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Book Review

Promoting metalanguage awareness among CLIL content teachers

The Roles of Language in CLIL, A. Llinares, T. Morton, R. Whittaker. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (2012). 344 pp., ISBN: 978-0-521-15007-1 (Paperback)

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an approach particularly implemented and investigated in Europe. CLIL usually refers to the teaching of a subject or curricular content together with another language (Dale & Tanner, 2012). Conceived as an umbrella term, the multiplicity of models found in practice (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010) may be placed along a continuum which moves from content-driven models such as bilingual education to language-driven models such as project work. *The Roles of Language in CLIL* is positioned at the content end with a two-fold aim: examining discourse and genres in the CLIL classroom and promoting language awareness among CLIL content teachers.

In the Introduction, Llinares, Morton, and Whittaker state that '[t]his book is about a bilingual educational approach in which the study of academic content is combined with the use and learning of a foreign language (p. 1).' The authors stress this view by adding that their focus is to investigate contexts in which English is the medium of instruction. For this purpose, the authors use a corpus which consists of 500,000 words of interaction in secondary CLIL classrooms in Spain, Austria, Finland, and the Netherlands. The methodological framework used is Cenoz's (2009) continua of multilingual education. These continua indicate 'how linguistic, sociolinguistic and school factors combine in different ways in different bi- and multilingual education contexts, thus making it possible to compare different situations by seeing them as lying at different points on a range of

continua' (p. 4). In addition, the authors incorporate Systemic Functional Linguistics, Coyle et al.'s (2010) Language Triptych, Sociocultural Theory, and a focus-approach-action framework for classroom talk (Mortimer & Scott, 2003) to arrive at a converging framework for the multi-level, though fragmented, linguistic analysis of the corpus under scrutiny.

The book is divided into three parts and each of them is subdivided into chapters. Part I deals with the role of language in CLIL classroom interaction particularly with the function and metalanguage underpinning talk between teachers and students and among students. Part II focuses on the language of academic subjects in CLIL by discussing genre, grammar, and lexis in CLIL subjects. Last, in Part III the authors discuss the roles of language in CLIL from different interrelated areas: focus on meaning and focus on form, academic and interpersonal language development, writing skills development, and assessment. At the end of each chapter, readers will find a conclusion, a set of questions and tasks (with answer keys at the back) to promote concept application, and a list of references. The book finishes with a glossary which readers will find helpful if it is viewed as a quick reminder of specific terminology.

Part I moves from a focus on classroom registers to the crucial role of language in interaction patterns and scaffolding. The three chapters in this part are extremely rich in classroom extracts from different content lessons such as Biology and Technology. Through their analyses anchored in the different frameworks mentioned above, the authors highlight the 'kinds of linguistic competences required by CLIL teachers as they use the L2 to manage the classroom' (p. 31). With this aim in mind, readers will discover the interrelations between regulative and instructional discourses, horizontal and vertical

knowledge, and dialogic and authoritative dimensions in classroom talk. All these concepts and discussions around them clearly point out the importance of metalanguage in the CLIL classroom. CLIL teachers are encouraged to promote dialogue and interaction in such a way that the classroom moves from everyday knowledge to scientific knowledge. In the authors' view, this calls for a dialogic teaching approach through which cognitive and language development, and autonomy are developed and systematically reflected on.

CLIL teachers need to develop and plan their lessons not only in terms of materials and activities but also, and perhaps more importantly, in terms of the interaction formats and language needed to participate in the lesson. Along these lines, Part I provides examples of the language used for scaffolding topic introduction and task completion, to name a few, through different interaction formats. Llinares et al. stress that both teacher- and student-generated interactions are equally important since they are the realisation of different registers and aims. In relation to the role of questions in these interactions, they also assert that display questions are as necessary as referential questions as they all encourage different levels of participation and involve varying cognitive and language processes.

In Part II, Llinares et al. describe subject discourses through text deconstruction. First, they introduce the concept of genre and propose a method for genre analysis, in fact the description of generic structure of texts in different school subjects. They discuss the genres of science, geography, and history by providing examples of how procedures, recounts, accounts, reports, and arguments are structured differently in these three subjects. The authors include useful tables with generic stages and texts taken from coursebooks used in

CLIL classrooms. While the authors insist on the method they provide in this part, readers are not explicitly told about it. Rather, CLIL teachers may be expected to extract this from the several samples provided and arrive at a methodology for the description of the generic structures of texts based on the authors' text analysis.

From text organisation, the authors move to show how grammar and lexis are to be addressed holistically and together with content. Overall, this section of Part II is a condensed description of functional grammar targeted at content teachers. Readers are introduced to concepts such as field, tenor, and mode, process types, nominal groups, pre- and post-modification, time and logical markers, and tools for reformulating and unpacking original texts. The authors make clear that they do not expect teachers to become grammar teachers, but if language awareness is sought, then grammar and lexis need to be brought to the foreground.

In Part III the inextricable link between language and content is realised by promoting a dual focus on form and meaning. According to the authors, CLIL teachers need to resort to implicit and explicit language learning together with proactive as well as reactive approaches which encourage noticing, awareness, and practice. This focus on language should be extended to all academic registers and genres found in the CLIL classroom. However, the authors add that, by drawing on Cummins' BICS and CALP, ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions of language should be attended to so that students can operate inside and outside the classroom. Along these lines, readers will find examples of interactions which display the linguistic tools used by CLIL students to socialise in group work or expand their turns. Although the book seems to mostly focus on speaking skills, a usual feature in the CLIL literature, the authors compare processes, student roles, and

grammatical features present in speaking and writing in order to see how the former may scaffold the latter. The authors believe that by raising awareness of field, tenor, and mode, students can produce coherent and cohesive written texts.

As it is the case in most books about ELT approaches, the last chapter is devoted to assessment. The authors' claims as regards widening the range of assessment methods in CLIL are not innovative but it is a useful reminder for teachers when planning their lessons and programmes. However, what is original about this chapter is the content-language assessment scale the authors offer through different examples. The scale may be adapted to different subjects and tasks and can represent the registers and genres systematically recovered throughout the book chapters.

In general terms *The Roles of Languages in CLIL* is a successful attempt to attend to the roles of language and language development in the CLIL classroom by encouraging metalanguage knowledge. A plus in this book is the number of boxes, tables, and extracts which illustrate how different language features and tools for linguistic analysis can be combined to help us become aware of the richness we usually find in classrooms. Although the book is CLIL-driven, the promotion of language awareness and the understanding of the roles of language across registers and genres should be a vital part of any good practices regardless of the approaches claimed. After all, all teachers should be language teachers and all teachers and students should be empowered to benefit from the multi-exponentiality of language for their cognitive and interpersonal development.

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