

The language challenge for higher education institutions in Europe, and the specific case of CLIL

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1. Introduction

The role of languages in HE in Europe has changed significantly in recent years. Traditionally, language study in HE was largely the reserve of language specialists, either in terms of philological/literary studies, or with regard to more practical language tasks such as translation and interpretation. In recent years, however, the situation has changed, and an increasing number of HEIs have set in place policies designed to extend language learning to students of other non-linguistic disciplines, as well as to other institutional actors such as teaching and administrative staff. These developments are linked to changes in the broader academic and professional environment. Recent decades have seen a dramatic increase in international mobility and exchanges, so that the “global village” has become a tangible reality in many aspects of everyday life. This trend is particularly marked within the European continent, as witnessed by the growth of the European Union (EU) to include 27 countries with 23 official languages (to say nothing of the many other regional or migrant languages) and a population of 490 million. This makes Europe an intensely multilingual and multicultural area. If HEIs wish to prepare their students, graduates and staff to operate within this context, attention clearly needs to be given to their linguistic preparedness. Furthermore, the knowledge-based economy has led to a dramatic increase in the number of persons entering HE: In 2003 12,5 million students were involved in HE in Europe, as compared with 9 million ten years earlier (COM, 2003). This means that HEIs are preparing a greater number of students for an increasingly multilingual and multicultural academic and professional environment.

Furthermore, languages play a significant role in the realisation of many of the

goals of the Bologna Process (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna_en.html) (Ritz, 2006). To begin with, it is evident that the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which gathers together more than 40 different European countries, will become an effective reality only if students, researchers, academics, and university management are able to communicate effectively with their counterparts from other countries. The role of languages in the promotion of mobility, both academic and professional, is equally clear. Furthermore, the European economy is increasingly more integrated, most EU countries trading more with their EU neighbours than with other commercial partners. For this reason, the effectiveness of individual companies and the well-being of the economy as a whole depend significantly on the ability of individuals to communicate effectively with partners, staff, clients, or suppliers from other European countries. Indeed, a number of studies (e.g. CILT, 2006; Connell, 2002; Hall, 2000; Mackiewicz, 2004; Moore and Hagen, 2006; Orban, 2007) have shown the role which language skills play in the economy, including the negative role played by the absence of such skills. Languages thus play a significant role in the promotion of the EHEA, of mobility, and also in terms of enhancing graduates' employability.

This new situation confronts HEIs with what could be described as the language challenge, namely how they should best equip their students with the linguistic and intercultural competences which they need in order to participate in the increasingly integrated academic and professional context created by the EU and the EHEA.

2. The language policy: the challenge

In response to the changes outlined above, a growing number of HEIs have set up language policies designed to extend language learning possibilities to students and other institutional actors. These developments were studied within the framework of the project European Network for the Promotion of Language Learning among all Undergraduates (ENLU, www.fu-berlin.de/enlu), which was managed by the European Language Council (ELC), as well as follow-up work conducted in collaboration with colleagues working in a number of HEIs across Europe. The situation with respect to the development of HE language policy is varied. On the one hand, while significant advances have been made in certain institutions, this is by no means the norm. Indeed, language specialists frequently report the presence of obstacles to the development of a language policy in their institution. For example, in a questionnaire survey conducted at the ENLU launch meeting in Brussels 23-24 April 2004

(Tudor, 2005), 23 out of 32 respondents mentioned the existence of obstacles to the creation of a language policy in their institution. The most frequently mentioned obstacles were funding, attitudes (e.g. “A lot of people don’t see any need for a language policy”, “Poor understanding of the role of languages by professors”), and organisational/institutional problems (e.g. “Rivalries between departments”, “The ‘problem’ of language credits crowding out other courses”, “Each faculty develops their curricula and is more interested in the academic science related courses”). Extensive consultation during and subsequent to the ENLU project confirmed the fairly widespread presence of such obstacles.

Furthermore, even when the need to develop a language policy has been accepted, a variety of questions arise as to the form this policy should take. In this respect, it needs to be emphasised that no one language policy model is equally appropriate in all contexts (Tudor, 2007; Tudor and Mackiewicz, 2006). A variety of different strategies exist, from “traditional” language courses to the setting up of partnerships with institutions in other countries. One of the more widely used strategies, however, is the teaching of content courses through a second language (L2) or CLIL (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/teach/clil_en.html). This paper will henceforth focus on a sample of language policies developed in a number of HEIs in Europe, with specific attention being given to CLIL.

3. Case studies: sample of he language policies

So far, this paper has focused on the rationale for the expansion of language learning in HE in Europe. This section will profile a sample of five HE language policies studied within the framework of the ENLU project and in follow-up research. Each of the language policies profiled below includes CLIL together with a range of other strategies as part of a broader language policy package. The five language policies selected are presented schematically in order to highlight their main components.

3.1. *Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium: Solvay Business School (SBS)* (www.solvay.edu/EN/Programmes/ingest/Programme_langues.php)

- Languages (English and Dutch) obligatory in the 3 years of the BA (1st cycle) programme.

- 30/180 ECTS of the BA programme devoted to languages —15 each for Dutch and English.
- Content of BA language courses linked to students' academic field, i.e. language for specific purposes (LSP) orientation.
- Achievement target fixed with reference to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) —level C1 by end of BA3.
- Limited formal language teaching in MA (2nd cycle) programme, but a significant percentage of courses taught in English or Dutch/CLIL.
- All students spend one semester in MA on a mobility programme.
- Ongoing efforts to integrate language and content courses more fully in BA programme.

3.2. *Kodolanyi Janos University College (KUC), Hungary*

- New language policy launched in 2003-04. Main features in the new policy: move to LSP teaching, introduction of content teaching in L2, fostering of independent language learning.
- Subject areas: Economics; Media Studies; Tourism; Catering; International Relations.
- Language courses obligatory in BA1 and BA2: BA1 courses focus on general language competences; BA2 courses have an LSP orientation.
- Content courses in L2 start in BA2/CLIL, with the formal language courses serving to support students' interaction with L2 content teaching/CLIL.
- From BA3, no formal language courses, but content teaching in L2/CLIL extended.
- Achievement target fixed with reference to the CEFR —level B2 by end of BA programme.
- Target languages: English, French, German.
- Independent language learning skills fostered by learner training in formal language courses and creation of independent language learning centre.
- Language policy awarded European Language Label in 2005.

3.3. *University of Food Technology (UFT), Plovdiv, Bulgaria*

- Bilingual degree programme (5 years) in French and Bulgarian in three main specialist areas: Wine Technology; Milk and Dairy Products Technology; Technology of Bread, Bread Products and Confectionery Products.
- 360 hours of French language courses in years 1-3 with an LSP orientation.
- From year 3, students specialise in one of the three areas listed above. From this point on, around 80 % of content courses are taught in French/CLIL.
- Strong professional orientation: French plays a significant role in the students' specialist domain.
- Admission to the programme is dependent upon success in a French language admission test.
- The UFT follows curricula common to French universities in the same field of study, has partnerships with French universities, and students may follow a summer internship in France.
- All content lecturers have followed French language courses at the Francophone Centre (set up in collaboration with the Alliance Française); they can also specialise in their content field in French universities.
- English taught in years 1-4: Move from general language in year 1 to English for Specific Purposes in years 2 and 3, and English for Business in year 4.

3.4. *Université de Fribourg (UFR), Switzerland (www.unifr.ch/main/bilinguisme/texte.php)*

- Fribourg is a bilingual university in that full academic programmes exist in both French and German, and students may opt for a monolingual programme in either language. From the 1980s, the university built on this potential to offer officially bilingual degree programmes.
- Fribourg offers three types of bilingual degree: (in French) Diplôme avec attestation bilingue; Diplôme bilingue; Diplôme “bilingue plus”.
- The difference between these degrees depends on the percentage of course requirements fulfilled in the L2 (inc. taking exams), and the presence of additional courses in LSP and L2 culture.
- The concept of Rampe linguistique or Sprachrampe is designed to allow students to follow a bilingual programme without being bilingual at the start of their studies.

- Learning advice structures designed to help students choose the most relevant bilingual programme and to manage their learning.

3.5. *Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Denmark (<http://uk.cbs.dk/content/view/full/55274>)*

- Fully bilingual university —Danish and English are parallel working languages in all aspects of university life.
- Commitment to bilingualism in the national language plus English in terms of employability of graduates.
- Commitment to internationalisation via use of English as a quality criterion in all aspects of teaching and research.
- Teaching of courses in both languages across the whole academic programme.
- Support structures for both students and staff in English (for Danish speakers) and in Danish (for non-Danish speakers).
- Quality control measures set in place regarding the English language skills of teaching and administrative staff.
- Measures to support the use and quality of Danish (especially in the written language) of Danish students and staff.
- Possibilities for the study of languages other than English and Danish.

4. Case studies: observations

The language policy models outlined above differ from one another in a number of ways. Certain observations may, however, be made.

One is that the specific language learning and language contact strategies that may be adopted vary in response to aspects of context, and one key aspect of context are the levels of L2 competence in the institution or country concerned. The CBS opted for a fully bilingual approach to teaching in both the national language (Danish) and the non-national language (English). In part, this reflects a strategic choice of the institution. In part, too, it reflects the fact that levels of achievement in English are generally high among Danish high school graduates, as well as among the Danish population as a whole, and thus also among teaching and administrative staff. The language policies of the KUC, the UFT and the ULB, on the other hand, cater for a significant degree of formal language teaching. Indeed, even in the bilin-

gual context of Fribourg, the creation of the *Rampe linguistique* and of different types of bilingual programme offer students linguistic support and the possibility to opt for differing degrees of bilingual study corresponding to their initial level of competence in the L2. One basic consideration in the development of a language policy thus relates to initial levels of L2 competence of the student population and also, in terms of the teaching of courses through an L2, of the teaching staff. On the last point, the language support offered to UFT lecturing staff via the Francophone Centre merits consideration.

The UFr illustrates the role which can be played by exploiting an existing potential, in this case the simultaneous presence of study programmes in both French and German. This set the basis for the creation of bilingual degree programmes, even if measures needed to be set in place to provide language support for students who are not bilingual at the start of their university programme. Bilingual universities such as Fribourg are relatively rare in Europe, even in bi- or multilingual countries. However, the EHEA opens up possibilities for various forms of institutional collaboration, including cross-border partnerships, which could derive valuable insights from the Fribourg model. Indeed, the partnerships which exist between the UFT and various French universities are a practical example of such collaboration.

The language policies adopted in the five institutions surveyed also show a concern with employability.

- The CBS and the SBS are both business schools which have the explicit goal of equipping their graduates for employability. Their choices in the language field reflect this concern —Danish-English bilingualism in the case of the CBS, trilingualism in French-Dutch-English in the case of the SBS, the specific language choices reflecting the demands of both the national and the international workplace.

- The UFT trains students in fields where French plays a significant role (fermentation and confectionery products), while also providing graduates with good levels of command of English. This linguistic preparation is one of the reasons why the UFT's graduates enjoy a high degree of employability in their field of specialisation.

- The KUC, too, prepares students for fields (economics, media studies, tourism, catering, international relations) in which the knowledge of languages is an evident asset.

- The UFr offers students the opportunity to achieve high levels of both linguistic and cultural competence in two of the national languages of Switzerland, and thus gives them a high degree of employability.

Another observation is that, in all five institutions surveyed, there is a trend towards the integration of language learning and content study. This may be seen in the preference for an LSP orientation in formal language teaching and in the teaching of content subjects via an L2, or CLIL. The question of CLIL, however, will be taken up in the following sections of the paper.

In conclusion, then, although certain common threads underpin the language policies adopted in the five institutions surveyed, it is clear that no one model should be viewed as canonical, and that a variety of strategies exist. The language policies developed in the KUC, the UFT and the ULB are more representative of the various language policies analysed within the framework of the project ENLU. This reflects the fact that, in many contexts, a more or less substantial amount of formal language teaching is necessary before other strategies become feasible. The CBS and the UFr have been included in order to offer a broader perspective on the strategies adopted in institutions which can profit from other possibilities. The choices which an institution may make in the language field therefore depend on a variety of factors. These include considerations of a directly pedagogical nature, but are also linked to the strategic choices of the institution, as well as to a realistic assessment of the context. While there is substantial communality in the goals pursued by the language policies developed in various HEIs, considerable diversity exists in the specific form which such policies may assume in one institution or another.

5. The case for CLIL

The fact that all five of the language policies surveyed above include a component of CLIL, together with the fact that CLIL (or L2-medium instruction, at least) is an increasingly widespread phenomenon in HE in Europe, suggests that CLIL merits specific consideration within the broader HE language policy framework.

Research into CLIL at primary and secondary levels has suggested that it has benefits which go beyond the learning of the L2 and include increased motivation for language learning, improved intercultural competence, and various cognitive gains (Dalton-Puffer, forthcoming; Eurydice, 2006; Marsh, 2002, for overviews). Insufficient research has as yet been conducted into CLIL at tertiary level to state whether these gains hold at this level, too. A number of legitimate hypotheses may, however, be expressed as to the potential benefits of CLIL in HE.

5.1. *Motivation*

There is a fairly general agreement in language teaching circles that motivation plays a crucial role in language learning (Dörnyei, 2001). With the expansion of language learning in HE, it has to be acknowledged that not all students of non-linguistic disciplines will necessarily feel a strong personal motivation for language study. However, the linking of content study with the learning of an L2 may potentially strengthen students' motivation to learn this language. This may derive from the transfer of students' motivation for their chosen field of study to the language of instruction, or simply from students' desire to succeed in their chosen subject area. The motivational value of CLIL is thus a potentially powerful argument for its use as one component of a broader HE language policy.

5.2. *An authentically communicative activity*

Another potential benefit of CLIL relates to the nature of the communicative interaction to which it gives rise. One of the main challenges which language teachers face is to create learning activities which generate a genuine need and desire to communicate via the L2. CLIL offers the possibility of creating precisely such a situation. Studying via an L2 engages students in a variety of communicative tasks which have a clear pragmatic goal, namely to assimilate the knowledge and competences linked to their chosen field of study. Depending on the mode of teaching and learning adopted, this involves a range of communicative activities —listening comprehension and note taking, reading lecture notes or background references, asking questions and spoken interaction, as well as various modes of writing. In order to succeed in an academic course taught in an L2, students are obliged to use this language as a practical communicative tool in order to assimilate academic content, prepare their course assignments, prepare for and take their examinations, and so on. In this respect, CLIL satisfies many of the parameters for successful communicative language teaching, namely an integrated, goal-oriented and pragmatically relevant interaction with the target language (cf. Johnson and Johnson, 1998, 69-74). Furthermore, given that CLIL involves students assimilating complex and potentially unfamiliar academic material, it is plausible that CLIL can support in-depth learning.

5.3. *Parallel development of academic/professional competences and domain-relevant communicative skills*

The increasingly multilingual nature of the European workplace means that graduates are likely to have to make use of their academic training in more than one language. The fact of pursuing at least part of their academic and professional training in an L2, as is the case in CLIL, helps students to develop their academic/professional competences in parallel with language competences intimately linked to their chosen field of specialisation. In this way, CLIL can help students to acquire both professional knowledge and skills and, at the same time, the ability to communicate the relevant concepts in an L2 as well as their first language.

5.4. *Preparation for lifelong learning*

Along with promotion of the EHEA, mobility, and employability, lifelong learning is one of the main goals of the Bologna Process. This reflects the fact that we live in a rapidly evolving professional environment. However relevant students' academic training may be at a given point in time, it is highly likely that they will have to initiate further learning cycles subsequent to graduation. This is particularly marked with respect to languages and thus to lifelong language learning (Mackiewicz, 2002). Whichever language or languages students may learn during their HE programme, there is every likelihood that they will, at some future stage of their career, find it necessary to deepen their knowledge of a language they have already studied or to learn a new language.

Helping students acquire language learning skills which they may transfer from the learning of one language to that of another is thus a significant goal of language teaching in HE. In this respect, CLIL may offer a number of advantages. It is an integrated learning activity which calls upon students to engage in a range of different learning tasks —independent consultation of L2 textual materials, use of dictionaries or other language reference materials, negotiation and disambiguation of meaning, drafting and revising L2 written work, or preparing for oral presentations and examinations in the L2, for example. In this way, CLIL may potentially help students to develop learning skills which they will be able to transfer to subsequent language learning. This is a plausible hypothesis but one which, to the author's knowledge, has not as yet been researched. This, as other aspects of CLIL in HE, is an area which merits further investigation.

5.5. Overview

In summary, then, there are plausible pedagogical arguments for the use of CLIL in HE. Certain points, especially the question of in-depth learning and the development of transferable learning skills, merit further research. It is fairly uncontroversial, however, that CLIL is a valid and potentially productive language learning strategy which merits consideration within the broader framework of HE language policy development.

6. A few (uncomfortable) questions on CLIL

As already indicated, CLIL has been fairly extensively researched at primary and secondary levels. The significant expansion in CLIL in HE in recent years has not been supported by a comparable level of research. If CLIL is to achieve its goals, careful consideration must be given to various aspects of its realisation.

6.1. *L2-medium instruction = CLIL?*

So far in this paper, no distinction has been made between CLIL and the teaching of content courses in an L2. The distinction is, however, a significant one. CLIL is a pedagogical strategy which involves the joint pursuance of two sets of goals —the acquisition of knowledge and skills in a given content domain and, in parallel, the acquisition of communicative skills in an L2. This implies clear goal-setting and the pedagogical planning and monitoring of both the delivery and the uptake of teaching in the L2. Two of the institutions profiled above (UFT and CBS) explicitly mention quality control and language support measures for lecturers teaching through an L2. Content teaching via an L2, with English being the favoured language, is increasingly widespread in HE in Europe. The question therefore arises as to whether this qualifies as CLIL by dint of a clear goal differentiation and pedagogical support. If this is not the case, and Marsh (2004) suggests that it is not, then one can question whether L2-medium instruction is likely to yield the language learning gains which CLIL is hypothesised to offer. It also raises fundamental questions as to the overall quality of teaching and learning in HE.

6.2. *Language competence of students —between challenge and obstacle*

As emerged from the case studies, in particular SBS, KUC and UFT, the introduction of CLIL (or L2-medium instruction, at least) followed more or less extensive formal language teaching. Studying complex academic material through an L2 places significant demands on students' linguistic abilities. This clearly represents a challenge. The question arises, however, as to when a challenge becomes an obstacle, such that studying through an L2 may *prevent* students from assimilating the content of their academic programme effectively, and thus have a negative influence of the quality of their learning. This is a factor which clearly merits research. For example, from which level on the CEFR would students be judged able to follow content teaching in an L2 without the risk of an impairment to the quality of their learning?

In addition to language competences, consideration may also need to be given to students' attitudes and motivations. Accepting the linguistic and cognitive challenge of studying through an L2 may be perceived differently depending on students' attitude to language learning, to the L2, or their perception of the role of the L2 in their academic/professional training. Such factors may exert a non-negligible influence on students' interaction with L2-medium instruction, and thus on the success of the initiative. Here, too, research is needed. It would, however, seem wise to undertake an evaluation of students' perceptions in this area before launching into L2-medium instruction.

6.3. *Language competence of teachers*

As already suggested, questions relating to the linguistic competence of lecturing staff also play a role in the adoption of CLIL. Marsh (2004, *op. cit.*) states that such measures are “unreported”, although the CBS and UFT case studies suggest that efforts are being made in this direction in at least some institutions. One question which arises here is whether a certain minimum level of language competence is required in order to be able to teach effectively in an L2. Another is whether HEIs have or are willing to set in place testing and support procedures designed to evaluate this factor.

Other related questions arise. One is whether teaching in an L2 causes any identifiable losses in a lecturer's teaching abilities. If this were to be the case, focused language support could be organised. Another question is whether the linguistic and

communicative demands of L2 teaching vary from one discipline to another. In certain disciplines (mathematics or engineering, for example) a significant amount of information is provided in non-linguistic forms such as formulae or graphics. These may serve to support communication of discipline-specific information and thus support understanding of linguistic elements. In other disciplines, information may be borne in a dominantly verbal manner, which may place greater demands on the communicative abilities of both lecturers and students. Here, too, further research is required in order to better understand the linguistic demands of teaching (and studying) in an L2 (Taillefer, 2004). The results of this research would serve to guide the decision as to whether to opt for L2-medium instruction or not, and also the linguistic and pedagogical support offered to lecturers.

6.4. *Collaboration between content and language teachers*

In one way or another, all the case studies show a combination of formal language teaching (or linguistic support in the case of the CBS and UFr) and L2-medium instruction/CLIL. Indeed, at the KUC, the BA2 language courses have the explicit goal of supporting the introduction of L2-medium instruction. Marsh (2004, *op. cit.*), however, suggests that collaboration between language specialists and content lecturers is by no means the norm. This may result from institutional factors, language centre or department staff having little or no contact with content lecturers, or even from questions of status, language teaching staff in many HEIs having a lower institutional status than mainstream lecturers. Collaboration between language and content specialists can be beneficial in a number of ways, however. One is that formal language teaching may, at least in part, be geared to providing students with preparation for the transition from language learning per se to the use of the L2 for study purposes. Another is that language specialists may be able to operate in parallel with content lecturers to observe students' interaction with L2-medium instruction and offer ongoing advice and support to both students and lecturers.

6.5. *Pedagogical adaptations*

The type of support which either students or lecturers may require in order to make L2-medium instruction effective, as a number of the other points raised in this sec-

tion, merits research. It is likely, however, that at least a certain number of pedagogical adaptations may be called for. It was suggested above that studying through an L2 places additional demands on students, and that a balance needs to be struck between the (potentially productive) challenge of studying through an L2 and the use of the L2 becoming an obstacle to effective learning. This might usefully be investigated on at least two levels.

The first would relate to pedagogical support geared to supporting students' interaction with L2 teaching. This could include specific pedagogical measures such as:

- Requiring students to read specified content material prior to attending lectures, or providing a summary of the target material.
- Setting students focus questions prior to lectures so as to prepare them cognitively for the content of the lecture.
- Providing visual support to lectures in the form of slides shown during the lecture, potentially with annotated versions of the slides being made available to students for personal study out of classtime.
- Providing students with glossaries of key technical terms in their L1 as well as the L2.

Measures of this nature could help support students in their interaction with the L2. True, they may call for an extra pedagogical investment by content teachers acting alone or in collaboration with language specialists or pedagogical advisors. However, given the very limited knowledge we currently have of the practice of CLIL in HE, it would seem profitable to explore the degree to which such measures could contribute to the effectiveness of the undertaking. It might also be useful to re-evaluate the relation which exists between formal language teaching and CLIL. For instance, it would not be inconceivable to arrange for at least some content courses to be taught interactively, possibly by an experienced language teacher familiar with the target domain, as a preparation for a transition to CLIL *per se*. This could allow for a more gradual transition from language to content focus under the guidance of a language teacher trained to assess students' language abilities, to diagnose difficulties, and to foster communicative interaction.

The second relates to the nature of the general pedagogical approach adopted in HE. Marsh (2004, *op. cit.*) rightly points out that CLIL is "ideally" characterised by interactional methodologies, i.e. methodologies which open up scope for discussion, the exchange of ideas, and the negotiation of meaning between lecturers and students, and among students themselves (cf. also Dalton-Puffer, *op. cit.*). Indeed, such

exchanges constitute the basis for many of the pedagogical advantages attributed to CLIL. Approaches to teaching and learning vary considerably across Europe, and in some teaching revolves largely around information transfer based on formal ex cathedra lecturing. Questions may be asked as to whether CLIL is fully appropriate for such teaching traditions or, at least, whether pedagogical adaptations may be required in order to ensure the effectiveness of L2 teaching and learning (cf. Räsänen and Klaassen, 2006).

6.6. Overview

CLIL involves the joint pursuance of content and language learning, and offers a number of potentially significant gains in terms of language learning per se and also with respect to the development of students' communicative abilities in their chosen field of specialisation. For this reason, CLIL merits serious consideration within the framework of HE language policy development. This having been said, the practical realisation of CLIL raises a number of significant questions of a pedagogical nature. These questions have a direct influence on the likely pedagogical effectiveness of CLIL in language learning terms, and also on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Given the relative paucity of research on CLIL in HE, together with its increasingly widespread adoption in HEIs across Europe, research in this area may be seen as a priority. Furthermore, the issues raised in this section have implications with respect to the pedagogical training of HE staff called upon to teach through an L2, as well as to the relative roles of content and language teachers in the practical realisation of CLIL.

7. CLIL and language choice

The language policies profiled in section 3 involve a variety of languages, which reflects strategic choices of the institutions in question. The SBS focuses on English and Dutch, languages which play a key role in terms of employability in Belgium. The UFr offers students the possibility to attain high levels of competence in two of the national languages of Switzerland, with the advantages which this offers in terms of employability. The UFT offers a bilingual programme in the national language (Bulgarian) and in French, a language which plays a significant role in the stu-

dents' chosen field of specialisation. The KUC prepares students in fields which have an international dimension: KUC students have learning opportunities in three languages, which enhances their possibilities for both mobility and employment. Finally, the language policy of the CBS is articulated in terms of both national employability (Danish and English) and internationalisation (English). In other words, the language policies adopted by these institutions reflect strategic choices which fit in coherently with one or more of the goals of the Bologna Process. Language policy development involves consideration not only of the pedagogical strategies by which the policy will be realised, of which CLIL is one, but also decisions relating to the choice of which language or languages are to be learned.

As a pedagogical strategy, CLIL is language neutral. It would, however, be naïve to ignore the fact that the expansion of CLIL in HE revolves significantly around English. A realistic evaluation of CLIL, or L2-medium instruction at least, would be incomplete without consideration of the specific role of English (cf. Tudor, 2006).

7.1. *English as a lingua franca*

It is an observable fact that English plays a significant role in HE in Europe and, indeed, worldwide. Furthermore, English is the favoured language of academic publication in a growing number of fields. This means that many students need to read English in order to gain access to information in their chosen specialisation, and many academics find it necessary to use English in order to participate in international conferences and to publish their research. In addition, English is the preferred language of international business and international meetings in many areas of activity. Viewed from this perspective, according English a place in a HE language policy has a clear rationale. As CLIL is one potentially valuable strategy, it logically follows that CLIL involving English is likely to appear frequently in HE. Questions arise, however, as to the motivations for the adoption of English as language of instruction, and the influence of such choices on the broader goals of HE language policy, in particular linguistic diversity and employability.

7.2. *English-medium instruction as a facility option*

The changes in the academic and professional environment outlined in section 1

have led a growing number of HEIs have set up strategically informed language policies. This is not the case in all institutions, however, and persons involved in language policy development frequently face a variety of challenges (Tudor, 2005, *op. cit.*). Institutions may experience difficulty in finding space for language learning in students' academic programme, or funding for language learning may be limited. Furthermore, in a significant number of institutions there is still insufficient understanding of the importance of languages. In such situations, the temptation exists to teach existing content courses in an L2, this decision being presented as a "language policy". Given the importance of English, such decisions frequently involve the teaching of content courses in this language. In other words, the adoption of English as language of instruction may be a facility option, rather than a coherently thought through strategic choice.

7.3. *Market forces and the role of English in HE*

Another powerful motivation for the adoption of English-medium instruction is to the potential of this language to attract the increasingly large market of "international students". Offering courses in English makes it easier for institutions to attract such students, especially if the national language of the institution is less widely spoken. This trend is, however, observable even in countries with a widely spoken language such as France and Germany, especially at postgraduate level and in certain fields of study, business studies and economics in particular. For these reasons there is a trend towards English as the preferred language of academic mobility in Europe. One may legitimately question the implications which this trend has in terms of linguistic diversity and the goal of multilingualism.

7.4. *Attrition of languages other than English in HE*

The increasing role of English in European HE is not without consequences for the status of other languages. A questionnaire completed by 25 participants in the project ENLU in 2005-06 included the question "Have members of your institution expressed concerns with respect to the erosion of the home language in Higher Education?" Thirteen participants responded positively to the question. One Danish colleague commented: "Yes, that concern is expressed repeatedly and massively."

Another colleague, also from Denmark, responded: “Yes. There is a concern that the students’ and graduates’ proficiency in —especially written— Danish needs to be enhanced. There is also a general concern because English is taking over in certain domains (international business, research, etc.) and that Danish will deteriorate as a consequence.” The sample is far too small to evaluate how widespread such views are, but the question remains open as to the role which the increasing use of English may have on students’ command of their L1.

In response to the same question, a Finnish colleague made the following remark: “There is a long tradition in Finland to keep an eye on the development of the mother tongue. The (University) language policy makes a point to stress the importance of fostering the Finnish language and its use. There is a concern for the weakening of the functionality of the Finnish language for various academic —research in particular— purposes. The policy stresses the importance of an awareness of the importance of the mother tongue as an ingredient of academic expertise. The language policy is built upon the principles of plurilingualism (involving also the mother tongue).” This response reveals the same concern as expressed by the two Danish respondents, while also pointing to measures designed to re-balance the situation by offering support to the development of a rounded multilingual competence, including in the L1.

7.5. *English, employability and the Europe of the Regions*

It is an observable fact that English plays a significant role as a lingua franca in Europe, and that it has become the preferred language of communication in a variety of both academic and professional fields. Does this, however, mean that English is sufficient for all graduates? Without underestimating the usefulness of English, it needs to be borne in mind that many graduates, in particular persons working in small or medium enterprises (SMEs), will work “locally”, and it is by no means certain that English is the most immediately relevant language in such contexts. Which languages are the most useful for persons working in SMEs in Catalonia, Eastern Germany or Western Poland, Slovenia, or Wallonia? It is very likely that this language will not be English but Catalan or Spanish, Polish or German, or Italian. This question has no necessary link to the question of English-medium instruction. However, there is a real risk that the increasing importance of English, combined with the spread of English-medium instruction, will tend to crowd out other lan-

guages from HE, with negative consequences both for the fostering of multilingualism and, more immediately, for graduates' employability.

7.6. *Overview*

As already suggested, there is no necessary link between CLIL and the choice of English as language of instruction. CLIL is a pedagogical strategy, whereas decisions relating to language of instruction are strategic, political and operational in nature. It would, however, be unhelpful to overlook the fact that a significant amount of CLIL, or L2-medium instruction at least, in HE currently involves English. A number of questions need to be raised as to the motivation for the choice of English-medium instruction. Is it a strategically motivated decision? How does English-medium instruction impact on the learning of other languages, on students' mastery of their L1 and their ability to use this language for academic or professional purposes? And is English the language which is most relevant for students preparing for fields of activity which have more local outlets? In other words, the question of language of instruction merits being studied within a broader language policy framework, involving consideration of maintenance of the L1, linguistic diversity, and the relevance of different languages in terms of graduate employability.

8. Is CLIL integral to the language policy?

Given the fact that CLIL (or L2-medium instruction) is an increasingly widespread phenomenon, one might be led to assume that CLIL is a necessary component of HE language policy development. There is good reason to question this assumption. In this respect, it may be helpful to consider a language policy model which does not include CLIL, that of the Freie Universität Berlin.

- Link languages-employability: 30/180 ECTS in BA programme devoted to courses linked to "employability".
 - 18/30 ECTS relating to "employability" can be in languages.
 - Wide range of languages offered, including ab initio courses.
 - General purpose orientation: Same courses followed by students of different disciplines.
 - Achievement levels linked to CEFR + "accessibility" of the L2.

- Range of different learning options: Formal classes, tandem learning, self-study.
- Explicit promotion of linguistic diversity by offering a range of languages, including languages rarely taught at secondary level

The language policy model of the FÜ rests to a significant degree on motivation and free choice. Students are not obliged to take language courses. They are, however, required to think of the link between their current study programme and their future employability. Languages thus enter into consideration within the framework of students' future academic or professional goals. Furthermore, the possibility for students to study a wide range of languages clearly promotes linguistic diversity. In this respect, it needs to be borne in mind that CLIL is feasible only if both students and lecturing staff have at very least a respectable command of the language of instruction. This, in practice, significantly limits the range of languages through which CLIL may be practised and to which students will be exposed.

The FÜ model indicates one reasoned approach to language policy which does not include CLIL. Furthermore, this model offers students the possibility of studying a wide range of languages, and thus addresses the concerns expressed in section 7 with respect to the increasing dominance of English in HE and the risks which this has in terms of linguistic diversity and employability.

9. In conclusion

This paper opened with a brief overview of the changes in the international and European environment for which HEIs are preparing their students. It then discussed the emergence of the concept of HE language policy, and profiled the language policies developed in 5 European HEIs. From that point on, the paper focused on the specific question of CLIL/L2-medium instruction. While no doubts were expressed as to the theoretical rationale for CLIL, a number of fundamental questions were raised with respect to the practical realisation of CLIL (or L2-medium instruction, at least), as well as to the growth of English-medium instruction in HE in Europe.

In conclusion, the question inevitably arises as to how CLIL should be evaluated within the broader framework of HE language policy development. The question is not an easy one. CLIL can, if practised in a pedagogically informed manner, make a meaningful contribution both to language learning and to the broader aca-

ademic and professional training of students. This having been said, one may legitimately question whether all L2-medium instruction does in fact qualify as CLIL, and therefore whether it can claim to offer the gains which are theoretically attributed to CLIL. Questions also arise with respect to the effects that pedagogically uninformed L2-medium instruction may have on the overall quality of teaching and learning.

Indeed, above and beyond the more immediately tangible changes which the Bologna Process has effected in HE in Europe, perhaps its ultimate goal is quality enhancement. Within this framework, the presence of a reasoned language policy is in itself a fundamental quality criterion for all HEIs. With respect to the specific strategy of CLIL, further questions arise:

- Is CLIL integrated in a coherent and pedagogically informed manner into the institution's broader language policy?
- Does the practical realisation of CLIL (or L2-medium instruction) respect considered quality criteria in terms of both its practical delivery and with regard to language choice?
- To what degree does CLIL respect and contribute to the goals of enhanced mobility and employability, but also to the broader goal of linguistic diversity which is fundamental to the long-term cohesiveness of the EU?

Finally, even if this may seem to run counter to the points just made, it may also be relevant to evaluate the motivational value of CLIL. Students who have opted to study dentistry, philosophy, history, or whatever else, may not have a strong personal motivation for language learning. Linking at least part of these students' language learning experience to their mainstream academic programme may be one of the more effective means of enhancing their motivation for the learning of another language. Here, of course, we are in the domain of perceptions and of subjective realities. And yet, in educational terms, such factors play a crucial role.

The paper is (perhaps inevitably) inconclusive in this domain. The "language challenge" facing HEIs in Europe is a significant one, in that it calls for changes not only in programme content, but also in terms of attitudes and priorities. As was suggested in section 2, there is no one canonical language policy model. While the challenges faced by HEIs across Europe are very similar on a fundamental level, the way in which individual institutions respond to these challenges will always be "local", and will therefore need to take account not only of objective realities, but also of the subjective realities of the various actors involved. Indeed, at the level of classroom

teaching and learning, and in terms of students' personal involvement in language learning, it may be precisely these subjective realities which play the most significant role in the ultimate success of a language policy. If CLIL can contribute to this goal, then its adoption merits serious consideration, if only for reasons of a motivational nature. These considerations, though less objective in nature than the others raised in this paper, also merit attention in institutions' choice of the strategies around which they construct their language policy and, in this way, develop their response to the "language challenge".

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