

**As línguas estrangeiras no  
ensino superior:  
propostas didáticas  
e casos em estudo**

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# A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF PLURILINGUAL TEACHING PROGRAMMES IN PUBLIC PRE- UNIVERSITY LEVELS IN GALICIA. CURRENT SITUATION UPDATE<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The teaching of foreign languages in Spain is gradually gaining importance at primary and (post) obligatory secondary education stages thanks to the implementation by the different regional governments of bi/plurilingual programmes. This study will focus on discussing the current situation in one particular bilingual community in Spain, Galicia. This regional territory was chosen because it is a part of Spain where little research has been conducted on the role of foreign languages in plurilingual educational settings (unlike other parts of Spain with a language of their own - Catalonia and the Basque Country). Aspects such as the current programmes that exist here to enhance the teaching and learning of EFL, the number of participating primary and secondary schools and the main content-subjects chosen to be taught in English at different educational stages will be described. This study will serve as the basis for further research on the effectiveness of these programmes with Galician learners.

*Keywords:* teaching, EFL, plurilingual programmes, CLIL, Galicia, non-university levels

## RESUMEN

El campo de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras está ganando importancia en España, tanto en educación primaria como en secundaria

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y Bachillerato, gracias a la implementación de los programas bilingües y plurilingües por parte de los diferentes gobiernos regionales. Este estudio se centra en describir la situación actual en una comunidad autónoma en particular, Galicia. Se escogió este territorio ya que es una zona de España donde hay escasos estudios sobre el papel que tienen las lenguas extranjeras en situaciones plurilingües (a diferencia de otras comunidades autónomas con su propio idioma como Cataluña y el País Vasco). Se describirán aspectos como los programas que existen actualmente para enfatizar la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera, el número de colegios e institutos que participan en dichos programas y las asignaturas de contenido escogidas para ser implementadas en inglés en diferentes niveles educativos. Este estudio servirá como base para futuras investigaciones sobre la eficacia de estos programas con alumnos gallegos.

*Palabras clave:* enseñanza, ILE, programas plurilingües, AICLE, Galicia, niveles no-universitarios

## 1 – INTRODUCTION AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In one of his articles in 2008, David Lasagabaster made reference to some interesting results included in the *2006 Special Eurobarometer on Europeans and their Languages* (number 243). According to this report, 56% of Spanish citizens admitted being monolingual and only 17% of them affirmed they could have a conversation in two other foreign languages. These percentages are very low in comparison to countries like Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovenia or Sweden. To exemplify, 92% of the citizens in Luxembourg stated they could speak two foreign languages apart from their L1(s) and 99% affirmed they could hold a conversation in at least one foreign language.

Since this study was carried out, the teaching of foreign languages in Spain is gradually gaining in importance thanks to plurilingual programmes like Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL from now onwards) to the extent that “Spain is rapidly becoming one of the European leaders in CLIL practice and research. The richness of its cultural and linguistic diversity has led to a wide variety of CLIL policies and practices which provide us with many examples of CLIL in different stages of development (...)” (Coyle, 2010, p. xviii). Similarly, Ruiz de Zarobe and Lasagabaster (2010, p. ix) stated that “in the last decade CLIL (...) has undergone a rapid development in the Spanish scenario. This is the result of a commitment with the European policies aimed at fostering multilingualism and a growing awareness of the need to learn foreign languages”.

Nowadays, we can distinguish between two contexts for CLIL approaches in public educational settings in Spain<sup>2</sup> (Ruiz de Zarobe and Lasagabaster, 2010):

- a) Monolingual communities such as Murcia, the Canary Islands, Madrid or Andalusia. In these regions, Castilian Spanish is the official language and learners can study one or two foreign languages via a CLIL approach.
- b) Bilingual communities, namely the Basque Country, Galicia and Catalonia-Valencian Community, together with the Balearic Islands. In these areas there are two official languages; as in the previous regions, learners also have the possibility of learning one or two foreign languages through CLIL.

Quite a lot of research on CLIL has been conducted in some Spanish autonomous communities, especially in the Basque Country (mainly by David Lasagabaster, Yolanda Ruiz de Zarobe, Jasone Cenoz and María Martínez-Adrián), Catalonia (by Carmen Pérez-Vidal, Inmaculada Fortanet and Cristina Escobar), the Balearic Islands (especially by María Juan-Garau) and Andalusia (Víctor Pavón, Fernando Rubio, María del Carmen Méndez-García and María Luisa Pérez-Cañado). Some of the positive results they have obtained indicate that CLIL learners: a) improve their English more than non-CLIL learners do (Lasagabaster and Doiz, 2016); b) have a higher language competence (Lasagabaster, 2011; Martínez-Adrián and Gutiérrez-Mangado, 2015); c) are better at different levels, namely: c1) written and oral skills (Lasagabaster, 2011), c2) speaking more fluently (Escobar and Sánchez, 2012) and, c3) English vocabulary (Escobar and Sánchez, 2012; Martínez-Adrián and Gutiérrez-Mangado, 2015); and d) CLIL learners tend to make fewer mistakes than non-CLIL learners; for instance, with definite and indefinite articles and complex clauses (Martínez-Adrián and Gutiérrez-Mangado, 2015). Moreover, other studies carried out in Spain have found that CLIL lessons benefit both female and male learners regarding the learning of technical language (Heras and Lasagabaster, 2015), they motivate learners (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2009; Lasagabaster, 2011) and the actual CLIL learners believe they will improve their English more by having EFL and CLIL classes rather than simply traditional EFL ones (Lasagabaster and Doiz, 2016).

Galicia, on the other hand, is a Spanish region where little research has been done on this topic of plurilingualism in non-university public educational levels. The only researcher I have come across is Xabier San Isidro but his last publication was in 2010. This lack of studies can be considered somewhat surprising since, as San Isidro himself stated in one of his articles, “en menos de 10 años, más de 500 profesores/as están implicados en programas CLIL y se supera ya la cifra de 10.000 alumnos” (2009, p. 51). Some of the reasons that may account for this lack of research may be: a) the fact that implementing a

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<sup>2</sup> This paper focuses on the role of CLIL approaches within the public educational sector in Spain; hence, private schooling offers of CLIL have not been taken into consideration here.

method such as CLIL is a slow process which represents a big change from traditional EFL teaching methods; b) low economic funding; and, c) content-teachers need to receive training in foreign languages.

The present paper therefore intends to be a contribution to combat this lack of studies in the sense that it aims at discussing the current situation of plurilingualism in public educational systems in Galicia by referring to aspects such as the programmes that exist to enhance the teaching and learning of EFL, the number of participating public primary and secondary schools and the main content subjects chosen to be taught in English at different educational stages, namely pre-school, primary education and obligatory and post-obligatory secondary education. As the title of this article states, this study should be considered as a preliminary paper; in other words, it intends to be a starting point for future research designed to test the effectiveness and faults of these plurilingual programmes in Galicia with Galician learners.

## 2 – PLURILINGUALISM IN GALICIA AND IN THE GALICIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

There are currently two types of programmes designed by the autonomous government of Galicia, the *Xunta de Galicia*, to help develop plurilingualism<sup>3</sup> in public schools. First of all, this regional government offers a programme aimed at establishing the use of Castilian Spanish and Galician in non-university levels which can be found in the official document *DECRETO 79/2010, de 20 de Mayo, para el plurilingüismo en la enseñanza no universitaria de Galicia*. Secondly, the *Plan galego de potenciación das linguas extranxeiras* (Dirección Xeral de Educación, Formación Profesional e Innovación Educativa, 2011) aims at encouraging the use of foreign languages at pre-university levels. For obvious reasons, the latter programme interests us most for the purposes of this paper; however, it is believed that both programmes perfectly complement each other and the former provides important background for the teaching of (foreign) languages in Galicia. Hence, both of these programmes will be described in more detail in the following paragraphs. Whenever possible, reference will be made to several public pre-university educational levels, namely, a) pre-school, b) primary education, c) obligatory secondary education and, d) post-obligatory secondary education.

### 2.1 – Programme 1: Establishing the use of Spanish and Galician at non-university levels

Currently, at pre-school level, “o profesorado usará na aula a lingua materna predominante entre o alumnado” (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9243-9244),

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<sup>3</sup> This term is used since, as mentioned above, Galicia is a bilingual community in which Spanish and Galician are both official languages. Hence, studying one or more foreign languages in the regional area implies learning an L3 or L4.

that is, teachers are expected to use the predominant mother tongue of the learners - if there are more learners whose main first language is Galician, then the corresponding teachers should speak to them in Galician in class. The learners' parents are asked to provide the teachers with this information at the beginning of the academic year. In contrast, whenever a teacher needs to address a particular learner, they should do so in that learner's main language, i.e., either Castilian Spanish or Galician, "atenderase de xeito individualizado o alumnado tendo en conta a súa lingua materna" (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9244).

At the remaining educational levels under analysis here, both Castilian Spanish and Galician are considered equally important. According to the *DECRETO 79/2010*, primary education centres should make sure their learners are exposed to both languages, "garantirase a adquisición da competencia lingüística propia da etapa e do nivel nas dúas linguas oficiais de Galicia" (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9244). The subject of science must be given in Galician and maths in Castilian Spanish; moreover, each centre can decide which of the remaining content subjects are to be taught in Galician and which in Spanish but the number of hours a week that learners are exposed to each of these official languages should be as homogenous as possible, "cada centro educativo (...) decidirá a lingua en que se impartirá o resto de materias de cada curso, garantindo que as materias en galego e en castelán se distribúen na mesma porcentaxe de horas semanais" (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9244).

In obligatory and post-obligatory secondary education, social sciences (geography and history) and science (both biology and geology) are to be taught in Galician whereas Spanish should be used for maths, technology and physics and chemistry. Once again, the different educational centres can choose the language to be used in the remaining content subjects but they should always bear in mind that learners must be exposed to each language during a similar amount of hours per week.

As would seem feasible, this official document also states that Spanish should be the only language used in Spanish language and literature classes, the same as Galician should be the only official language used in Galician language and literature lessons, both by the teachers and the learners, "nas clases de lingua e literatura galega e lingua e literatura castelá, usarase, respectivamente, o galego e o castelán, tanto por parte do profesorado como por parte do alumnado" (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9244). These rules are applied from primary education onwards. Moreover, in the different content subjects mentioned above (maths, science, geography, etc), each learner can choose whether to speak and write in Castilian Spanish or Galician although their respective teachers should try and get them to communicate in the official language being used in each subject:

En todas as áreas, materias ou módulos, agás nas sinaladas no parágrafo anterior e nas materias de lingua(s) estranxeira(s), o alumnado poderá utilizar nas manifestacións oral

e escrita a lingua oficial da súa preferencia. Non obstante o anterior, procurárase que o alumnado utilice a lingua en que se imparte a área, materia ou módulo (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9245).

Along similar lines, the teaching materials selected to be used in class should be written in the official language chosen for each subject, “os materiais e libros de texto das materias impartidas en galego e en castelán estarán redactados na lingua en que se imparta a materia” (DOGA 97, 2010, p. 9245).

## **2.2 – Programme 2: Plan Galego de Potenciación das Linguas Extranxeiras**

As mentioned in section 2, this programme, published by the *Dirección Xeral de Educación, Formación Profesional e Innovación Educativa* in 2011, aims at encouraging the use of foreign languages in non-university levels in Galicia. Three main sub-groups or sub-programmes can be differentiated: a) traditional EFL classes versus CLIL subjects in Galicia; b) other programmes available for learners to learn foreign languages; and, c) other programmes offered for teachers to learn foreign languages. In the following sections, each of these sub-programmes will be described in more detail.

### **2.2.1 – Traditional EFL classes versus CLIL lessons in Galicia. General features and some data**

In this section, two types of lessons will be differentiated: a) traditional EFL classes, that is, classes in which learners learn different aspects of the English language – vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, culture, morphology - and the main aim is to develop their written and oral skills, both at a receptive and a productive level; and, b) CLIL lessons in which the L2 is used to learn both content and as a way of getting learners to communicate in the foreign language. These latter classes should revolve around the four Cs of *Content, Communication, Cognition and Culture* (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010).

Generally speaking, at pre-school level in Galicia in public settings, the choice of introducing EFL for 3-6 year olds falls on each educational centre, i.e., it is not compulsory; on the other hand, in primary education onwards, learners receive obligatory lessons in foreign languages several times per week.

To begin with, in primary education, learners have 2 hours per week of traditional EFL classes in the first cycle (i.e., 6-8 year olds) and 3 hours per week in the second cycle (9-12 year olds). In addition, primary school learners are given the opportunity of being exposed to English during more hours by enrolling in CLIL lessons - referred to as *secciónes bilingües* - or

by participating in immersion courses for learning English within Spain:

(...) nesta etapa, a aprendizaxe do inglés non só se promove a través do currículo establecido na normativa, senón tamén mediante os diversos programas de formación lingüística, dos que destacan dous: as actividades de formación en linguas extranxeiras, en grupos, dentro de España, en contextos anglófonos e, sobre todo, a través do modelo AICLE/CLIL (...) de seccións bilingües (Dirección Xeral de Educación, Formación Profesional e Innovación Educativa, 2011, p. 11-12).

In obligatory secondary education, learners have an obligatory first foreign language 3 hours/week; moreover, in the first cycle (12-13 year olds), they have to take a second obligatory foreign language (once again, 3 hours per week), which becomes an optional subject for them in the second cycle (roughly 14-16 year olds). As in primary education, learners can once again choose to receive more teaching hours in English by enrolling in a content subject which is taught in the foreign language or by taking part in immersion courses offered by the autonomous government which can take place either in Spain or abroad, “tamén se promove nesta etapa a aprendizaxe de linguas extranxeiras mediante os programas de formación linguística en España e no extranxeiro, o programa CUALE<sup>4</sup>, os auxiliaries de conversa e, sobre todo, o ensino CLIL” (*Dirección Xeral de Educación, Formación Profesional e Innovación Educativa*, 2011. p. 12).

As with the previous educational stage, in post-obligatory secondary education, learners once again have to take an obligatory first foreign language (3 hours per week) and they can choose an optional second foreign language which, at this stage, is taught 4 hours per week instead of 3 as in secondary education. Moreover, depending on the centre they are studying at, they may also be able to study some content subjects in English through a CLIL approach.

In general terms, this means that primary school learners are exposed to languages (either to Spanish/Galician and/or to foreign ones) between 9 and 11 hours/week out of the total 25 weekly teaching hours they receive. Obligatory and post-obligatory learners, on the other hand, receive a total of 32 teaching hours per week and between 9 and 13 of them are devoted to the teaching of languages, either through traditional EFL classes, Spanish and Galician lessons or a content subject taught via a CLIL approach.

After having described the options that learners in different public educational stages within Galicia have in order to study foreign languages, I will now move on to describing in more detail the use of the foreign language in content subjects in Galicia, the requirements and obligations of both CLIL learners and teachers and some data concerning the current situation of CLIL lessons within the different Galician primary and secondary educational centres.

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<sup>4</sup> See section 2.2.2 for more information on this programme.

According to the DOGA 97 on the 20th May, 2011, at least 50% of a lesson should be taught in the foreign language, “a incorporación da lingua estranxeira na sección bilingüe acadará un mínimo dun 50 por cento” (DOG 97, 2011, p. 10349). Nevertheless, the foreign language should be introduced gradually, especially at beginner stages.

Any learners can take part in CLIL subjects if their parents or tutors give them permission. However, once they have started, they must not abandon the course unless extremely necessary:

Podrá acceder a las secciones bilingües el alumnado matriculado en cualquiera de los cursos de las etapas para los que su centro esté autorizado. (...) el alumnado que forme parte de una sección bilingüe no podrá abandonarla antes de acabar el curso escolar, salvo por razones justificadas ante el centro y con la autorización de ésta (...) la incorporación de un alumno o una alumna a una sección bilingüe requerirá la autorización por escrito de los padres, madres o tutores/las legales (DOG 97, 2011, p. 10350).

It is important to bear in mind that the different educational centres must make sure they offer their CLIL learners the opportunity of continuing their CLIL studies in the same subject for the following years. Hence, if a particular primary school offers CLIL lessons to third-year learners, they must continue offering this approach to the same learners when they pass this course and go on to fourth grade.

As can be read in the official document mentioned above, the minimum number of CLIL learners required so that a particular centre can offer content subjects in the foreign language is 12 except in post-obligatory secondary education, where a minimum of 10 learners are needed, “el número de alumnado para desarrollar una sección bilingüe, o para poner en marcha una en un curso distinto de los que haya autorizado, será con carácter general de 12 alumnos/as, excepto en el Bachillerato (...), donde se podrá iniciar una sección bilingüe con un mínimo de 10 alumnos/as” (DOGA 97, 2011, p. 10350). In addition, primary education learners can only be enrolled in a total of 2 CLIL subjects whereas in obligatory secondary education, this figure rises up to 4. Finally, official recognition will be given to all the learners who pass a CLIL subject, “Al final de cada curso el alumnado que sea calificado positivamente en el área, materia o módulo objeto de la sección bilingüe recibirá una credencial oficial expedida por el centro conforme participó en una sección bilingüe, que se hará constar mediante diligencia en su historial académico” (DOGA 97, 2011, p. 10350).

Moving on now to the figure of the teacher, we should distinguish between CLIL teachers and foreign language teachers. It is necessary for the former to have a CEFR B2 level in the foreign language they are going to teach the content subject in, “el profesorado especialista del área, material o módulo no lingüísticos que inicie el proyecto deberá (...)

acreditar su competencia en la lengua extranjera en el nivel B2 del marco común europeo de referencia para las lenguas” (DOGA 97, 2011, p. 10351). Hence, in the case of English, teachers need a level equivalent to the Cambridge Advanced English (CAE) exam. As can be read on page 10351 of the previously-mentioned official DOGA document, “a Consellería de Educación e Ordenación Universitaria procurará que as vacantes que se produzan nas áreas, materias ou módulos non lingüísticos (...) se cubran con profesorado coa debida competencia lingüística”, that is, it is the government’s responsibility to make sure the CLIL teachers selected are capable enough, linguistically speaking, to teach a content subject in a foreign language, in this case, English. Similarly, the Xunta de Galicia will be in charge of finding and selecting other adequate substitutes whenever needed due to medical leaves or the like.

The language teachers are in charge of coordinating the CLIL teachers, “realizar (...) la coordinación del equipo de profesores/as que forman parte del programa de secciones bilingües” (DOGA 97, 2011, p. 10352). Some of their other functions include taking part in teacher-training courses for CLIL teachers, helping in the design of teaching materials and reviewing the initial and final reports CLIL teachers are required to write in every academic year. On the other hand, content teachers teaching their subjects through a CLIL method have to complete teaching-training courses, design teaching materials and write different reports during the course year. (cf. DOGA 97, 2011, pp. 10352-10353 for more information).

Now that I have described the main features of CLIL lessons in Galicia, as well as the profiles of both CLIL learners and CLIL teachers, I will continue by analysing some data. To begin with, the number of pre-school centres that have introduced English into their curriculum has gradually increased over the last 12 years or so; consequently, the number of pre-school learners (3-6 year olds) that have been exposed to English in this period has also continued to increase throughout the last decade. More specifically, in the academic year 2004-2005, there were 37500 pre-school Galician learners studying English whereas the latest figures available indicate that there were over 63000 pre-school learners exposed to English in the academic year 2009-2010 (data extracted and adapted from the *Plan galego de potenciación das linguas extranxeiras* (Dirección Xeral de Educación, Formación Profesional e Innovación Educativa, 2011, p. 11).

I was unable to find empirical data available for the remaining educational levels. For this reason, I downloaded the respective DOGA official documents where one can find the lists of the different primary schools and secondary schools accepted to introduce CLIL subjects in each academic year (<http://www.edu.xunta.gal/portal/linguasestranxeiras/133/610>). After downloading these documents, I manually counted the number of primary and secondary schools that introduced CLIL between the academic years

2011 and 2015. Moreover, I also registered the different subjects to be taught in English. As would seem likely, I found some subjects in these documents that were to be taught in another foreign language (mainly French and German); for the purposes of this article, I did not take these into account in my analysis.

Broadly speaking, a similar situation to the one found in pre-school level is also registered in primary education onwards in the sense that the general findings indicate that CLIL is gradually gaining importance throughout the different academic years in all of the educational levels under analysis in this paper. More particularly, there are currently 893 educational centres in Galicia; 639 of these offer primary education studies and the remaining 254 are (post) obligatory secondary education centres<sup>5</sup>. As can be inferred from Figure 1 below, between 2011 and 2015, a total of 212 Galician educational centres have begun to introduce CLIL subjects. Out of these, 168 (79.25%) correspond to primary schools and the remaining 44 (20.75%) to secondary schools.

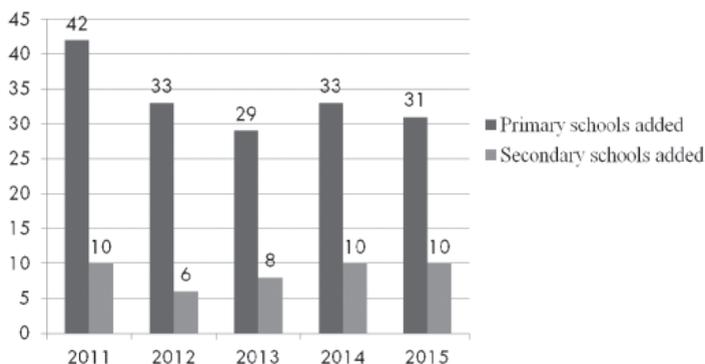


Figure 1: Number of primary and secondary schools that became plurilingual between 2011 and 2015.

After manually counting the number of new subjects to be taught in English through CLIL in the different schools and secondary schools, I found that in primary education, the main content subjects that have been chosen (and are still chosen) to teach via a CLIL method are the artistic disciplines, hence, art and music. Moreover, as shown in Figure 2, other subjects that are offered up to a certain extent to primary school CLIL learners in different schools are science, P.E. (Physical Education), I.C.T. (Information & Communication Technologies), maths and geography and history.

<sup>5</sup> Data extracted from the following website: <https://www.edu.xunta.es/centroseducativos/>

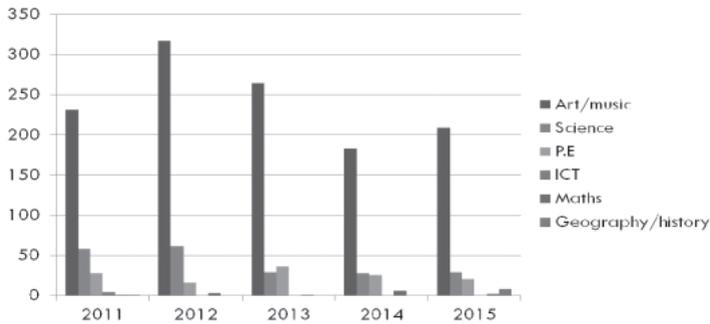


Figure 2: Most frequent subjects taught with a CLIL approach in primary education from 2011 to 2015.

A more varied situation can be found in obligatory secondary education. As can be inferred from Figure 3, around 8-10 different secondary schools have opted for offering art and geography and history with a CLIL method (with the exceptions of the years 2014 where this figure reached a minimum of 15 centres and 2015 when none of them included geography in their CLIL programme). Moreover, the number of centres that introduced CLIL in physics, and chemistry, technology and biology and geology has varied throughout the different years. Worth-mentioning is the high number of centres that chose Physical Education (P.E) to be taught via CLIL in 2013 and 2014, a figure which has dropped completely in the latest data available for the year 2015. Finally, in 2011, no centre offered learners the possibility of studying maths in English whereas in the last academic year, over 10 centres chose this content subject to be taught through CLIL.

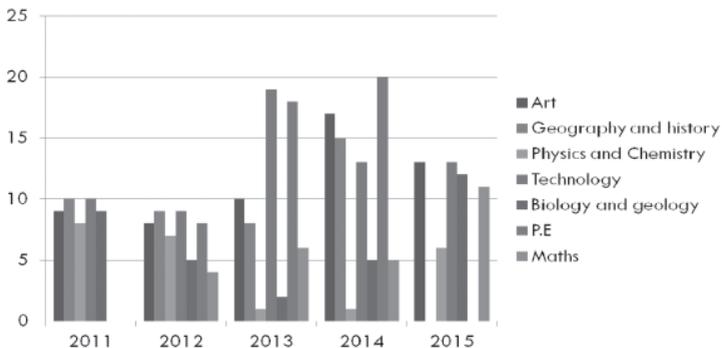


Figure 3: Most frequent subjects taught with a CLIL approach in obligatory secondary education from 2011 to 2015.

Finally, the process of teaching a content subject in a foreign language in post-obligatory secondary education has been slower and nowadays, there continue to be few centres which offer CLIL subjects at this educational stage. For instance, in 2012, only 5 new secondary schools offered plurilingual programmes at this stage with subjects like industrial technology, ICT, maths or contemporary history to be taught in English (cf. Table 1 below for more information).

Year	Number of new plurilingual centres introduced	Subjects taught
2012	5	Industrial Technology ICT Maths Contemporary History
2013	14	Economics Physics and Chemistry Industrial Technology P.E. Maths Contemporary History
2014	1	P.E.
2015	4	Industrial Technology Philosophy Scientific Culture Technical Drawing Artistic Drawing

Table 1: Introduction of new plurilingual centres between 2012 and 2015 with the corresponding subjects taught via CLIL.

### 2.2.2 – Other programmes available for learners to learn foreign languages

Apart from CLIL lessons, the Autonomous Government of Galicia also offers the following courses for non-university learners to learn and practise foreign languages, either in Spain or abroad<sup>6</sup>:

- a) CUALE (*Programa de cursos para la formación complementaria en lenguas extranjeras del alumnado*): these courses have been designed to

<sup>6</sup> All of this information, as well as the main information in section 2.2.3, has been taken from and adapted from <http://www.edu.xunta.gal/portal/linguasestranxeiras/programas>

help learners prepare the corresponding exams for the Spanish Official School of Languages; hence, they are carried out during the academic year. Learners can enrol in 4 different stages, from CUALE A1, addressed especially to 3rd year obligatory secondary education learners (14-15 year olds) to CUALE B2 for post-obligatory secondary education learners (17-18 year olds).

- b) AXUDASLE (*Actividades de formación en lenguas extranjeras para el alumnado*): this programme is based on summer courses which aim at helping learners improve their oral and written skills in a foreign language. They take place from the last week of June until the end of August. In 2014, a total of 680 grants for obligatory and post-obligatory secondary education learners were offered and in 2015 this figure was increased to 682. These particular courses are held within Galicia and learners are offered accommodation in student halls of residence.
- c) *Programa de inmersión lingüística en otoño*: these immersion courses are addressed to 6th year primary education learners (11 year olds) and to 2nd year obligatory secondary education learners (13 year olds). Groups of learners from different parts of Spain join each other to learn a foreign language. For instance, a group of Galician learners and another one from the Basque Country could meet in Madrid for the course. These courses take place during October and November every year, therefore, during the academic year.

### **2.2.3 – Other programmes offered for teachers to learn foreign languages**

There are also some courses offered by the Xunta de Galicia to help and encourage teachers to learn foreign languages. The most important ones are:

- a) PIALE (*Programa integral de aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras*): some of these annual courses are addressed to CLIL teachers. There are two different modules teachers can choose from: a.1) 75 hours of English in Galicia. This course takes place during the school term; hence, while completing it, the CLIL teacher is substituted by another teacher; or, a.2) 75 hours of English in the UK, Canada or Australia during three weeks in July, that is, during the summer holidays.
- b) CALC (*Cursos de actualización lingüística y comunicativa*): 120-hour courses designed to help content teachers pass official language exams

(A2, B1, B2). I am unaware if these courses still exist as I was only able to find information regarding the call for academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

Another positive change which is emphasising the teaching of foreign languages is that the Xunta de Galicia is gradually hiring more native language assistants in plurilingual centres. These native teachers should aim at helping learners improve their receptive and productive skills as well as introducing learners and teachers to cultural aspects of their own country. Moreover, the native speaker is expected to provide a correct linguistic model for learners to imitate.

### **3 – CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

As has been seen throughout this article, plurilingualism in Galicia is gradually gaining in importance since, for example, in recent years: a) quite a few pre-schools have started introducing toddlers to EFL; b) the amount of primary and secondary schools that offer CLIL lessons is also constantly rising as the years go by; c) in recent years, some secondary schools have begun offering CLIL classes to post-obligatory secondary education learners; d) each year, a different variety of content subjects are offered through CLIL; and, e) the Xunta de Galicia has designed several courses to help both learners and teachers learn foreign languages. Nevertheless, there is still a lot of research needed in this area of Spain; as mentioned in the introduction, there has been quite a lot of research conducted in other bilingual and monolingual communities in Spain (Basque Country, Andalusia, Catalonia) which have generally obtained positive results regarding the effectiveness of plurilingual programmes such as CLIL to motivate learners and help them improve their English at different levels.

This chapter has summarised the constant rising trajectory of plurilingualism in Galicia over the past decade. Now that this has been described, it is time to start analysing whether programmes such as CLIL actually help Galician learners learn English better, as well as the perspectives of both Galician CLIL teachers and Galician learners regarding the teaching materials used, the use of several languages in class, teacher-training, etc. Consequently, some topics for future research could be: a) analysing the methodology currently being used in CLIL classes in Galicia. Thus, for instance, it would be interesting to see whether there is a tendency for both the content and the language teachers to be in the classroom at the same time or whether the CLIL teachers are alone when teaching their subject, to describe how often and when exactly do learners use the foreign language in

class and when their native language(s) (to ask a question, to correct their homework, for small talk, etc) or to analyse the method and activities used by the teacher to teach specific vocabulary in English; b) a second group of studies could be aimed at analysing the effectiveness of these programmes on Galician learners' learning process of English. In other words, research is needed to answer questions like: Do plurilingual methods such as CLIL actually work with Galician learners? Do Galician learners improve their English? In what respects? Does their pronunciation, fluency, grammar and/or vocabulary improve? Are Galician learners exposed to English through traditional EFL classes and CLIL lessons better at English than learners who are only in contact with English in their weekly EFL classes? If so, what skills and competences are CLIL learners better at?; c) finally, another interesting field could be to analyse both learners' and teachers' opinions regarding CLIL lessons. For instance, one could analyse whether CLIL learners are more motivated than non-CLIL ones with regard to learning English. Moreover, we could analyse the reasons why they choose certain CLIL subjects. Regarding teachers, it may be interesting to research aspects such as: Do CLIL teachers feel they receive enough training opportunities? What aspects do they find difficult in teaching CLIL subjects? or, Do they think they receive enough support from the language teachers and vice versa?

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