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CLIL Activities: A Resource for Subject and Language Teachers

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BOOK REVIEW

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Dale, L., & Tanner, R. (2012). CLIL Activities: A Resource for Subject and Language Teachers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

As the title suggests, this book provides activities for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) teachers. On the very first page (p. I), the authors help the reader check whether he/she is the target audience by hinting that the book is useful for, "a subject teacher who is teaching your subject through English in a bilingual setting, a language teacher working in a bilingual setting, a subject or language teacher in training to become a teacher in a bilingual setting." Having briefly described the notion of a CLIL teacher in the *Introduction*, the authors elaborated on the background to CLIL in Part 1. Then, in Part 2, the authors discuss nine subjects in terms of the language of the subject, which include: 1) art, design, and technology, 2) economics and business studies, 3) geography, 4) history, 5) information and communication technology, 6) mathematics, 7) music and drama, 8) physical education, and 9) science (biology, chemistry and physics). In Part 3, CLIL activities are proposed in five chapters: Activating, Guiding understanding, Focus on language, Focus on speaking, and Focus on writing. The last chapter, Chapter 6, is also included to provide readers with practical ideas for assessment, review, and feedback.

In order to familiarize readers with the notion of CLIL, the book begins with Part 1, which provides an overview of CLIL covering the main aspects of the approach. There are three areas of discussion in this first part. The first area is what Content and Language Integrated Learning refers to, including its characteristics which sometimes overlap with those of Content-based Language Teaching (CBLT) and of the immersion approach. The second deals with the extent to which the collaboration between language and subject teachers can be sustained. The last focuses on the challenges in CLIL practice.

After providing the principles underpinning CLIL, Part 2 moves on to the subject pages of the aforementioned nine specific areas. Each page contains four main features. In the first feature, the language for the subject, the authors discuss how the language of the subject is typically used and provide examples of spoken, written, and visual input, as well as examples of the input illustrated with the language involved. In the second feature, sample text and comments for the subject, the authors illustrate an annotated page from authentic school teaching materials with the major typical language features of the subject. In the third feature, sample language and content aims for the subject, the authors demonstrate examples of the aims for speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary in each subject, which are associated with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages, as shown in the appendix.

When it comes to CLIL for classroom practice in Part 3, a wide range of CLIL activities are proposed. These activities have been organized in relation to the challenges in CLIL discussed in Part 1; namely, Activating, Guiding understanding, Focus on language, Focus on speaking, and Focus on writing, in order to best portray how to cope with such challenges. As their names suggest, the four types of CLIL activities are aimed at activating students' background knowledge on the topic of the lesson, fostering their understanding of the content, building up their knowledge of vocabulary and language

use related to the content, and practicing their speaking as well as writing skills. In a practical way, each of the activities is presented using a clear procedure with its focused thinking skill(s), language focus, and language skill, as well as time allocated, the language level linked to the CEFR, and the preparations needed. Apart from the five main types of the activities, the additional chapter on assessment, review, and feedback is included so as to give CLIL teachers a clear picture of how to develop innovative assessment plans with particular content and language aims, and to give useful feedback to their students.

In my view, this book has done a great job in echoing its name *“CLIL Activities: A Resource for Subject and Language Teacher.”* This is because, unlike other CLIL books launched in the field of language teaching, the book provides a range of easily-accessible activities useful for CLIL practitioners. These activities have also been provided in an accommodating way since they are print-ready, and written in the accompanying CD-ROM. In addition, in order to make things clear for the users, these activities are categorized into types according to their purposes, such as the activating activities and the guiding understanding activities. What makes these activities practical is that each activity is shown with a particular outline; specific aims for content, language, thinking skills; and precise procedure. Thus, despite the fact that the activities are designed for secondary school teachers, they, as the authors mention, may also be applied for primary school and higher education teachers. In addition, the way the overview to CLIL is described in the first part makes it clearer that the CLIL activities proposed in the following part does not come out unfounded but from the theoretical principles underpinning the activity design. Hence, from my perspective, this book is useful. I believe that it not only benefits CLIL teachers who have adopted CLIL practice, but may also inspire ESL/EFL practitioners to adopt CLIL in practice. If there is another point to make, it would be a wish to encourage the authors to publish more books on CLIL activities, in particular for primary school and higher

education teachers, in order to meet all the types of needs that CLIL practitioners may have.

The Reviewer

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