

RESEARCH OUTPUTS / RÉSULTATS DE RECHERCHE

Effects of input on written proficiency in L2 English and Dutch

Van Mensel, Luk; Bulon, Amélie; Hendriks, Isa; Meunier, Fanny; Van Goethem, Kristel

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CLIL IN BELGIUM

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

- Dual-focused educational approach: content & language
- « *Language of, for and through learning* » (Coyle, Hood & Marsch 2010)

CLIL in Belgium

- Bi-/multilingual workers needed on the job market (Mettewie & Van Mensel, 2009)
- Language learning often seen as problematic (Ginsburgh & Weber 2007)
- Polarisation of the two main linguistic communities (Dutch- and French-speakers) for economic, social and political reasons
- Separate educational systems, in French-speaking Belgium:
 - 2/3 of CLIL schools have CLIL in **Dutch**, 1/3 in **English**
 - 8-13h/week in target language



(for more information, see Hilgsmann et al. 2017)

AIMS and RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Goals

Explore the effects of (instructed vs. extracurricular) **input** on **written proficiency** in immersive (CLIL) and non-immersive (non-CLIL) language learning settings

Linguistic proficiency in written data

- L2 proficiency -> 3 components: Complexity, Accuracy, Fluency (CAF) (Housen et al. 2012)
- Complexity as an indicator of L2 proficiency (Ortega 2012, Bulté & Housen 2012); possibility of quantitative measurement

Impact of CLIL on written proficiency?

- Jexenflicker & Dalton-Puffer (2010)
 - overall **positive** impact, but small samples, only English
- Our previous analyses (Bulon et al 2017)
 - overall, **CLIL-pupils perform better** on written proficiency than non-CLIL
 - but differences more clear-cut for Dutch than for English -> **larger impact** of CLIL on the **acquisition of Dutch**

Impact of target language input?

- Time spent on learning a language -> important factor for successful acquisition
- Few studies on CLIL have controlled for the possible effect of L2 exposure (Saladrigues & Llanes 2014)

METHOD

Subjects and procedure

• Corpus

- 412 French-speaking learners of English or Dutch in CLIL and non-CLIL
- 5th year **secondary** school (mean age 16,5)
- Timed writing task (max. 25 mins) in computer room
- E-mails of at least 15 lines: one in L2 (English or Dutch) and one in L1 (French); topics: holiday or party
- Survey questionnaires (input & control variables)

	N participants	N words
CLIL Dutch	132	37209
Non-CLIL Dutch	100	19399
CLIL English	90	29394
Non-CLIL English	90	23747

• Computational tools

- English: *Coh-Metrix* (Graesser, McNamara, Louwerse & Cai 2004)
- Dutch: *T-Scan* (Pander Maat et al 2014)

Measures

• Outcome variables (*written proficiency*)

1. Text length: words per text
2. Sentence length: words per sentence
3. Morpho-syntactic complexity: syllables/morphs per word
4. Lexical diversity: MTLD

• Input variables

1. CLIL / non-CLIL
2. Duration of target language instruction in years
3. Current informal contact with TL (*composite measure*: frequency of internet use in the TL, frequency of TL (productive and receptive) use outside school, frequency of contact with native speakers outside school) (Muñoz 2011, 2014)

• Control variable

- Non-verbal intelligence (Raven score)

RESULTS

Regression analysis

	Dutch		English	
	Significant predictors	Explained variance	Significant predictors	Explained variance
Text length	CLIL Extracurricular input	38%	CLIL Number of years	20%
Sentence length	CLIL Raven	11%	CLIL	7%
Morpho-syntactic complexity	CLIL Raven	18%	CLIL Number of years	6 à 7%
Lexical diversity	CLIL Raven Extracurricular input	+/- 20%	CLIL Number of years	+/- 20%

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Discussion

- Model better in explaining
 - variance Dutch vs. English (except MTLD)
 - text length and lexical diversity
- **CLIL** important predictor for all measures
- **Raven** scores predict written proficiency in Dutch, not in English
 - Dutch CLIL more selective?
- **Input measures** that contribute significantly to achievement
 - Dutch: Current informal contact
 - English: Length of TL instruction in years

Conclusion

- Results confirm **different status Dutch vs. English** as L2 / CLIL
 - English: international (omnipresent) language, both CLIL and non-CLIL have frequent extracurricular contact -> variable less distinctive
 - Dutch: non-international language of the 'other' national community, less frequently used in informal contexts -> more decisive impact of extracurricular input

Limitations

- 'General' measures of proficiency
- What about (instructed) input **quality**? (future analyses)
 - Teacher's language proficiency & quality of teaching material