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Review of *Teaching Language and Content in Multicultural and Multilingual Classrooms: CLIL and EMI Approaches*



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Teaching Language and Content in Multicultural and Multilingual Classrooms: CLIL and EMI Approaches edited by María Luisa Carrió-Pastor and Begoña Bellés-Fortuño, Palgrave, 2021, 386pp., €124.79 (Hardcover) €96.29 (eBook). ISBN 9783030566142.

Human language is a very complex phenomenon that is living, breathing, and shapeshifting. As maintained by Elaine Chaika (1994), who gives a thorough explanation of the complexity of language and its uses, “Human language is multilayered.” It is composed of a system of meaningless elements that combine rules into meaningful structures. Sounds, meaningless in themselves, form meaningful words or parts of words. These words combine by rules into sentences, and sentences combine into discourses, including conversation, books, speeches, essays, and other connected sentences. Each level has its elements and rules for use, and each also relates to other levels, also by rule” (p. 7). Being multilayered, similar to a Russian nesting doll, makes language potentially complex in terms of learning and teaching. *Teaching Language and Content in Multicultural and Multilingual Classrooms* edited by María Luisa Carrió-Pastor and Begoña Bellés-Fortuño takes a stab at this very concept of multilayeredness. Whereas considering and evaluating the similarities and dissimilarities between Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), this edited book peels back every single layer of language teaching in multilingual and multicultural classrooms and does it best to demystify the terms and their implications for classroom practice. The chosen explanatory point of view permits grasping wide perspectives of content-based education, counting institutional contexts of teaching and learning, language educator backgrounds, societal approaches, CLIL and EMI practices and their benefits to

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language and content acquisition.

The book consists of three main parts covering broad aspects of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in fourteen chapters, each representing a critical aspect of this relatively young field of research in language education and pedagogy. The chapters are supported by tables and illustrations that viably present and communicate data and information and constitute the volume's integral part.

The *Introduction* guides the reader to the book's aim, its structure, related research, and the topics and content of its chapters. In her *Introduction* (pp. 1–10) to Part 1 titled *CLIL and EMI* Belles-Fortuno states that: “The proposed volume aims at delving into the real concept of CLIL to provide an authentic rationale of CLIL as opposed to other EMI practices” (p. 3). This will not be possible without a thorough theoretical underpinning of critical issues of content-based language pedagogy, and this is provided in all the chapters of the book. To illustrate, the most relevant studies devoted to the application of CLIL and EMI are explored in Chapter 2 by Carrier-Pastor, who examines the main differences between the methods and results of the two approaches to language learning. In Chapter 3, co-authored by Wozniak and Crean, particular attention is paid to managing risks associated with integrating English through CLIL and EMI.

In contrast, Chapter 4 by Aguilar-Perez opens Part 2 *English as a Medium of Instruction* examines local lecturers and students' perceptions of EMI and points out the potential of EMI for strengthening intercultural awareness and the need to re-evaluate the EMI in the context of the European universities. Chapters 5 through 8, along with the previous one, involve students and educators' results and explore the development and knowledge construction in the EMI context while giving practical suggestions and guidelines on how to improve EMI courses and ameliorate EMI practices. Teacher training perspectives taken into account in Chapter 5 by Krulatz, similar to Lopez-Ozieblo's position on the importance of providing teaching resources suggested in Chapter 8, are excellent illustrations of the practical outcomes for the teaching community covered in Part 2. In Part 3, titled *Content and Language Integrated Learning*, the authors of Chapters 9–13 attempt to answer questions related to the improvement of day-to-day class practices and teacher support in the context of CLIL teaching practices in “a progressive continuum along primary, secondary, and higher education levels” (p. 8). Other aspects explored in this part of the book involve features of the multilingual programs and standards that they follow. These are among intercultural and multilingual issues that influence CLIL pedagogies and their participants. The examined perspectives also include use of literature in CLIL methodology (Chapter 9 by Ballester-Roca and Spaliviero), quality standards in CLIL training (Chapter 10 by Marzà), revision of the controversial issues regarding assessment in CLIL practices (Chapter 11 by Bellés-Fortuño), teacher training courses in CLIL methodologies (Chapter 12 by Alvarez-Gil), and challenges of CLIL methodologies in the classroom regarding the maximization of content learning, language learning, and content competence acquisition (Chapter 13 by Martín-del Pozo and Rascón-Estébanez).

Directed to second/foreign language teaching community involved in teaching in English at primary education, secondary education, and higher education levels as well as to the EMI lecturers, the book first and foremost aims at “delving into the real concept of CLIL to provide an authentic rationale of

CLIL as opposed to other EMI practices” (p. 3). It is an exceptional source of thoughts and ideas for better understanding the variations between the methods and results of these two language learning approaches. These considerations are strongly supported in the book authors’ work experience and knowledge of language learning, CLIL pedagogies, and curriculum design. *Concluding Remarks on Teaching Language and Content in Multilingual Classrooms: CLIL and EMI Approaches*, the final book chapter, explains the book’s relevance to researchers and teachers. These concluding remarks corroborate with the recommendations and guidelines to facilitate making a difference in multilingual classroom as stipulated in the *Language learning and multilingual classrooms* study (2016) of the European Commission, especially when the ability of “valuing diversity by incorporating diversity in teaching” (Language Learning, 2016, p. 79) is concerned.

To this end, it is noticeable that the book’s editors and contributors have made every attempt to enfold as many of the topics related to CLIL and EMI pedagogies in the context of multiculturalism as possible. So far as the topics themselves are concerned, these have been chosen with an eye to the pedagogical community. The potential reader explores such topics as teacher education, teacher training programs, student preparedness for CLIL programs, curricula design, CLIL in bilingual/multilingual communities, and current CLIL and EMI policies in different countries and contexts. However, though this volume “proves an updated reflection on the whole educational scenario as far as CLIL and EMI are concerned (p. 8), most of the researchers’ writing is situated mainly in the context of the European universities,” for example Spanish, Italian, Norwegian, and so forth, and “around the world” perspective is quite limited. Nevertheless, the evidence presented in the book gives valuable examples of “the implementation of new methods to teach specific uses of English in different countries and contexts” (p. 8). Also, while offering a lot of insights to language educators in other educational settings, it calls for preparing “the educational community to take on new pedagogical experiences that imply an FL medium across part of the curriculum” (p. 8).

Along with some other publications in the market in the fields of language education, teacher education, and education for multilingual learners, the book challenges traditional approaches to interpreting multilingualism, multiculturalism and language education and pedagogy, advances the research-based knowledge of the field and promotes future research endeavours to better support the education of multilingual learners and their educators. For example, *Teaching content and language in the multilingual classroom. International research on policy, perspectives, preparation and practice* (2020) edited by Svenja Hammer, Kara Mitchell Viesca and Nancy L. Commins, similar to the reviewed volume, shares research on teaching multilingual learners internationally. In contrast to the volume under review, it covers critical viewpoints on the multilingual learners’ equitable teaching of researchers from six different countries across three continents. In addition to bringing multi-national researchers who explore pre-service and in-service teachers’ preparedness to teach multilingual learners, what is particularly interesting with this book is its careful look at multilingual learners’ equity and social justice and more detailed coverage of the preparation and practice related to the development of teachers’ competency in teaching multilingual learner.

Teaching Language and Content in Multicultural and Multilingual Classrooms. CLIL and EMI Approaches edited by María Luisa Carrió-Pastor and Begoña Bellés-Fortuño is definitely a book that is likely to be well received by the language educator community. Using examples from diverse

teaching contexts and diverse interpretations of teaching practice in multilingual and multicultural classrooms covered in the book may lead to transforming knowledge and ideas into practical applications.

I look forward to how the updated information on many aspects concerning the implementation of CLIL and EMI programs is provided in *Teaching Language and Content in Multicultural and Multilingual Classrooms. CLIL and EMI Approaches* book will serve as stimulus for language educators globally and locally to obtain competencies and skills “to be successful in their jobs, including proficiency in the target language, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, and content-language interface skills” (Horn, 2011, as cited in Krulatz, 2021, p. 116) and to improve their programs and educational practices.

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