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CLIL MODELS IN POLISH LOWER-SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to discuss the existing CLIL models with respect to how they are used by teachers in Polish lower-secondary education. Throughout the paper a general situation in the system of education concerning bilingual classrooms is depicted with the focus on four CLIL models traditionally used in contemporary schools. The overall objective is to analyse the popularity of languages employed as the medium of instruction in bilingual provision, the subjects whose content is imparted through the medium of a foreign language as well as the four major curricular models themselves developed and implemented for the needs of bilingual programmes in the Poland.

KEYWORDS: bilingualism, CLIL, bilingual education, curricular models, lower-secondary schools

STRESZCZENIE

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest omówienie modeli zintegrowanego kształcenia przedmiotowo-językowego (CLIL) funkcjonujących w polskich gimnazjach, w których istnieją oddziały dwujęzyczne. W artykule zostaje krótko omówiony stan kształcenia dwujęzycznego w polskim systemie edukacji ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem gimnazjów. Przedstawiono cztery modele CLIL, zobrazowano popularność poszczególnych języków w kształceniu dwujęzycznym a także przedmioty, które najczęściej nauczane są w języku obcym na poziomie gimnazjalnym.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: dwujęzyczność, CLIL, zintegrowane kształcenie przedmiotowo-językowe, modele kształcenia przedmiotowego, szkoły gimnazjalne

ON THE WAY TO BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN POLAND

Bilingual education in Poland is not a new phenomenon, however it cannot be stated that its programmes have been created and implemented successfully yet, either. Its roots reach as far back in the history of education as 1960s when selected content subjects were taught through the medium of a foreign language for the whole time of a lesson in very few Polish secondary schools, i.e. Warsaw and Gdynia (Papaja 2014). The language initially used was only English. This form of instruction was then regarded as elitist and it still is. But what has changed in

the past fifty years? First of all, nowadays we can easily define what bilingual programmes entail. Due to the political changes occurring in Poland after 1989 and the integration with the European Union in 2004, the country geared its language teaching to the uniform policy prevailing all over the EU states. English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) programmes are not reserved for learners whose background is somehow linguistically distinctive anymore. In the past it was mainly children from bilingual families who were subject of this type of schooling, however it was also available for the circles of diplomats, politicians and entrepreneurs. Initially the main focus of such instruction was to educate highly proficient language users although the teaching was conducted by content language teachers whose competence in the target language was not very high. At present the extent of foreign language use may range from occasional situations in foreign language classes to covering even the whole curricula. The latter option became possible thanks to the introduction of the requirement on the so-called double qualifications on the part of teachers involved in bilingual teaching as well as informal entrance examinations imposed on the learners willing to be educated in bilingual classrooms. Meanwhile, the range of languages used as a medium of instruction has grown wider with the introduction of German and French in 1990s and the popularisation of Italian and Spanish cultures in Poland in 21st century. However, it must be stated firmly that it is the dominance and ubiquity of English witnessed at all educational levels in Poland. Moreover, various innovative teaching approaches originated in the last two decades, which are efficiently being implemented nowadays. It is CLIL though that has revolutionised the Polish bilingual programmes as it became the most popular provision after Poland's access to the EU in 2004 (Romanowski 2018).

UNRAVELLING CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL)

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a common term used for a number of related approaches intended for the teaching of content subjects through the medium of a foreign language (Coyle et al. 2010). Wolff (2003: 11) assumes that foreign languages are best learnt by focusing not so much on the language itself but on the transmitted content taken from school subjects, e.g. Mathematics, Geography, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, etc. The CLIL methodological approach seeking to foster the integrated learning of languages and content subjects has been a fast developing phenomenon in Europe. At the European level, the interest is growing in the approach and it brings about many benefits to students (Mehisto et al. 2014; Pérez Cañado 2016). Dakowska (2014: 47) refers to CLIL as a system rather than a method and she rightly notices its fairly good reputation in the context of foreign language education adding that it is regarded as a more

effective solution in an increasing number of contexts than mainstream methods. The underlying principle of CLIL refers to the belief that young people should be more effectively prepared for the multilingual and cultural requirements of diversified culturally, ethnically and linguistically Europe where mobility is expanding (Gierlinger 2017).

Complementing the national profiles reported in the Eurydice survey, numerous publications provide insights into how CLIL is being implemented in more than 20 European countries (Maljers et al. 2007; Marsh/ Wolff 2007; Dalton-Puffer 2011; Pérez Cañado 2014; Merino/ Lasagabaster 2018). One important recurrent observation in these materials is the predominance of the English language. If the pre-eminence of Global English seems absolutely clear in the EU schools as far as conventional foreign language teaching is concerned, the same will occur when we propose the CLIL provision. On the other hand, the current linguistic situation might be viewed as an opportunity for incorporating a greater number of other EU languages, i.e. French, Spanish, German and Italian. Over the past two decades an increasing body of research has demonstrated that CLIL can enhance multilingualism and provide opportunities for deepening learners' knowledge and skills. CLIL has been found to be additive (one language supporting the other) and not subtractive (one language working against the other). It involves a process which is generally curriculum-driven with the language curriculum arising from the content curriculum (Olpińska 2010).

Following the same line of reasoning, the proponents of CLIL have stressed that Learning involves the Integration of both Content and Language, i.e. learning of any content must involve learning of the language associated with it. At the level of schooling, successful education in one or more languages requires that learners be equipped with the language for thinking about the content. When learning in a CLIL programme, where an additional language is used, language-supportive resources, procedures and activities are actively and coherently used to enable learners the use of language purposefully. This support acts as a form of scaffolding helping learners to effectively process information, negotiate understanding, and co-construct knowledge (Mehisto et al. 2014; Anderson 2009; Dalton-Puffer 2017; Ruiz de Zarobe 2017).

Considering the fact that English has become both the language of science and academic research, and an obligatory subject in all schools, the most logical decision would be to combine the two achievements so that a learner could take advantage of them simultaneously. This is the core of CLIL also labeled as a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels (Marsh et al. 2010). It is essential to highlight that the additional language is not supposed to be the only medium of instruction and thus, it should be used interchangeably with the mother tongue. Its frequency of use will largely depend on its level of advancement among teachers and students

as well as the complexity of discussed issues. That is why integrating language and non-language content has been referred to as the hallmark of all forms of bilingual education (Genesee 1987; Cenoz/ Genesee 1998: 35–67; Lo/ Macaro 2015).

CLIL AND ITS MODELS IMPLEMENTED IN POLISH BILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

All the approaches implemented in bilingual education in Polish schools originated from CLIL principles. Marsh et al. (2008) enumerate four main types of instruction or curricular models to be distinguished in schools. The distinctive feature lies in the proportion between L1 and L2 used during the lessons. The rationale behind each model will be discussed below.

In Model A, referred to as Extensive Language Medium Instruction, lessons are mainly conducted in a foreign language, as far as both the lesson and syllabus realisation are concerned. The mother tongue is restricted to situations where translation of terminology is required or short recapitulation of the main points is needed. This model is used to achieve the syllabus aims as well as to develop learners' language competence at a very high level. The main purpose is to achieve the expected content learning outcomes while developing and using a very high degree of competence in English.

In Model B, often labeled as Partial Language Medium Instruction, lessons are conducted in both Polish and a foreign language and the two languages are used interchangeably and whenever necessary. About 50% of lesson time is devoted to each language. The predominant aim is to achieve course objectives, less attention is paid to linguistic competence. The logic behind this model is to achieve expected content learning outcomes while developing and using a very high degree of competence in the target language.

Model C, called Limited Language Medium Instruction, offers lessons with limited use of a foreign language. Hence, using both Polish and a foreign language interchangeably is common. Between 10% and 50% of lesson time is devoted to a foreign language. Teaching the aspects of course content is the primary objective whereas the linguistic knowledge is expanded chiefly through the study of new lexis. The reasoning is to achieve expected content learning outcomes alongside the limited use of the target language. This generally involves the activation of existing knowledge, supplementing it with new words, terms and concepts, and providing opportunities for cross-linguistic development.

Last but not least, when a foreign language is used sporadically while teaching we mean Model D, often defined as Specific Language Medium Instruction. Very little time is devoted to the selected foreign language, which is mainly used to achieve particular aims (i.e. a lesson is conducted in Polish, but it is based on texts

in the target language or project work where the results are presented in the target language, however most of the content studied earlier is available in Polish). This model is complementary as it focuses on the course objectives and the secondary aim involves the use and development of foreign language competence. The main objective is to complement courses taught in Polish and fulfil the expected content learning outcomes by providing opportunities for specific forms of the foreign language usage and development.

BILINGUAL PROGRAMMES IN POLISH LOWER-SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NUMBERS

In a report published by the Centre for Education Development in Warsaw, Pawlak (2015) indicates that there are 180 lower-secondary schools in Poland with bilingual instruction in 738 sections and educating almost 19,500 students. In comparison, it is noteworthy that the number of secondary schools with bilingual instruction in Poland is twice as low.

Table 1. Lower-secondary schools with bilingual education programmes

Provinces	Number of schools	Number of sections	Number of students
Mazovian	45	194	4,851
Silesian	29	108	2,942
Lower Silesian	21	77	2,066
Greater Poland	16	75	2,026
Łódź	13	41	1,085
Opole	10	35	827
Lublin	8	28	754
Kuyavian–Pomeranian	8	27	691
Pomeranian	7	28	752
Subcarpathian	6	20	518
Western Pomeranian	5	44	1,208
Lesser Poland	4	15	434
Lubusz	3	20	475
Podlasie	3	11	313
Warmian-Masurian	2	15	441
Świętokrzyskie	0	0	0

Bilingual instruction at lower-secondary level takes place in almost all the Polish provinces, although the highest number of schools and sections has been noted in bigger cities, such as: Warsaw, Katowice, and Wrocław. The most popular language taught is English present in over a half of the reported schools. German seems to be the second most popular language if we consider the number of schools, however if our criterion changes to the number of students, it appears that French is the second leading foreign language offered in Polish lower-secondary schools. Spanish is less popular and used in only 10% of the schools with bilingual instruction. Italian and Russian are scarce as they are present in only three and two schools respectively, with the former being slightly more popular.

The geographical distribution of bilingual sections according to languages is also interesting. English is present in all the provinces whereas German is particularly popular in the western part of Poland. On the contrary, the instruction in Spanish and French is offered only in the biggest cities. With the least popular languages, the following conclusion can be drawn: the less popular a language is, the more likely it is that it will be taught only in the provinces with the highest population.

Table 2. Popularity of languages taught

	Number of schools	Number of sections	Number of students
English	134	496	12,789
German	30	93	2,289
French	23	92	2,655
Spanish	18	49	1,431
Italian	3	6	191
Russian	2	2	28
Total	210 (180)	738	19,383

Based on both tables, it becomes obvious that a high number of schools or sections does not necessarily reflect a high proportion of students. In Lower Silesia there are 21 schools educating 2,066 students in 77 bilingual sections whereas in Greater Poland there are only 16 schools altogether and the number of students (2,026) is not commensurate with it. On top of that, it needs to be emphasized that the density of schools in a particular province does not determine the total number of students involved in bilingual provision (see Table 1). In Kuyavia-Pomerania there exist 8 schools with CLIL teaching, of which 691 students in total take advantage. On the contrary, in Western Pomerania 1208 students are educated in as few as 5 schools only. In addition, there are schools which offer bilingual education in all the sections, however there are those institutions that

decide specifically how many sections to launch each year where this type of provision will be available. In addition, there are schools where bilingual instruction is possible in one language only in contrast to those institutions where two or three languages are used in parallel. Hence, there exists a discrepancy in the total number of schools (see Table 2).

It might seem difficult to deliberate in which direction a further trend will develop although, on the other hand, such inclinations have always existed. The numbers show that the most desirable language offered in bilingual programmes is English. It has also been observed that the majority of schools are concentrated in bigger cities, however recently a tendency has been noted to advance bilingual teaching in smaller communities, usually to diversify the educational offer, maintain viability of classes or simply suggest new solutions to the ever-changing demands of people and markets. At the final point it should be stressed that it is Spanish, which could outnumber French and German in the future, for this tongue is gaining on popularity not only in Europe, but it is also spoken and taught on other continents.

In addition to all the foregoing, perhaps it would be essential to articulate the fact that in the context of promoting plurilingualism, there is sufficient evidence of interest in the learning of non-European languages. Yet in times of economic globalisation, it appears essential to pay more attention to the numbers of learners of Chinese, Japanese or Arabic attending respective courses apart from the school hours. In this case bilingual education or CLIL may also be a practical means of introducing non-European languages. Students who have acquired a satisfactory competence in English will be able to extend their multilingual competence to study an Asian or African language through the tongue previously learnt.

DIVERSITY OF POLISH BILINGUAL PROGRAMMES

In the context of the present article differentiation will be discussed in terms of the subjects taught through a foreign language, a variety of languages used as a medium of instruction as well as the selection of curricular models applied to bilingual teaching methodologies, which best serve this type of instruction.

What most students require is to be involved in inspiring lessons that will allow them to reach the highest potential. That is why it is not surprising that they will demand a supportive environment which promotes diversity, nurtures creativity and acknowledges their strengths and capabilities (Heacox 2002). It needs to be underlined that bilingual programmes offered in the Polish system of education meet the demands resulting from differentiated instruction. Through the choice of subjects and languages available at the level of lower-secondary schools, learners with an abundance of interests and a wide assortment of learning profiles can experience differentiated instructional opportunities in bilingual programmes.

THE STUDY

The present study was conducted in the months of September – December 2016. It is part of an ongoing research project devoted to bilingual programmes at (lower-) secondary level of education in Poland. For the purpose of the current investigation a short questionnaire was created and sent out to teachers of content (non-linguistic) subjects involved in the teaching in bilingual classrooms. There were ten questions addressed, however in this paper we shall focus only on the first five questions. The selected issues are as follows:

- 1) How many subjects are taught in bilingual classrooms in your school?
- 2) Which subjects are taught through the medium of a foreign language?
- 3) What languages are used?
- 4) Is there a relationship between the subject and the language through which it is taught?
- 5) Which curricular models are used?

Altogether 62 schools participated in the survey where 145 teachers agreed to provide their responses to the outlined problems.

Table 3. Participating teachers

	Number of participating teachers N = 145	%
English	76	52.5
German	46	31.8
French	13	8.9
Spanish	10	6.8
Italian	0	0

THE MOST FREQUENTLY TAUGHT SUBJECTS

The choice and number of taught subjects varies from country to country. In most EU countries it does not exceed two or three subjects. In Poland, however up to four subjects are offered concurrently. In addition, exact sciences, such as: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology are the most frequent choices in lower-secondary schools (Iluk 2000; Dzięgielewska 2002; Romanowski 2016a). They are regarded as difficult courses in comparison to humanistic subjects, such as: Geography, Philosophy, or History where instruction is also provided in a foreign language. Depending on the availability of qualified teachers, the intensity and

language exposure may vary. In exceptional situations one subject is taught every year, and hence the available subjects change from one year to another. This is the most popular scenario for small towns where the insufficient number of teachers has become the most frequent problem school directors must face.

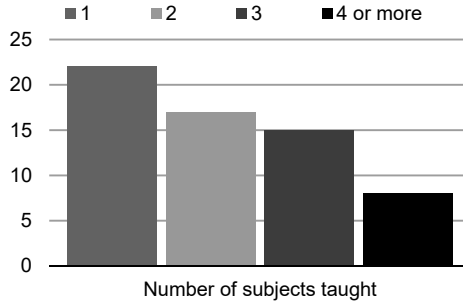


Figure 1. Intensity of CLIL programmes and the overall language exposure for students.

On the basis of the conducted study, the following findings have been collected. Out of 62 surveyed schools, there were 22 where 1 subject was taught every year, 17 schools where the instruction in a foreign language was offered in 2 subjects, 15 schools with 3 subjects and 8 schools with 4 or more subjects provided concurrently.

In the present study five content subjects are investigated. It seems that the most widely instructed content comes from Maths, Physics, Geography and Chemistry. The least popular, according to the conducted questionnaire, is Philosophy.

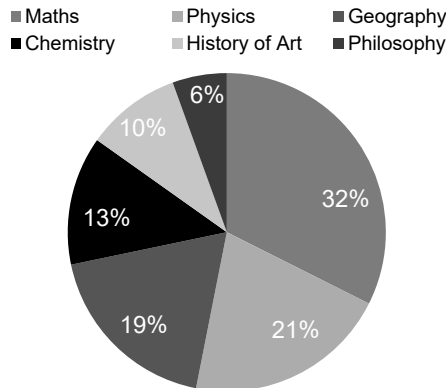


Figure 2. Popularity of the subjects taught.

THE MOST COMMONLY USED LANGUAGES AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

There is no denying the strength of English as the first foreign language of choice for most non-Anglophone countries in Europe and outside. Hence, also most of the students involved in bilingual programmes in Polish (lower-) secondary schools are exposed to English, because they undisputedly perceive its popularity and superiority over other foreign languages (Romanowski 2016b). Consequently, the dominance and ubiquity of English as the language of instruction in bilingual teaching has been widely observed in Poland.

As indicated earlier, the most common language of instruction is English and the results of the conducted study seem to confirm this trend. English is the language used in bilingual provision in 54 out of 62 schools. German is obviously the second most popular language with 26 schools surveyed. French is present in 13 schools out of those investigated and Spanish in only 10. The demonstrated numbers prove that in the 62 schools where the study was conducted there were 2 or 3 languages offered at the same time. Italian and Russian are not represented in the researched institutions though.

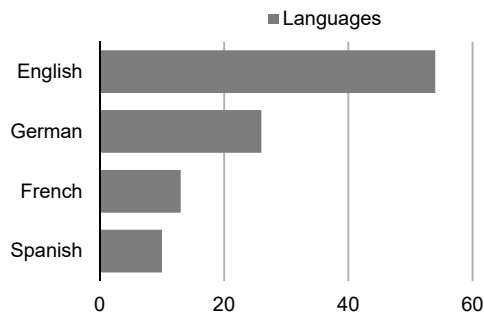


Figure 3. Popularity of languages as the medium of instruction.

ANY SUBJECT-LANGUAGE LINKS?

One of the questions in the study investigated the potential relationship between the taught content (subjects) and the foreign languages used as the medium of instruction. The objective was to check whether particular subjects are more popular in relation to the languages applied. Before the study was launched it was assumed that certain subjects are more easily taught, and hence they have become more popular.

Based on the results, it can be stated that both English and German are more frequently used with the (natural) sciences, such as: Maths, Physics and Chemistry.

In fact, English is the most often used medium of instruction in Poland as indicated earlier. There are 54 schools in the study where this language prevails, however as can be seen it is used in 76 cases, which implies that in some institutions it is applied to more than one subject. In case of German, it must be stressed that although it is used only in 26 schools, its frequency of occurrence in CLIL programmes is twice as high because it serves as the medium of instruction for 46 teachers. French is the medium of bilingual provision in 13 cases with a clear tendency towards humanistic subjects: History of Art and Philosophy. It is not used in Maths or Chemistry at all. A similar trend can be observed about the second Romance language, namely Spanish. Although it serves as the language of instruction for Maths and Physics, it is almost as popular for History of Art and Philosophy. It is not represented in the teaching of Geography or Chemistry though.

Table 4. The subject-language relationship

	English	German	French	Spanish	Total
Maths	29	15	0	3	47
Physics	14	10	3	3	30
Geography	18	7	2	0	27
Chemistry	10	9	0	0	19
History of Art	3	4	5	2	14
Philosophy	2	1	3	2	8

CLIL MODELS USED BY THE TEACHERS

In this part the popularity of the four curricular models among the teachers involved in the study will be presented. Model A, referred to as Extensive Language Medium Instruction, assumes that 90% of the lesson time is devoted to using a foreign language. The mother tongue is restricted to situations where translation of terminology is required or short recapitulation of the main points is needed.

According to the collected data Model A is the most frequently used one (87 teachers where 50 of them use English, 28 – German, 5 – French and 4 – Spanish). In Model B, Partial Language Medium Instruction, about 50% of lesson time is devoted to a foreign language, hence the two languages are used interchangeably and whenever necessary. In the study 28 teachers have used it successfully (14 – English, 10 – German, 2 – French and 2 – Spanish). Limited Language Medium Instruction (Model C) offers lessons with restricted use of a foreign language. Between 10% and 50% of lesson time is devoted to a foreign language. 18 teachers out of those surveyed admitted using this particular model

in their everyday teaching (9 – English, 4 – German, 4 French, 1 – Spanish). Last but not least, it is Model D – Specific Language Medium Instruction – where little time is devoted to the selected foreign language. Its use is limited to project work, however most of the content is studied earlier in Polish. Less than 10% of the total number of the surveyed teachers admit to be using it (3 – English, 4 – German, 2 – French, 3 – Spanish).

The discussed CLIL models affect the development of students' competence in a foreign language. Those models where the exposure to the target language is high, work for the benefit of their competence (Models A and B). In cases where the focus of the lesson is on the content and the language is treated only as a tool for instruction (Models C and D), the development of language skills will be much slower.

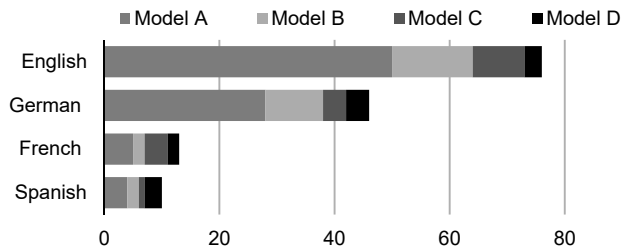


Figure 4. Popularity of CLIL models.

Different results might be achieved depending on the assumed objectives as well as a teacher's qualifications for teaching in bilingual classrooms. In Poland, in order to be eligible for teaching in CLIL classes, teachers are required to have obtained double qualifications: in both the content subject and a certificate of proficiency in a foreign language. Thus, following this line of reasoning it might be posited that the choice of curricular model is contingent upon the developed level of competence among teachers. Those teachers who are less proficient in a foreign language, which they employ as the language of instruction, are more likely to focus on the content itself as they might have majored from the programme reflecting the taught subjects, i.e. Biology, Geography, Maths, etc. On the other hand, teachers who have obtained full qualifications in foreign language studies will tip the balance towards developing learners' language competence at a very high level.

CONCLUSION

In Poland, bilingual classrooms are becoming more and more frequent day by day. It is possible to benefit from the experiences of other countries. In a first step it seems important to define what should be the aim(s) of this type of education. It is necessary to be clear about the outcomes for the Polish students. As a second step it could be possible to point out which non-linguistic disciplines seem to be particularly appropriate for this type of instruction. Every non-linguistic discipline may give their own contribution to the bilingual aim even if not every topic seems to be adequate for it. The challenge is to define the chances and the limits of all non-linguistic disciplines in a model of bilingual education.

As reflected in the results of the survey, there is still a lot to be researched. The subjects offered in bilingual provision in Poland do not differ much from those in other countries which can be regarded as pioneers of CLIL, i.e. Germany and Spain. What is needed urgently is a kind of unification of curricula and the amount of exposure. Since English prevails as the medium of instruction, it would seem reasonable to promote other languages, at least those used as the procedural languages of the European Commission, e.g. Germany and French. In addition, the greater Europe needs competences in more than one foreign language, so bilingual education may be one solution for the multilingual Europe of the future. Hence, we need to pursue a further development of plurilingual competence in our bilingual programmes as envisaged in the Council of Europe documents.

Last but not least, the classroom procedures and strategies employed by the majority of in-service teachers require further elaboration and investigation. The qualifications of those working in bilingual classrooms need to be verified against the existing regulations. Polish teachers involved in bilingual teaching demand subsequent training without which effective teaching will not be possible.

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