer errors in their writing than EFL learners?

3. Methodology

- Participants and setting: 62 students doing 4th year of secondary education in a High School in Teruel. 50% of the subjects followed CLIL methodology in primary and secondary education in centres that have the signed agreement between the Spanish Ministry of Education and the British Council since 1996 (henceforward CLIL). 50% of the subjects did not follow CLIL methodology in primary or secondary education (henceforward EFL). 21 EFL subjects of the same course participated in a pilot study (henceforward PS).

- Instruments: a standardized 60-item multiple choice proficiency test; two questionnaires; and a composition stimulated by paintings.
- Data: Data have been analysed by means of SPSS. Ratio and percentage measures were used to analyse stimulated written composition of the subjects.

4. Results and conclusions

A comparison of the results of the proficiency test administered shows that the CLIL outperformed the EFL.

H1: CLIL learners have a more positive attitude to writing than EFL learners. The two main problems for CLIL learners are the lack of the necessary vocabulary and the fact that they do not really know how to write a good composition. The main difficulty for EFL learners lies in the fact that they do not know how to organise their ideas, how to write a good composition in English or what to say. They also lack the necessary vocabulary or they have many grammar mistakes in their written production.

H2: Both CLIL and EFL learners show a positive attitude towards the use of paintings as stimuli. 80% of the participants would like to do more activities related to paintings as visual stimuli. Using paintings as stimuli can awaken the need to develop the four skills. The results of the analysis lead us to believe that paintings could be a good resource to teach and learn English and content in EFL and CLIL contexts.

H3: CLIL learners did better in the three variables analysed. Following Navés & Vitori (2010) and Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim (1998), the variables which were considered for the analysis of the compositions were:

- Syntactic complexity, which was studied by means of average of clauses, T-units and complex T-units. The most syntactically complex compositions were the ones written by the CLIL learners.
- Fluency was analyzed by means of essay length. The CLIL group outperformed the EFL group in this variable.
- Accuracy was analyzed from three different angles namely, error-free sentences, number of words in error-free sentences and errors in sentences. The essays written by the CLIL group are more correct than the EFL.

Fillmore (1979) referred to fluent second language writers as those who rapidly, coherently, appropriately and creatively produced written language. Hence, three competent judges were also involved to assess aspects such as creativity, spontaneity, coherence or relevance. CLIL participants outperformed EFL.

This study has supported some of the findings regarding CLIL research and pointed to the potential of paintings in CLIL and EFL contexts.

> Just as we have come to see English as a deterritorialized lingua franca with a democratized ownership, so art too has become the property of all of us. Of course, this is not to say that all art is accessible but it does suggest that this is an opportune time to wake the sleeping giant. (Grundy et al., 2011: 9).

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