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SUMMARY

Bilingual Education in Primary School: Aspects of Immersion, CLIL, and Bilingual Modules contains a brief introduction followed by six chapters discussing various aspects of bilingual education in primary schools, specifically in Germany. In this volume, CLIL refers to content and language integrated learning and primary school refers to the school attended by children roughly from the ages of five to eleven, depending on the country.

The editors hope that this volume will assist other educators in successfully creating and maintaining bilingual education programs.

Chapter 1: Daniela Elsner and Jörg-U. Keßler. Aspects of Immersion, CLIL, and Bilingual Modules: Bilingual Education in Primary School.

This introductory chapter describes what bilingual education is, no easy task.

Bilingual education entails instruction in at least two languages, regardless of the balance or duration of each languages. In CLIL, a more specific form of bilingual education, up to fifty percent of the school subjects are taught in the target language.

Simply teaching in the target language during a language course for two to five hours a week, however, does not constitute bilingual education. Given these definitions of bilingual education, this chapter offers seven research questions including the following: "which approach(es) to bilingual education are most promising in primary school settings", "could bilingual education enhance both language and content learning or would it rather water down one of those or even both areas", and "how can bilingual education cater for the needs of the specific subject content rather than just serve as additional language input". The book "combines results of research studies, literature reviews and best practice examples of bilingual education from all across Europe and beyond" (p. 3). The final section offers an overview of the remaining chapters.

Chapter 2: Gregory Poarch. Some Thoughts on Bilingualism.

Chapter 2 examines several definitions of bilingualism and effects of bilingual acquisition and education; it explains that bilingualism covers a large range of capabilities and unfortunately agreement on one specific definition does not exist. Given the lack of a clear definition, this chapter continues to explore positive and negative effects of learning multiple languages from a young age.

This chapter critically considers several of the principal questions that opponents of early bilingual education ask. Mainly, does learning a second language at an early age confuse children, causing them to acquire a first language more slowly and confuse two languages with each other? Poarch then offers evidence of studies showing that not only are children who acquire multiple languages not confused, but they even demonstrate more advanced cognitive abilities than monolingual peers including "greater mental flexibility, a higher aptitude for abstract and divergent thinking, and

superiority in the formation of concepts" (p. 11). The evidence outlined in this chapter however only applies to children learning multiple languages in immersive settings. Indeed, a certain level of proficiency must be gained in the second language before the advantages of bilingualism become truly apparent.

Chapter 3: Daniela Elsner and Jörg-U. Keßler. Bilingual Approaches to Foreign Language Education in Primary School.

Chapter 3 surveys various forms of bilingual education offered in primary schools: specifically immersion, CLIL and bilingual modules. Unfortunately relatively few primary schools in Germany operate under the guidelines of immersion education, but those that do demonstrate high success in foreign language development. The second approach is CLIL - content and language integrated learning. The authors explain that this is an umbrella term for many approaches in which any amount of specific content is taught in a second language. CLIL is more widely used throughout Germany, and although it shows less favorable results than immersion, it still offers a "valuable contribution" to second language acquisition (p. 26). The third and final approach is considered a subcategory of CLIL: bilingual modules. In this approach, the frequency and intensity of L2 use is not as high as that of CLIL, rather it is used for "time-limited and topic-specific phases of lessons" (p. 20). This approach is the easiest to employ although the results are obviously less favorable than those of immersion and CLIL.

Although this chapter places the success rates of these three approaches on a scale of highest to lowest, each approach is more successful than traditional second language teaching, as they offer a more realistic context. Students are learning the language for a purpose: rather than explicitly learning a language simply to learn the language. They are using language as "a medium of negotiation within the frame of learning processes" (p. 22). Although the use of a second language in content lessons may slow the process of acquiring the content knowledge at first, these students do catch up to peers taught in their first language after a period of time. While this lag may seem problematic, the authors of this chapter argue that it is offset by not only more successful L2 learning, but also the higher development of social competence, creativity, problem-solving ability and motivation in early bilingual students.

Chapter 4: Thorsten Piske. Bilingual Education: Chances and Challenges. This chapter critically examines the faults with the current systems of bilingual education, specifically in Germany. Piske first mentions the four crucial factors for success in second language acquisition: an early start, continuous and intensive exposure, frequent use of language in various contexts, and access to input from native-like speakers. While students in Germany are exposed to a second language at an early age, the other three factors are not suitably addressed in those schools that offer second language as a subject lessons. Most of these primary schools offer language instruction for merely two lessons a week in a playful manner. In addition, most primary school teachers did not study languages as a university subject and are often not native-like in the language they teach. In contrast, those schools offering immersion and CLIL bilingual programs address the four crucial factors better by offering an immersion setting for at least part of each day covering a variety of subjects.

The remainder of this chapter presents research evidence on the development of L2, L1 and subject knowledge of immersion students in comparison to that of non-immersion students. In terms of L2 development, not surprisingly studies show that students in immersion primary schools had a richer vocabulary and made fewer grammatical mistakes in English than peers who took English as a subject course. In relation to L1 development, studies show two results: that immersion students L1 reading fluency progressed

faster than that of those students in traditional schools, and that orthographical skills do not vary significantly between the two groups. Finally, regarding development of subject knowledge, studies show that after grade 1, immersion students tested higher in mathematical skills but that by grades 2 and 3 the differences had equalized. Therefore, this chapter supports the view that immersion-type L2 education is more successful than traditional L2 education and with no significant detriment to L1 or subject development.

Chapter 5: Jörg-U. Keßler and Daniela Elsner. Bilingual Education -- Subject Matter(s).

This chapter explores several subjects that are suitable for integration into bilingual education. The chapter is divided to address the following subjects:

natural science (5.1), mathematics (5.2) and physical education, art and music (5.3).

Chapter 5.1: Natasha Aristov & Helga Haudeck. Natural Science.

Natural science at the primary level is not the complex subject that it becomes in secondary school. In primary school, science is "experiencing the world" (p. 43). Many argue that teaching science in a CLIL setting unnecessarily complicates an already complex subject, and while this may be true at the secondary level, the authors argue that primary level science is basic enough to be taught in a second language. Primary school science classes are exciting; many children find the most exciting subject in school. It is ideal for CLIL because it is highly motivating: students follow directions carefully (to ensure the exciting outcome of the experiment occurs), and are eager to discuss the results.

Chapter 5.2: Britta Viebrock. Mathematics.

Mathematics and languages are often compared to each other, as structures in one relate to the structures of the other. This section assures readers that mathematics encompasses more than just symbols, and that it also has communicative requirements. The chapter then outlines topics and terms used in mathematics and offers resources for CLIL materials for a mathematics classroom. Although resources are scarce and the idea of CLIL for mathematics is fairly new, the authors of this chapter are hopeful that it will be taken seriously in the future.

Chapter 5.3: Katja Heim. CLIL--Teaching the Art: Physical Education, Art, Music.

The final section discusses the benefit of bilingual physical education, art and music. Physical education and music at the primary level include many of the same activities as beginner language lessons: action games and songs. Thus it seems natural to overlap these subjects. These two are especially ideal for beginning language learners as physical education starts with comprehension (following rules) more than speaking, and music consists primarily of repetition and memorization rather than producing original speech. These activities are ideal beginning steps for language learners. Art is also a fitting subject for bilingual education as the topics at the primary level include describing basic topics such as colors, shapes and textures.

Chapter 6: Ute Massler & Daniel Stotz. Assessment in Bilingual Classrooms.

This chapter outlines the difficulties of assessment in bilingual classrooms and offers appropriate criteria to do so. It first explains the difference between formative and summative assessments, where formative assesses progress throughout a topic and summative assesses knowledge at the end of a topic.

Both types of assessments should be used in order to gauge the success of the lesson while in progress (with the option of readjusting the lesson as needed) and to measure the students' success against some sort of standard at the end.

The chapter then states several crucial requirements for assessment in CLIL subjects: there should be discrete and separate assessment for language and subject content in addition to a section where the two are assessed together, and assessment should reflect the type of input received in class. In addition, educators must take into consideration the age and developmental stage of the learners: younger students often understand the material but may not be able to express it, especially in a second language. For very young learners, assessment should use very little written or spoken language (visualization is key). As CLIL itself varies among educators, assessment must also so that it properly relates to the style of instruction each student receives.

Chapter 7: Kristin Kersten & Andreas Rohde. On the Road to Nowhere? The Transition Problem of Bilingual Teaching Programmes.

The seventh and final chapter of this volume discusses the academic problems encountered during transition from one institution to another (home to preschool, preschool to primary school, primary school to secondary school).

The authors argue that transitions for content-based language courses are easier than those of language oriented courses because they lack a specific language curriculum and therefore an expectation of certain linguistic skills before students can successfully move on. After administering surveys, the authors of this chapter also found that the inherent stress and difficulty in transition can be lessened by following certain measures (regulated transition measures). These measures include information exchange between teachers at both institutions regarding both goals and methods of class, exchange of materials between institutions and informational meetings for parents.

EVALUATION

This collection of chapters from various authors reads much more like a book than an edited volume. Chapters flow easily from one to the next, each containing new information and no repetition. The volume as a whole covers a great amount of material from the various interpretations of what constitutes bilingualism, to explanations of different bilingual education approaches, to critical studies on those approaches in classrooms. It ends with a glossary and an appendix of lesson materials mentioned throughout the text.

This volume would likely appeal most to language educators and their students.

The chapters within the volume are ideal for a language pedagogy class: each begins with a short abstract followed by preparation questions to promote thought and discussion before reading the chapter. Each also includes a section titled "review -- reflect -- research" which encourages students to critically analyze what they have just read. Finally, each chapter ends with a list of suggested further readings. Beyond being ideal for a language pedagogy class, it is also a superb read for language educators who wish to employ forms of bilingual education in their classrooms.

The editors' goal is to not only analyze certain forms of bilingual education in Germany, but to assist others in becoming successful bilingual educators.

This goal has certainly been met as the chapters within offer detailed descriptions of different methods and demonstrate through research and critical analysis the success rates of various methods. This volume not only shows how successful bilingual education can be, it acts as a manual and explains how to bring this success to the reader's own classroom.

Two brief criticisms are that the acronym CLIL, which appears in the title of the book and throughout many of the chapters, is not actually explained until chapter 3. Both the first and the second chapter used the acronym

without stating its full name and although many people who will read this book already know the acronym, many others will not. Second, several quotes in German are not translated.

Introducing bilingual education at the primary school level can be extremely beneficial and rewarding to both students and teachers alike. This volume does a wonderful job of clearly explaining the current and past situation of primary bilingual education in Germany, as well as motivate the reader and convince him/her of the many benefits to introducing bilingual education to our youth.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Sarah Hart is a PhD student in Spanish linguistics at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Her research interests include comparative and historical Romance linguistics, especially concerning Spanish of the 13th century. She is currently working on her dissertation on the loss of the Old Spanish -udo participle, in addition to teaching Spanish language courses.

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