

# Report and evaluation of the development of CLIL Programmes in Catalonia

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## *Abstract*

This chapter offers an overview of foreign language teaching plans in the last ten years in Catalonia. In the introduction, we review the bilingual immersion plans for learning Catalan and Spanish that were designed in the second half of the 20th century; this is the jumping-off point for understanding the development of Catalan multilingual educational policies. We go on to describe the main foreign language teaching programmes that allow Catalan students to learn a third language and learn in a third language, built on content-based project-work and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approaches. We also present statistics for participation and for results of student evaluations in languages and in curricular content. Finally, we analyse the main school factors and classroom practices that correlate with success and high scores in international results, and examine their impact in Catalan schools.

## *Keywords*

CLIL, plurilingualism, holistic and blended learning, language learning programmes

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## **Introduction: from Catalan immersion to foreign language CLIL**

In today's world, there are very few places where a person can spend an entire lifetime in contact with only one language. New digital technologies have brought us all into contact with songs, texts, films, political voices, and other cultural manifestations in a variety of languages, including some we may never have heard of. Learning languages becomes a way of both enlarging our understanding of the complex global world where we live, and of increasing our possibilities of entering other cultures and societies.

Catalonia is an autonomous community in Spain that projects its language as a vital part of its history and cultural identity. People live every day in at least two official languages: Catalan and Spanish. In addition, recent immigration has brought us in contact with languages that were hardly known in earlier times, such as Amazigh, Chinese, Ukrainian, Urdu, etc. Plurilingualism is more and more a reality, in this diverse society that considers languages as tools for social improvement, European mobility and future employability (Council of Europe, 2011). Enlarging everyone's language learning options is a more inclusive approach than just facilitating immigrants' acquisition of the

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local language; it also implies the possibility of maintaining original family languages and the optional spreading of new languages to other learners to empower the whole community for future needs.

### Early immersion experiences: the Catalan language case

Schools in Catalonia have always had to deal with language learning techniques and reading-teaching methods for educating students that have little or no proficiency in the language of instruction. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) generalised schooling only in Spanish and the Catalan language was prohibited, making the gap between communities even more evident than before. At the end of the last century, once democracy was restored, educational policy in Catalonia prioritised social cohesion by recuperating Catalan language presence in social life. Schools had to deal with the need to teach classes *of* Catalan and *in* Catalan to students who had not always spoken this language at home. Immersion was focused primarily on Spanish speaking migrants to Catalonia, who arrived after the Spanish Civil War, but not only: many Catalan families had lost a whole generation of schooling in their own language.

Today, schools have expanded their efforts to include immigrant populations with many other cultures and languages. The *Departament d'Ensenyament de la Generalitat de Catalunya* (Catalan Education ministry) is developing organisational strategies that include initial immersion classrooms to integrate foreign speakers who, more often than not, need to learn both Spanish and Catalan. This teaching experience in language diversity provides an excellent base for developing content and language integrated learning techniques (CLIL) that are becoming the norm throughout Europe.

We can distinguish three different steps in this language teaching evolution:

- 1940's–1980's: Until the Spanish Constitution of 1978 and the Catalan Statute of Autonomy in 1979, teaching and learning Catalan at school after the Spanish Civil War was more an act of tenacity and cultural survival than a planned educational strategy. Several schools such as Isabel de Villena, Sant Gregory, Institut Tècnic Eulàlia and many others did their best to maintain the *active Catalan school* tradition. Sometimes with more practice than theory, some devoted teachers developed strategies for integrating students into the mainstream educational curriculum in Catalan, and applied immersion and partial immersion approaches within classes regardless of students' language of origin. Voluntary teacher training and teaching exchange, mostly offered by the Rosa Sensat summer schools, provided active and collaborative Catalan immersion techniques that we still largely apply today.
- 1980's–2000: The decade of the 80's saw the establishment of the legal and regulatory framework for institutional Catalan immersion plans, and laid the basis for today's plurilingual policies. At that time, the *inclusive Catalan school* was already planned around the idea that Catalan was to be the language of instruction for everybody, as a way to guarantee the same level of proficiency, both in Catalan and in Spanish, at the end of compulsory education for all students. Immersion techniques and blending approaches were systematically applied in the context of heavy migration from other Spanish communities, to provide social cohesion. Teacher training is more systematic in this period, with a consistently designed

language immersion plan for schools, supported by the legal framework that establishes Catalan as the vehicular language of the community, co-official with Spanish.

- 2000–present: The active participation of the Catalan government in many European initiatives for language teaching provided a solid base of educational strategies for language teaching, learning and assessment at school (European Commission, 2001). Student's plurilingualism started to be seen as an opportunity for the future, while teaching and learning foreign languages become an enrichment strategy for school communities. Educational authorities become aware of language diversity as a powerful resource for future citizens in Europe, and they start developing plans and programmes for implementing language learning. For example, the *Language Immersion and Social Cohesion Plan* (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2004) had the objective of preventing social and communicative gaps at school. Some of the activities that have validated this approach are Catalan participation in ALTE (ALTE, 1999), early translation into Catalan of the Common European Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) and serious research into the language immersion plans from the previous decades (Dickson and Cumming, 1996; European Commission, 2011).

The principal challenge of *plurilingual inclusive Catalan schools* is, at this point, to integrate immigrants from the entire world, most especially from developing countries. The main concerns of any school language project are to consolidate the past experience of Catalan immersion (mainly successful in integrating Spanish and Catalan Speakers to guarantee their mastery of both languages) and to include the new need for other European languages of instruction at school (mainly English). The objectives are to provide access to the official languages, to add an international dimension to schools through mastery of other languages and, at the same time, to preserve immigrants' mastery of their native tongues, which is considered part of the richness they bring to Catalan society. Teacher training is primarily focused both on improving the language level of teachers in foreign languages (mainly English and French) and their knowledge of Content and Language Integrated Learning techniques (CLIL), and other blended learning approaches.

It is evident that teaching languages, in the present day, is also related to the inclusion of ICT tools in regular classrooms, and the provision of individual support that students might need for their personal learning development. Supporting language and cultural diversity requires as much specific teacher attention as diversity of learning styles or other specific needs. Language immersion techniques and blended ICT teaching approaches represent new integrated educational options that are expanding the involvement of teachers in action-reflection processes and in their own professional development. Thanks to networking in virtual communities, teachers have the opportunity to share experiences and achievements, giving continuity and greater impact to the active Catalan school. These integrated experiences also help to empower coordination amongst teachers to develop students' participation in content learning. In this sense, CLIL in Catalonia can be understood as the engine of innovative teacher collaboration: it implies active language learning and curricular-research, performed by students, aimed at attaining real knowledge building.

## Initial results of integrated language learning in Catalan immersion programmes

The educational results show that both traditional immersion programmes before 2000 and plurilingual school projects, developed under new frameworks, are showing successes that need to be analysed in context.

Curricular assessment has shown that Catalan immersion was not causing difficulties in achieving good marks in subjects like Maths or other content areas. Nine-year-old students (4<sup>th</sup> Primary) obtained better results in schools with immersion plans than in schools without immersion plans, and similar results to the average in the rest of Spain (Vila, 2011, p. 11):

**Table1. Comparative Maths results for schools with immersion and without immersion programmes, in Catalonia at the end of the 21st century**

	Immersion	No-Immersion	Spain
Numbers and math	61.10	52.76	61.30
Measurement	63.39	59.29	60.80
Geometry	65.56	56.66	60.10
Data analysis	68.90	65.65	69.30
Algebra and functions	61.67	53.42	58.30
Conceptual understanding	60.44	57.23	60.80
Procedural knowledge	69.05	60.19	66.10
Problem solving	60.98	49.89	57.30

Source: Translated from Serra, 1997 (in Vila, 2011, p. 11).

More recent international comparative assessments of Language, Maths and Science (OCDE, 2006 & OCDE, 2009) show that, in spite of the evident need for improvement, students in Catalonia are not underachieving more than students in many other Spanish autonomies.

**Table 2. Comparative PISA 2009 results in Language, Maths and Science for schools in different autonomies of Spain**

	Science	Mathematics	Reading
Catalonia	503	493	500
La Rioja	520	518	511
Castile and León	520	523	511
Madrid	511	499	507
Navarre	519	521	506
Aragon	516	517	504
Galicia	525	506	503
Basque Country	499	513	502
Asturias	511	505	501
Cantabria	511	504	499
Murcia	497	493	495
Andalusia	492	488	482
Canary Islands	470	450	467
Balearic Islands	463	466	462
Ceuta and Melilla	446	441	439

Source: Translated from Ferrer, Castejon, Castel & Zanjajo, 2011.

Using Ignasi Vila's analysis (Vila, 2011, p. 11-14), the evidence shows that Spanish speaking students educated under immersion programmes in Catalonia are not left behind, compared to other Spanish-speaking students in the rest of the country:

The differences are significant when the spread is more than 15 points. That is, for science, Spanish-speaking students in Catalonia know significantly less than students in La Rioja, Castile and Leon, Navarre and Galicia but significantly more than Spanish-speaking students in Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla, and as much as students in other communities. As for reading, Spanish-speaking students in Catalonia obtain significantly better results than students in Andalusia, the Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla, and the same as students in other communities. In mathematics, Spanish-speakers in Catalonia are significantly exceeded by students in La Rioja, Castile and Leon, Navarre, Aragon and the Basque Country and significantly outperform students in the Canary Islands and Ceuta and Melilla, and they again match the result of students in the other communities. (Vila, 2011, p. 13. Quotation translated by NL)

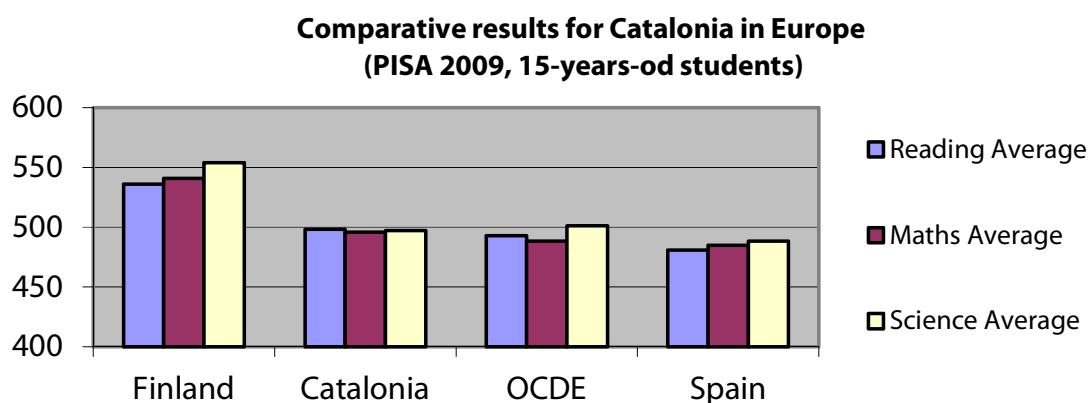
Other researchers have reached the same conclusion, when analysing data results. For Xavier Vila, the Catalan school immersion model helps students to learn both Catalan and Spanish without significant differences from other students in Spain (Vila, 2004, III). Joaquim Arnau's analysis of the PISA results of 2003, 2006 and 2009 (CSA, 2010) shows that students in Catalan immersion programmes don't underperform, nor present any deficit in curricular areas for reasons of studying in Catalan: (Arnau, 2011, p. 20).

Summing up, studies in Catalan language immersion programmes conclude that differences in the students' results are mainly due to contextual and initial social factors

during the schooling period. Results of immersion, partial immersion and integrated language learning strategies in Catalonia show that meaningful differences are not due to the language of instruction, but due to many different social and cultural causes, several school organisational conditions and some specific school practices.

The main challenge from now on is to evaluate if the fact of including CLIL for a third language in Catalan schools (or forth language, for many of the immigrant students) will or will not affect the educational results in the near future. Our initial starting point of maintaining a bilingual society without enlarging the social and cultural gap between Spanish and Catalan communities seems to have been effective enough, considering school results of 15-year-old students in the European ranking of PISA 2009:

**Table 3. PISA 2009 results in Language, Maths and Science for 15 year-old-students, comparing Catalonia's position in international ranking with the highest-ranked European country (Finland), the OECD average and the global Spanish ranking: graphic and data**



PISA 2009	Reading Average	Maths Average	Science Average
Finland	536	541	554
Catalonia	498	496	497
OCDE Average	493	488	501
Spain	481	485	488

Source: OCDE, 2009.

In the rest of this article, we present detailed information on the Language Teaching and Learning Programs that were developed in Catalonia in the last ten years for foreign languages. We also consider their educational results, in the framework of Catalan plurilingualism, where English and French are the third and fourth language taught at school, if not the fifth or sixth for many immigrant students. Finally, we will analyse the challenges still to come, if we really want to achieve the main educational objectives defined by the European Union under the 2020 Strategy plan (European Commission, 2011).

## Teacher training for Content and Language integrated Learning in Catalonia

### CLIL context and immersion background in Catalonia

The evolution of the main language plans and projects in Catalonia in the last decades reveals the progressive prominence of foreign language teaching in the curriculum and how language teacher training has changed significantly with the enlarged language diversity in Catalan schools (Sole, 2002).

The three most important changes are related to enlarging the period of foreign language learning at school, including the social aspects of language learning in the teaching process and developing a new legislative framework to deal with all of the above. As a result, CLIL and other integrated techniques, such as project work and networking, have evolved almost naturally, especially in the educational environments where the Catalan immersion experience was already consolidated. Teacher training programmes have also evolved, following increased complexity and plurilingualism at school and in general society. Evolution of learning theory, school practice experience and legislation, have blended to facilitate the fast spread of foreign language learning school programmes in the last years.

#### *Legislative framework*

The most relevant educational laws of the Spanish democratic period are LOGSE (BOE, 1990) and LOE (BOE, 2006). They represent an important change in the conception of how, what and when to teach foreign languages. The LOGSE made introduction of a foreign language for every student at the second cycle of primary education compulsory, and the LOE did the same for the first primary cycle. Both laws promoted the introduction of a second foreign language at the third cycle of primary education and compulsory secondary education (ESO). Today, an increasingly plurilingual society and the preeminent economic need to count on a community able to speak several languages, have motivated many schools to consider all the languages in the community as part of the common heritage. Moreover, the main changes brought by the LEC, the Catalan Law of Education (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2009) has opened the door to autonomous school development, diverse models of curriculum management and contextualised experimentation at school. Foreign language teaching in Catalonia presents a very diverse map where several approaches converge under the same legislative framework, putting the emphasis on success and equity for all students.

#### *School practice experience*

The basic mastery of Catalan and Spanish languages seems to now be the starting point for a more ambitious plurilingualism at school, where English or even French are considered essential, too. We could say that the success of Catalan immersion programmes is one more factor that has helped innovative teachers to change and improve foreign language teaching methodologies in schools. These experiences have provided methodological examples for progressive implementation of CLIL programmes in Catalonia. Moreover, some schools have developed different blended options to innovate in their foreign language classes with project work, ICT for foreign language teaching (FLT),

flexible timetable organisation to increase foreign language instruction, language volunteers, teacher assistants, teacher and student mobility and international exchange programmes.

### *Learning-theory evolution*

The last century's contribution to theories of learning consolidated, at school, the notion of an existing science or corpus behind the teaching praxis. Knowing grammar was not enough to teach properly, and psychology and pedagogy were included and emphasised in the teacher's training syllabus. Alexandre Galí i Coll (1886-1969), with his work *La mesura objectiva del treball escolar* is a clear example of the rigorous language learning studies done at the time in Catalonia (Galí i Coll, 1928). These initial contributions were later enriched with evolutionist models of learning that came from abroad, to combine the idea that people create meaning through cognitive development and shared experiences (Dewey, Montessori, Vigotsky, Piaget, Wilkins). In a way, the generalisation of these theories allowed the Catalan school to recuperate the local social models of teaching and learning that had already been consistent with constructivist approaches (Francesc Ferrer i Guardia, Josep Estalella i Graells, Laureà Figuerola Ballesster, Josep Mallart i Cuto, Artur Martorell Bisbal, Pau Vila i Dinarés, Rosa Sensat i Vila, Angeleta Ferrer i Sensat, Montserrat Bertràn Vallés, Lola Anglada i Sarriera, among many others). This existing background of active experiences may have helped young teachers integrate student-centred approaches into their practice more easily, and open themselves to experimenting with new active methodologies. In any case, language teachers in Catalonia soon found, in learning theories, the structured explanation for what they had done when spreading the initial Catalan immersion programmes.

When learning foreign languages became a social aim, searching for scientific bases was one of the main preoccupations of the Department of Education. CLIL studies have offered the perfect field to grow towards, being similar enough to immersion and content teaching (Marsh, 1994).

Today, teachers, students and schools have aligned their perceptions of teaching and learning foreign languages to the fact that languages are learnt when they are used, and are even better learnt when they are used for learning and communicating about real things in life. Schools have adopted slightly different approaches promoted under different plans and projects, but ultimately all the proposed language learning programmes organised by the Department of Education have the same common goal: to develop a multilingual school project that offers the student the possibility of having an early start to learn and use several languages in context. The general scheme is, first, to provide access to the Catalan language for all students, as part of the official policy for social cohesion that guarantees equal mastery of Spanish and Catalan, whatever the family origin, and second, to enlarge students' possibilities of studying several languages in context, by using foreign languages to learn about curricular topics.

### **The first in-service foreign-language teaching programmes**

From the early eighties to the present, foreign language programmes have responded to the multiple demands made by teachers, schools and society. In 1983, the Department of Education had developed a programme to select innovative school projects for



research in education, prioritizing Catalan language immersion, new language teaching methodologies for Catalan and Spanish and new foreign-language teaching techniques, cross-curricular projects and ICT teaching and learning with computers, videos and audio-visual techniques, among others (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 1983, p. 2319).

Foreign languages were in high demand, and the main obstacle was the need to increase not only the teachers' foreign language mastery, but also to develop experimental research for integrating new computer-assisted teaching methods at school. In 1984 the Department of Education created a special commission for foreign languages, *Comissió de Llengües estrangeres* (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 1984), with the main aim of studying different possibilities to train large numbers of foreign language teachers (Generalitat de Catalunya, 1984, p. 1495). The suggested programmes included methodological training, language learning and collaboration with private and public educational entities.

At that moment, teacher training and school research in foreign-language teaching had become a priority, and in 1985 the commission for foreign languages organized the first experimental plan for training teachers of English and French, focussed on improving methodologies (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 1985). It was structured in two sections (English and French) and was planned to first collect training materials and design training for teacher-trainers, then develop further training activities throughout the territory. The creation of these two support groups also consolidated assessment initiatives for improving training development (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 1985, p. 325).

The Department of Education was determined to implement and prioritize this line of action, with special emphasis on both increasing the number of foreign language teachers and the quality of language classes, using more advanced methodologies. Catalan immersion was already working, and schools were ready to step forward into a more complex challenge.

Finally, the creation, in February 1986, of the Resource Centre for Foreign Languages known as CRLE (*Centre de recursos de llengües estrangeres*), brought foreign language teachers in Catalonia the needed space for experiment, research, and documentation exchange (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 1986).

The CRLE was in charge of developing tasks of different natures: to detect and disseminate innovative teaching practices, materials and technologies, to develop the different necessary tasks for teacher training, to support school projects and student mobility, and to facilitate teachers' access to digital technology. The CRLE promoted resources for teachers to consult and use, designed innovative teaching proposals and collaborated with universities. For many years, professionals working at the CRLE were the initial reference for teachers in Catalonia involved in new technologies, proposals or experiments related to teaching, learning and researching foreign languages.

The CRLE and its successors developed a variety of action plans to improve the mastery of foreign languages and to promote the most modern integrated methodologies for teaching them. Some of the best known programmes that helped schools organise

structured language learning projects, content teaching and, eventually, CLIL projects, were the first Orator programme (1994), the *Pla Experimental de Llengües Estrangeres*, PELE (2000), the currently running innovation programmes under the *Pla Integral de Llengües Estrangeres*, PILE (2012) and the *Ajut a l'Aprenentatge Actiu d'Idiomes*, AAI.

In a parallel manner, an office for educational cooperation with Europe had been created in the Department of Education, the *Oficina de Cooperació Educativa i Científica amb la Comunitat Europea del Departament d'Ensenyament*, called *Oficina de Cooperació Educativa i Científica Internacional* after 2000 (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2000a). It was in charge of developing international actions to bring European programmes into the Catalan schools. Internationalisation was a main step in teacher training and teacher development, and Catalan schools opened to the European programmes. Many teachers started knowing about foreign language learning integrated approaches, mainly through a look at blended language learning activities in the first Erasmus programme in 1987, the following Socrates I (1995-1999) and Socrates II (2000-2006) and the ongoing *Lifelong Learning programme: 2007-2014 (Programa d'Aprenentatge Permanent-PAP)*. The initial Lingua Projects and the first Comenius provided experiences of European mobility for the teachers who participated in the annual selection (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2000b). This offered them direct contact with initial CLIL tendencies in Europe and international exchange of experiences in language teaching and immersion in bilingual regions. As Neus Figueras says, some of the ideas and concepts behind CLIL have been present in Catalonia for almost twenty years (APAC, 2005, p. 4).

Today, many of the inter-institutional and management activities that the CRLE and the *Oficina de Cooperació Educativa i Científica amb la Comunitat Europea* started, are now driven by the *Subdirecció de Llengua i Plurilingüisme* where the *Servei d'Immersion i Acol·liment Lingüístic* develops Catalan immersion programmes and transversal projects for reading and speaking, and the *Servei de Llengües Estrangeres* gives support to plurilingual programmes and international educational networking for developing the European dimension at school. Training activities in foreign languages are largely developed by the *Subdirecció General d'Innovació, Formació i Orientació*, and special research, creation and dissemination of specific resources and materials are led by the *Centre de suport a la innovació i a la recerca educativa de llengües* (CESIRE-CIREL).

In perspective, it is clear that the creation of the CRLE focussed teacher training not only on collecting methodological information in early databases, but also on developing a real collaborative meeting space, for working together and creating a genuine learning community. Since then, promoting and maintaining inter-institutional agreements for improving foreign language teaching in Catalonia has been a way of consolidating educational dynamism at school. In March 2008, activities of the CRLE were distributed to other units of the Department of Education. These continued to contribute to the development of content teaching strategies in foreign languages. Every year, several training and research work-groups are organised in French or in English with innovative or inspiring approaches (intercomprehension and inquiring minds, such as *EuroComRom*, *La Main a la Pâte*, *Science et Société*, *Euromania*); language and methodology courses are organised for presenting tools to primary and secondary teachers (for example the *European Portfolio of Languages*), as well as annual foreign language com-

petitions and contests, for students and schools to participate in (*The Fonix*, *Trinity Theatre*, *Eco-sac Voyageur*, among others).

## Implementing CLIL training in Catalonia

From the first in-service training programmes for foreign language teachers, it was clear that improving methodologies and techniques were tied to research and experimental teaching. Both the CRLE and the *Oficina de Cooperació Educativa i Científica amb la Comunitat Europea* collaborated in the Department of Education to design coherent language policymaking. Several structured programmes were developed to implement foreign language learning projects, mainly at primary and secondary school, and recently also in vocational education and training (VET). From the very beginning, the programmes followed the strategies suggested by the Council of Europe for mobility and international collaboration (Council of Europe, 2002). Later, they worked to follow the implementation of the European Union Resolution (14757/01 EDU/155) on the promotion of linguistic diversity and language learning, as outlined by the European Council. The main aim was, and still is, to develop plurilingual school projects that offer students the possibility of studying several languages and of using a foreign language to learn about curricular topics. Ultimately targeting the student, in-service teacher training was a strategy to empower the educational system and to guarantee sustainability for innovative programmes. The earliest projects were offering explicit CLIL training, embedded in experimental teaching, for teachers willing to initiate teaching experimentation, research and learning at the same time.

*Orator, a Catalan government plan to improve foreign language learning in compulsory education.*

The *Pla de millora de l'ensenyament i l'aprenentatge de les llengües estrangeres a l'ensenyament reglat*, also known as the Orator project, was planned as a five-year action plan to improve teaching and learning foreign languages. It started in Catalonia with 120 centres of primary and secondary education in the school year 1999-2000 (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 1999), and in the next year it already established the possibility of including another foreign language at Primary level (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2000c), usually French –the forth language for Catalan students, who were already managing Catalan, Spanish and English at school. This complex project was initially considered educational innovation, and it has been considered innovative ever since (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2001b). For secondary schools, it established an explicit modality of content and language integrated learning (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2000d, p. 869) and it also was considered an innovative project (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2001a).

This programme was aimed at encouraging students to reach a certain level of communication in a foreign language, mainly English, to add a European dimension to the Catalan educational system. Schools were committed to provide continuity to the project, even the two years after their initial bids had expired, with the intention of transforming the school language project into a richer one. CLIL was one of the options in the programme, both for primary and secondary schools. Teachers started to expect secondary education students to increase their level of English for communicative purposes, and internationalisation was included in school projects in order to empower

young citizens in Catalan society. This international vision was coherent with similar initiatives throughout Europe at the turn of the millennium, and was connected to the parallel development of ICT and digital learning at school.

We could say that the Orator project was the first integrated institutional plan addressed to students, teachers and schools, with different initiatives at the same time, directly drawn from the Catalan immersion plans. Complementary activities worked to enlarge the learning context by providing occasions for using English or French in real educational communicative situations. Students benefited from participating in English summer camps, oral contests and scholarships to practice foreign languages abroad. Teachers participated in specific language courses, language teaching methodology classes and study visits abroad, among other immersion training strategies. Schools obtained funding, specific ICT resources for FLT purposes, additional language teachers, and native language assistants.

From 1999 to 2004 more than 400 Orator projects were developed throughout Catalonia. Many of the teacher coordinators decided to continue their innovative task by participating in further CLIL programmes afterward, both in English and French (EMILE: *Enseignement d'une matière par l'intégration d'une langue étrangère*). Others have become trainers and advisers for the teachers that were joining CLIL approaches each year, thanks to wide training and dissemination of good practices.

Since the late 90's, the most recognised authorities in CLIL were visiting Catalonia annually both to train teachers and to directly observe experiences in our rich plurilingual field. David Marsh, Do Coyle and Philip Hood, among other international experts, have participated in seminars, courses and conventions to exchange ideas and share their teaching principles in Catalonia. The report of those early times was fully recorded by the CRLE in 2005 (APAC, 2005, p. 32-33) and includes the main Catalan contribution to CLIL international reports and conferences between 1994 and 2002). David Marsh summarized the main Spanish experiences (Marsh, 2002, p. 80) in his CLIL/EMILE report *The European Dimension: Actions, Trends and Foresight Potential*:

In Spain, as in other regions, there are various initiatives being conducted that are often project-based. In the Basque country up to 30 % of the public primary schools offer small scale CLIL/EMILE in English within a framework of trilingual education. In Catalonia, project ORATOR 1999-2004 has developed CLIL/EMILE in 8 schools involving some 650 students. The LINGUAPAX project involves 5 schools and some 300 students. The total number of students experiencing trilingual education in Catalonia is about 5.500. Finally, there is the MECD/British Council project in Madrid which started in 1996 and now involves teaching through English in 42 mainstream schools and some 10.800 pupils. (Marsh, 2002, p. 80)

(...)Many of the privately-funded secondary schools offer CLIL/EMILE, mainly through English. For example, there are estimated to be some 15-20 schools offering trilingual education in Catalonia alone. Between 1998-1999 a large pilot experiment involving 260 Catalan schools (and some 52. 000 students) was started whereby English was taught using an inter-disciplinary content-based approach. (Marsh, 2002, p. 92)

In the 2006-2007 school year, the Department of Education decided to scale up foreign language training, and created a *Pla d'Impuls al domini de la llengua anglesa per part de l'alumnat* to generalise sustainable training itineraries, first for English teachers only, and later for other foreign language teachers too. It encouraged schools to use quality CLIL and project work approaches. The number of qualified teachers was greatly increased, and innovative teaching methodologies were promoted in school projects

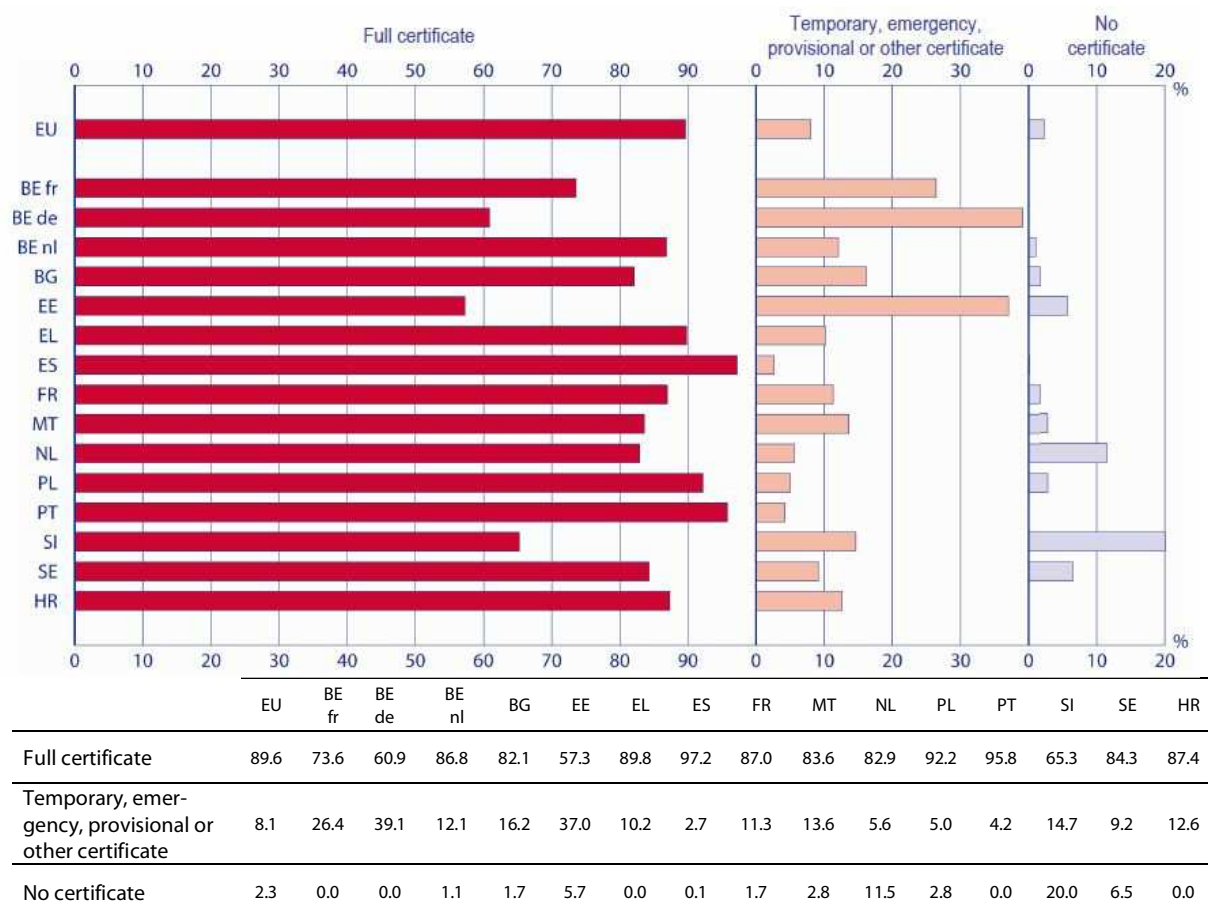
with the use of new ICT devices such as interactive white boards, blogs, and web 2.0 resources.

- a) *Pla d'Impuls al domini de la llengua anglesa*, a government plan addressed to the whole community, with experimental school plans for learning foreign languages in context.

This plan quickly changed into a *Pla d'Impuls al domini de les Llengües Estrangeres per part de l'alumnat* (shortened as *Pla d'Impuls de Llengües estrangeres*), to include other European languages. It was designed to address the entire school community with different strategies: teachers, students, families and other educational agents. This global focus followed policy directives of the Council of Europe on language teaching and multilingual schooling, which was seen as a path for inclusion in Europe. In January, 2007, Leonard Orban, the first Commissioner for Multilingualism in Europe, promoted language learning as a tool for increased social cohesion and development of European citizenship (Orban, 2007). The common aim of enriching language diversity, at European level and in Catalonia, provided the framework for augmenting implementation of CLIL programmes on larger scales. Catalonia made an effort to guarantee that every foreign language teacher in primary and secondary school was certified as a qualified language teacher either by a University degree or a certification from the *Escola Oficial d'Idiomes*, the official post-secondary education school for adults that provides courses and certified levels in foreign languages, following the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001). Compared to other countries, Spain has achieved significant stability in this regard, and it is not possible to teach a foreign language (or in a foreign language) without proper certification.

In the *Pla d'Impuls al domini de les Llengües Estrangeres per part de l'alumnat*, several planned actions allowed schools to have grants to take students abroad (*Ajut a l'Aprenentatge Actiu d'Idiomes-AAI*) or to start a *Pla Experimental de Llengües estrangeres-PELE*, as a second version of the previous Orator school project (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2005a). These PELE projects lasted three years. The PELE was for many years the motivating organisational project that offered 300 annual school grants to carry out CLIL, project work, or activities for oral skills development (SdLE, 2011). The main strategies focussed on the improvement of spoken language skills, incorporation of foreign language teaching in the last two years of primary education, content project work development, or CLIL techniques in English or French (EMILE). The continuity of PELE recruitment allowed the Catalan educational system to reach 1345 projects based on foreign learning proposals, between 2005 and 2010 (SdLE, 2012). Schools have been able to initiate and develop several projects in different languages (English and French) and their teacher-coordinators have been trained in project work or in CLIL, in Catalonia or abroad. CLIL approaches have been a resource for school autonomy and for flexible cross-curricular planning.

**Table 4: Percentage distribution of foreign language teachers that are officially certified, according to Key Data on Teaching languages in 2012 (Question 19 of the Teacher ESLC Questionnaire). Edited by Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency with P9 Eurydice and Policy Support**



Source: Eurydice (2012, p. 94).

Today, implementation of CLIL in Catalan schools is very diverse. This diversity can be appreciated at all levels of education, in the subjects being taught in a foreign language or in the nature of the groups of students doing CLIL within the same school. Language advisors have identified several essential elements for the development of a successful project:

- The entire school needs to be committed to the project, given that it affects different curricular subjects, several languages and social cohesion.
- Headmasters need to be clear about showing their support for the project as part of building a sense of community in the school, which includes teachers and families.
- Teachers need to be willing to coordinate and collaborate with other teachers, especially when designing the project, applying it in class and assessing students.
- Evaluation is a significant element of the project. Both student progress and the supervision of teaching and learning processes need to be evaluated.

- Schools need to guarantee continuity even after initial investment from special programmes has been spent, as part of a strategy for organisational learning.

Many assessment surveys from participants in PELE projects indicate that the main complaint from teachers is *the feeling of working it out without enough support from the rest of the teachers*. However, we can say that a large majority of schools with CLIL projects have enlarged student plurilingualism in a way that had never been seen in Catalonia, reaching the initial goals of the project and beyond. In the next section of this paper we will present results and language achievement data. Training of teachers engaged in school projects has proven to be an efficient strategy to empower the educational system, especially when European mobility was involved. Combining practice, research and theoretical training in Catalonia, with shadow teaching and long periods of training abroad in immersion programmes, was one of the most coherent and consistent strategies. Several public announcements addressing state teachers were made to call for bids for innovative research studies on specific issues, CLIL being one.

Both foreign-language teachers and other curricular-subject teachers were able to obtain a CLIL focussed *Llicència d'Estudis C* or *Llicència d'estudis D*, sabbatical periods for implementing teaching strategies or improving their teaching skills. Summer study grants for teachers have also been offered abroad by European Lifelong Learning Programmes (*Programa d'Aprenentatge Permanent-PAP*), connected to Lingua, Comenius and Grundtvig programmes. Several programmes for self-reflection and in-service research, either abroad or in Catalonia, were implemented, melding theory, practice and research. Action-research methodologies and action-reflection models were the underlying basis for these training programmes.

### **Sabbaticals and courses abroad: collective action-research and action-reflection in CLIL training**

The PELE projects and the European Comenius school association, both coordinated after 2008 from the *Servei de Llengües Estrangeres*, provided the generalisation of content learning in foreign languages through communication approaches and ICT techniques. Fostering and widening CLIL and EMILE experiences, training programmes in Catalonia were organised by the *Subdirecció General d'Innovació, Formació i Orientació* to give support to PELE projects, the same as the *Subdirecció General de Formació Permanent i Recursos Pedagògics* had done before under Orator project. They mainly followed Do Coyle's CLIL approach (Coyle 2003, p. 5-29), together with the project work developed in the European Comenius projects. Catalan teachers were given the opportunity to be trained abroad, and participate in European school projects. They could innovate through ICT in the classroom, increase their collective bank of resources, and develop their classes with the help of native language assistants. These strategies have raised awareness among teachers, schools and students of the importance of learning a language through content from three different perspectives:

- Language of learning
- Language for learning
- Language through learning

The creation of sabbatical periods, *Llicències d'estudis retribuïdes C i D*, helped the Department of Education promote CLIL teacher training abroad. These sabbaticals were offered to primary and secondary foreign language teachers who worked in state schools in prominent research projects.

*Llicències C* for language teachers were offered for the first time in 2003, after a memorandum of agreement was signed with the English Department of Education and Skills (DfES) and in 2005 with the Scottish Education Authorities in Glasgow (APAC, 2005, p. 35). Selected Catalan teachers, already involved in quality CLIL actions, travelled to Great Britain to work in two or more schools as Spanish lecturers for a whole school year:

- Time: one school year.
- Task abroad: Spanish lecturer and classroom observation.
- Product result: 35-hour unit design

They collected data from classroom observation, and wrote a CLIL report based on this experience. Once back home, teachers were expected to implement their CLIL proposal in their own schools and make the material available for other teachers. Until 2009, *Llicències C* succeeded in adding to available resources, for teachers interested in having quality CLIL models and examples (XTEC, 2010a).

Shorter sabbatical periods were created with the *Llicències D* modality in school year 2005-2006, both in Great Britain, and in France. Grant description:

- Time: 10 weeks.
- Task abroad: CLIL course attendance.
- Product result: 15-hours unit design

Teachers were expected to participate in a very intense CLIL or EMILE course for ten weeks. During this period, they were committed to design innovative CLIL materials for teachers to implement in Catalonia. Some very well-known web resources and materials used today were created by the Catalan teachers who obtained a *Llicència D*. (XTEC, 2010b)

Other annual sabbatical offers, such as *Llicències d'Estudi Retribuïdes*, began in 1989-1990 and were still recruiting teachers in 2010 (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2010). Several proposals were presented for CLIL and foreign language teaching, these being constant priorities of the Department of Education. The recruiting call in 2010 put special emphasis in creating educational material for promoting the transference and dissemination of the experience (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2010, p. 26204).

A searchable database of granted sabbatical projects is available on the XTEC web page, the main on-line official resource for Catalan teachers (XTEC, 2011a). Online search reveals 1664 research studies, and several studies show up in different languages (searched on Feb. 2013):



Key-word	Sabbatical studies
Anglès	119
Francès	8
Alemanys	3
Itàlia	2
CLIL	55

These sabbaticals strengthened the feeling of collective project that many CLIL teachers had after the creation of the CRLE. A strong sense of community can be still detected among many of the participants in these experiences. It is clear that teachers were more inclined to support methodological change at school if they were involved in creating it. Some of the major changes in Catalan society were reflected in these sabbaticals, such as the arrival of the Euro at the turn of the millennium (Lorenzo, 1999) or the new hypermedia and hypertext challenge for language teachers (Matamoros, 1997).

The Department of Education, facing a new European economic context at the end of the last decade, reduced resources for international training in order to invest in widening the more affordable local courses. Some of the most innovative CLIL teachers, who were trained using one of the grants abroad, participated later in the in-service training of other teachers in Catalonia. They were still focussed on CLIL, initial language teaching and immersion approaches for foreign languages. The main design included Primary and Preschool English Teaching Programmes (*Formació per a l'ensenyament de l'anglès a l'educació infantil i primària-ANIP*), and Preschool English Teaching Programmes (*Formació per a l'ensenyament de l'anglès a l'educació infantil-ANIN*), among other training courses.

Building on the experience gained in teaching secondary teachers, the specific courses for primary (ANIP) and preschool (ANIN) teachers were designed for early foreign language teaching. They were intended to provide specialised content-teaching and cross-curricular techniques for the youngest students (2007-2012). The innovation in these courses was a mix of face-to-face, on line, theory and practice, all conducted in the target language. Teachers who had participated in the grants abroad or had obtained a *Llicència d'Estudis* (sabbatical) were involved in training and advising new in-service activities for other colleagues providing stability and continuity to the system. Teacher trainers were expert English teachers from Catalonia, with wide classroom experience, who had already developed a plurilingual background. These trainers did not abandon their own teaching duties while they were training, and that kept them very close to the trainees and their concerns. ANIP and ANIN courses sought to maximise impact and optimise resources by training teachers in the *Escoles Oficials d'Idiomes* and in the *Pla de Formació de Zona*, both being local resources. The continuation of the original ANIP programme, now mainly on line, called ANT1, is still operating in 2012 and it is offered both to teachers in private schools, as well as to teachers in state schools.

Many of the expert teachers involved in these training programmes are now joining international research or training at university, or developing innovative materials on the Internet (Carmen Albadalejo in 1990; Ana Yagüe in 2001; Dolors Camats in 2002; Mar Camacho in 2004; M. Riera Tolò in 2004; Mercé Barrull in 2007).

## On-going projects: results, and educational value

### Present CLIL approaches and integrated or blending methodologies

Recent changes in language policy in Catalonia have led to several initiatives with the primary goal of including vocational education and training (VET) in the dynamic processes that have stimulated the other educational levels: In 2012 under a very restrained budget, a new plurilingual initiative was shaped under a foreign-language integrated plan, the *Pla Integrat de Llengües Estrangeres* (PILE), established as an evolution of the original PELE concept (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012a). They were also targeted to include vocational schools and adapt the school project to a two-year life cycle, in the current European context of encouraging entrepreneurship and stimulating educational experimentation in post-compulsory education. While primary and secondary teachers have been continually involved in CLIL projects and blended programmes in Catalonia, foreign languages were commonly absent from vocational studies until 2009. Based on project work and CLIL modalities, PILE was designed explicitly to include all the post-obligatory levels, to address CLIL proposals to post-secondary levels with specific commitments. The main aim is finally to develop a plurilingual school project, connected to the school-community context, by developing different flexible strategies in every school: projects, language teaching increasing, or integrated communicative tasks are widely promoted. (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012a, p. 20932).

On-going projects with CLIL approaches are now part of the current options that schools can choose to develop their educational autonomy. After the Catalan Education Law of 2009, many of the options that were only allowed in schools with a specific programme are now open to the general public, with the sole constraint of having enough qualified teachers to develop their options. In their strategic plans schools can include the issues they consider to be best adjusted to their needs and possibilities: improvement of students' language skills; CLIL implementation in the school; flexible student groupings to develop content-based project work in different languages, etc. The possibilities are enormous, but still many schools have not started to work them out.

In the next section of this paper we review the main data existing for CLIL projects and for foreign language teaching in Catalonia, and provide current data on results and performance.

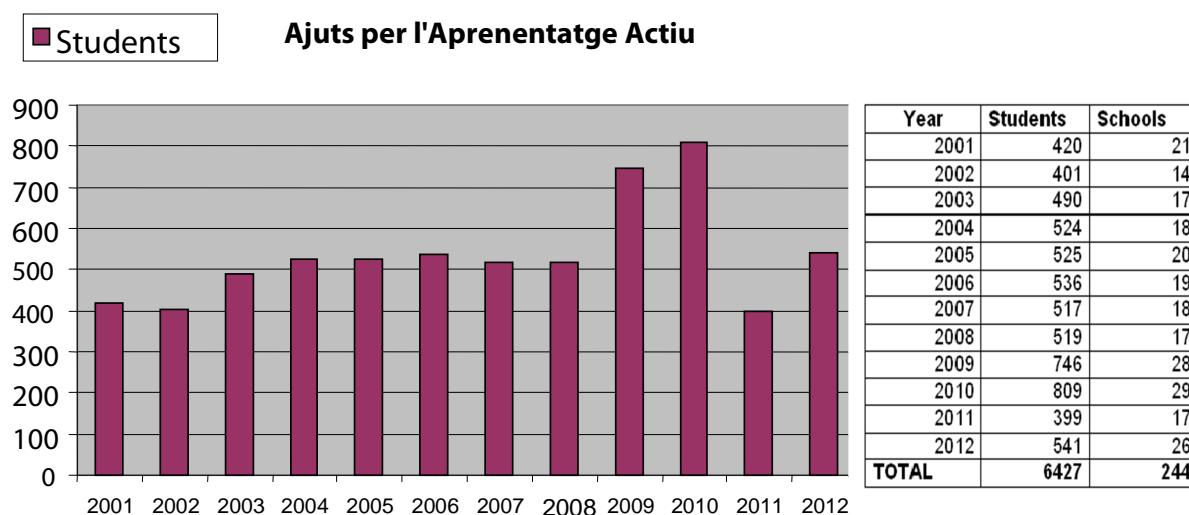
### Results and programme data

As we have seen in the previous section of this paper, the Departament d'Ensenyament has developed a variety of action plans, in the last ten years, to aid the mastery of foreign languages and to promote the most modern language and content integrated methodologies for teaching them. The following are some of the best known programmes:

- *Aprenentatge Actiu d'Idiomes-AAI* (2000-2006): Born under the Orator programme, this international mobility project is offered for secondary schools. It allows a

whole classroom to travel to a foreign speaking country in order to further develop a thematic school project, based on content learning and topic research, or integrating language and content acquisition. Different versions of this strategy have since been organised annually, and a total of 6427 students and 244 schools have participated until now.

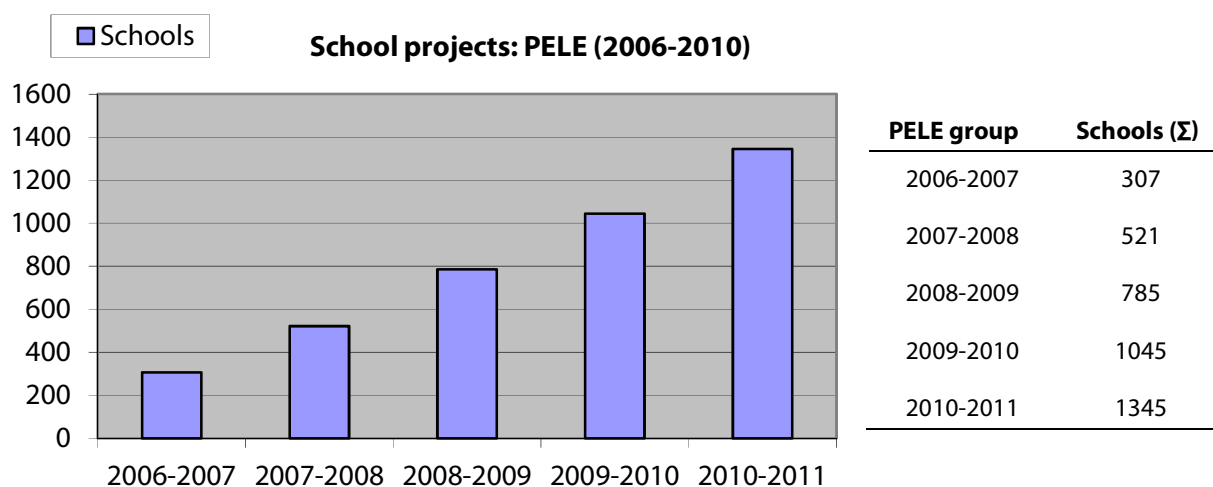
**Table 5: Annual participation (number of secondary students) in the main Orator programme, focused on content based projects that completed their development abroad, Aprenentatge Actiu d'Idiomes (graphic and data).**



Source: Servei de Llengües Estrangeres (SdLE, 2012a).

- *Pla Experimental de Llengües Estrangeres-PELE (2007-2010)*: The *Experimental Foreign Language Plan* provided specific funding to primary and secondary schools for implementing actions in a third or fourth curricular language at school. The last PELE group started in 2010 and will continue until August 2013.

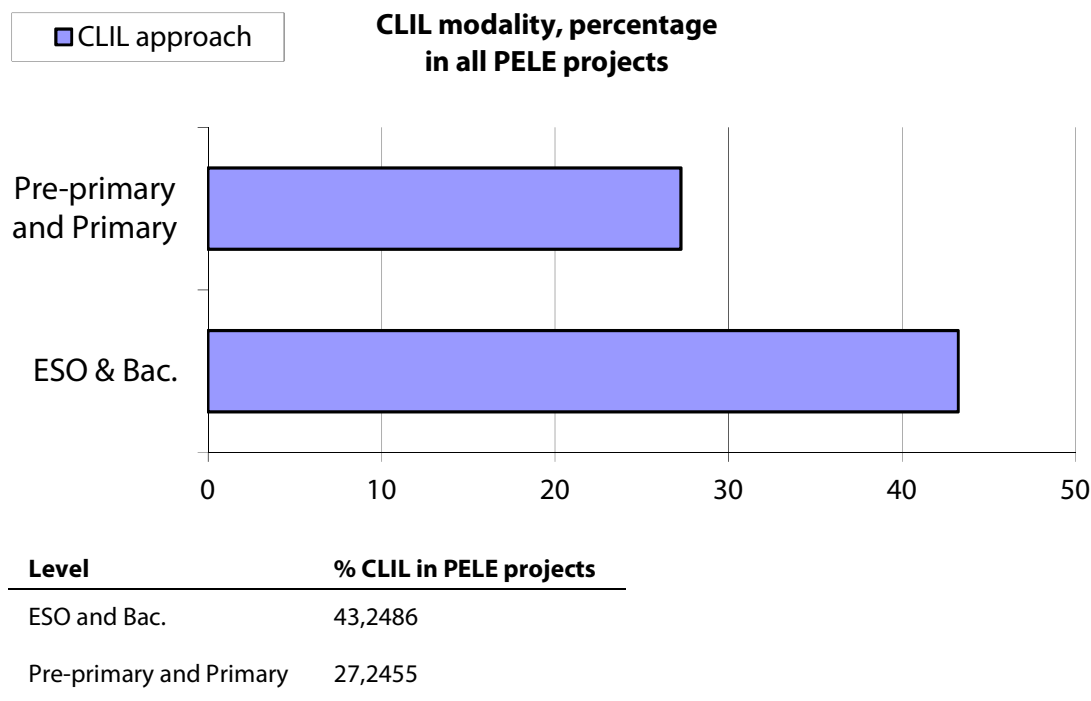
**Table 5: Annual participation (number of schools) in the PELE programme for primary and secondary schools, (Pla Experimental de Llengües estrangeres) 2006-2010, (graphic and data).**



Source: Servei de Llengües Estrangeres (SdLE, 2012b).

There are more PELE projects in primary schools (1002) than in secondary schools (343). Nevertheless, there are more CLIL-PELE projects in secondary than in primary, the others being mainly project work oriented:

**Table 6: Percentage of CLIL-PELE projects.(Pla Experimental de Llengües estrangeres) 2006-2010, (graphic and data)**



Source: Servei de Llengües Estrangeres (SdLE, 2012c).

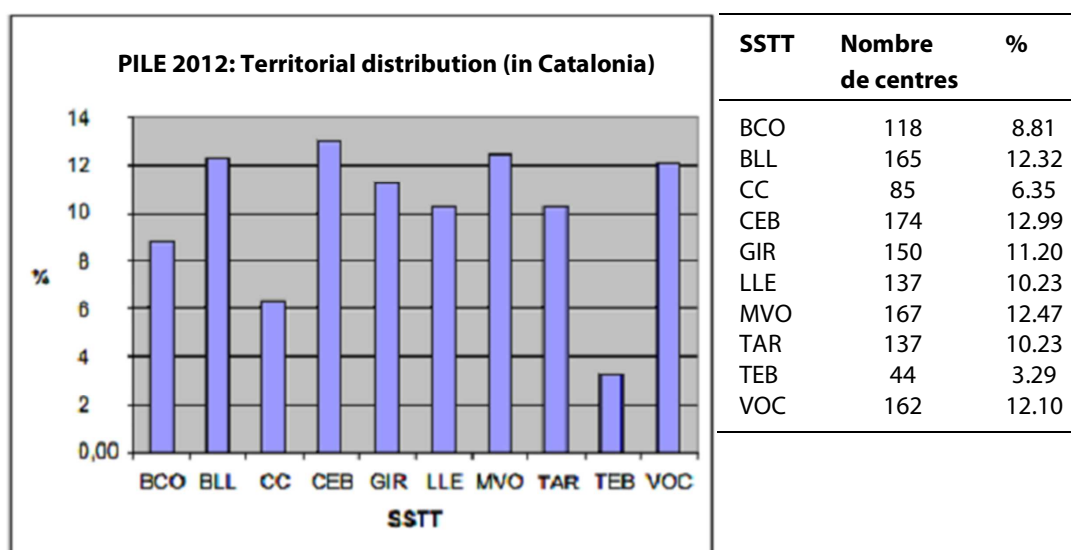
- *Programa d'Aprenentatge Permanent-PAP* (2007-2013): PAP is an application in Catalonia of the Lifelong Learning Programme, the European educational and training programmes (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006). These programmes help schools to exchange experiences, teachers, and students for learning languages, enhancing mobility, promoting a European dimension in education, and collaborating in the development of a common two-year project. Different opportunities are offered as a function of the educational level they are targeting, such as Comenius for primary and secondary schools, Grundtvig for informal adult education, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education, among others. Since 2007, CLIL has been a priority for selecting schools to be funded with a Comenius grant. Most of the participating Catalan schools have worked in at least three languages, whatever curricular subject-field the Comenius project was developing.

**Table 7: PAP Comenius projects for primary and secondary schools (Programa d'Aprenentatge Permanent) 2007-2012, (graphic and data)**

Year	Comenius BILATERAL	Comenius MULTILATERAL
2007	6	23
2008	14	22
2009	21	76
2010	10	73
2011	4	62
2012	26	185

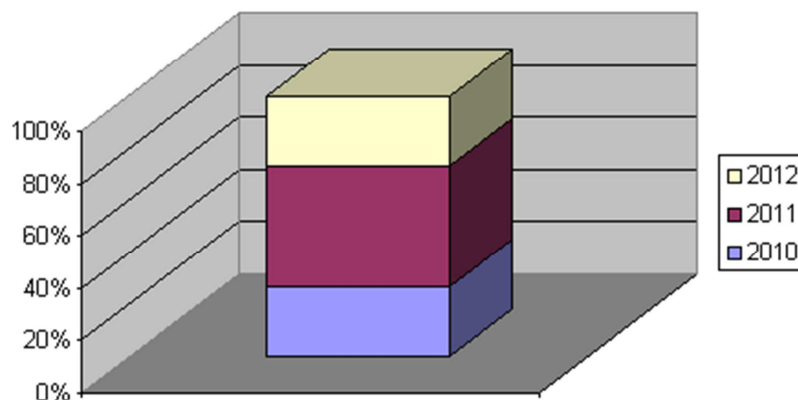
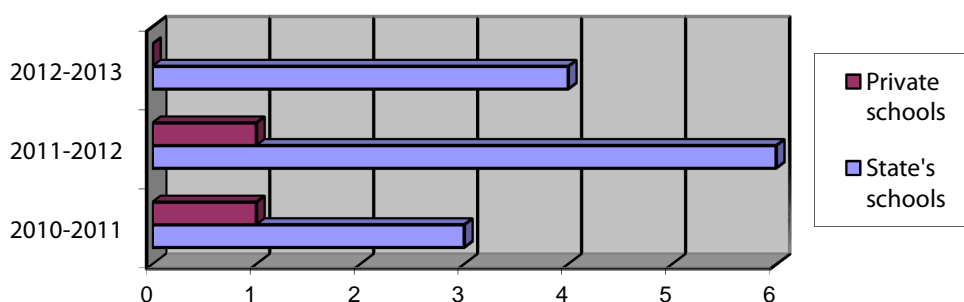
Source: Servei de Llengües Estrangeres (SdLE, 2012d).

- *Pla Integrat de Llengües Estrangeres-PILE* (2012-continuing): The *Integrated Foreign Language Plan* was established in 2012 as an evolution of the original PELE concept. These PILE projects offer a more transversal approach than PELE, to integrate common strategies for all the languages taught in the school. Open to vocational schools, the main aim is to increase the time of language immersion in an academic context, for students to use the foreign language as a tool to communicate, to study and to conduct research in real meaningful environments.

**Table 8: PILE Projects in Catalonia (Pla integrat de Llengua Estrangera) 2012 (graphic and data)**

Source : Servei de Llengües Estrangeres (SdLE, 2012e).

The PILE programme also provides official support for the French CLIL projects (EM-ILE), especially in the compound Spanish-French Baccalaureate (BatxiBac), which follows the international agreement between Spanish and French educational authorities. This option allows students to obtain a B2 level certificate in French, according to the Common European Framework for Languages, at the same time as the official Baccalaureates from Spain and France. The studies include 33,3% of time in French, with classes in Language, Literature, History and other subjects and research in that language:

**Table 9: BatxiBac, Evolution of number of schools that offer Compound Baccalaureate from Spain and France, with EMILE approach (CLIL) since it was created (2010-2011)****Spanish-French Baccalaureate schools: increase process in the programme****BatxiBac EMILE in private / state secondary schools**

Source: Servei de Llengües Estrangeres (SdLE, 2012f).

The implementation of all these programmes, designed to increase students' plurilingualism, responds to main educational policies oriented to guaranteeing education and training systems that are fully in line with the needs of our society and our labour markets. Assessment indicators are usually connected to the number of projects, budget involved and number of participants, both teachers and students. Further impact and efficiency studies still need to be done.

### Objectives and quality indicators

Education and foreign language learning were included in a global assessment of policy making, as part of the government's strategic vision. Indicators have been evolving from those that count participation towards approaches that favour accountability.

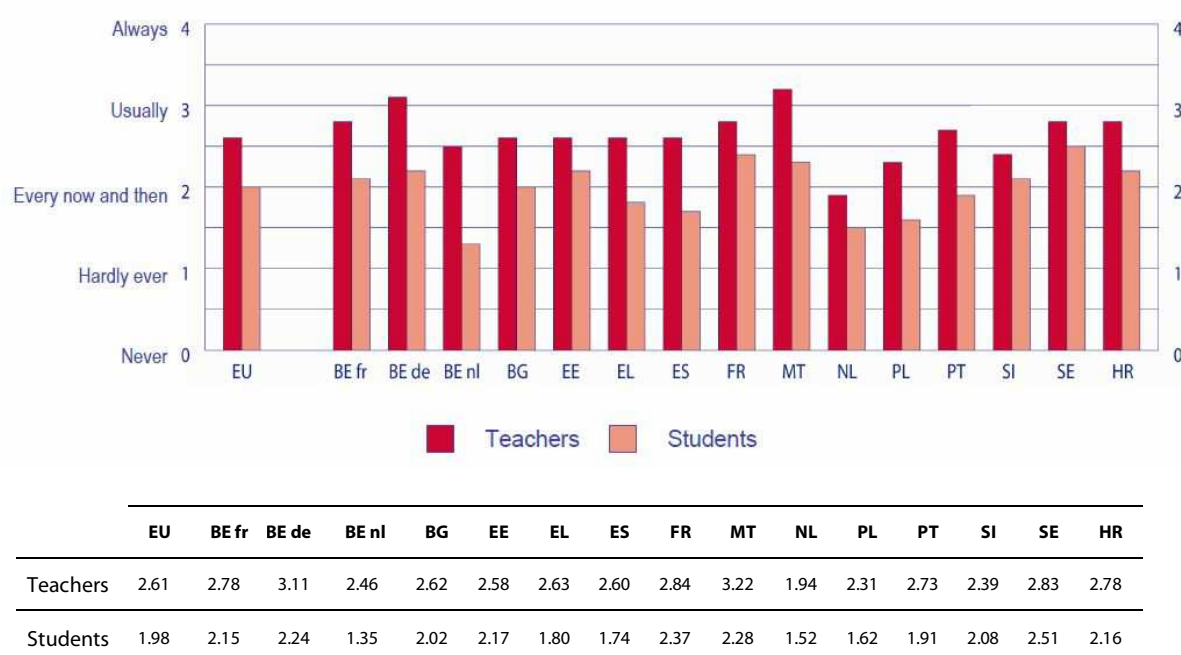
The initial Orator programme counted results through effectiveness and impact, by considering the number of participants and invested resources. The indicators of success for this programme were:

- Number of students that achieved an intermediate level with the EOI certificate.
- Percentage of educational resources for language learning (budget) in primary and secondary education.
- Number of grants given to do immersion in foreign languages (CLIL).

The PELE programme was also validated through participation. Basic skills control, PISA tests and external assessment of schools that were developing a strategic autonomous plan were some of the measures that schools could data-cross in order to know about their own improvement. Many schools with an autonomous plan for improvement (*Pla de millora, Pla estratègic*) added foreign language learning and even *students' foreign language accreditation* to their school indicators, especially when doing a PELE. Teacher training was designed accordingly (SdLE, 2012g).

In any case, it was obvious that the simple number of participants could not provide quality information about the teaching and learning processes that took place in the classroom. We only need look at the real *communication time* in language classrooms, across Europe to understand how meaningful the interaction between students and teachers can be when comparing results:

**Table 10: Frequency of use of the foreign language in class, (English, in Spain) by teachers and students during the, school year 2010-2011**



Source: Eurydice (2012, p. 106).

In 2005, the number of CLIL schools became a quality indicator for the Catalan government. That year, the Catalan government included content and language integrated learning within the framework of the '*Strategic Agreement to promote internationalisation of the Catalan economy, strengthen its competitiveness, and improve the quality of employment*' (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2005b). Among other initiatives, it was planned to generalise CLIL in English at secondary schools from the school year 2005-2006 on, as much as possible (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2005b, p. 22).

If it is true that the annual funding of PELE projects established the normative and autonomous framework for the dissemination of content in English or any other curricular foreign language, the emerging socio-economic situation certainly affected the rhythm of generalisation. Scaling up never took place.

In 2008, a new Strategic Agreement took into account the new European economic scenario and recognised the importance of foreign language learning for empowering new generations (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2008). The new document included a plan for developing English learning at school (*acció 6*, Generalitat de Catalunya, [Gencat], 2008, 47) and several indicators of progress that were annually assessed (action 6, strategies from 26 to 32). They were promoting singular school projects under contextual decision-making and school-management autonomy, mainly following the PELE models.

A third strategic framework for educational policy-making was included in the governmental plan in 2011, the *Pla de Govern 2011-2014* (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2011), and language learning skills were again part of the educational strategies for empowering Catalan society. This time the scope for learning (*àmbit 2.2.*, Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2011, p. 24) was widened and made more transversal, to include implementation of reading and speaking skills together with digital competencies in ICT: the main novelty was to include reflective practice and crosscurricular reading to improve Maths competences and writing expression, among other skills. Additional priorities for school success (*àmbit 2.3.*, Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2011, p. 25) emphasize plurilingual competencies as much as those in mathematics, high order thinking, and creativity. English mastery and especially oral skills are explicitly mentioned as an objective to prioritise.

Under these objectives, assessment indicators are already aligned with the educational controls that the *Agència Catalana d'Avaluació del Sistema educatiu* provides to the Department of Education:

- Reading results
- Skill competencies (Language, Maths and Science)
- Foreign language (recently added)

Moreover, one of the items in the content checklist for PILE school projects was evaluation. The official recruitment call, *Art. 3.4. Description of the project* included the identification of assessment criteria for the evaluation of students and of the teaching process itself, at least during the two initial years (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012a).

It is clear that a third language has become part of the language baggage that every student gets in Catalan schools. A second foreign language can also provide the fourth or even the fifth linguistic code for many students, thanks to the Orator, PELE, PAP, PILE or BatxiBac projects. All of these programmes have common elements that permit us to follow their processes and implementation. All of them promote:

- Increased time during which the student is exposed to the target foreign language.



- Improvement of teaching models that may include the use of language assistants.
- Priority of specialised teacher training.
- Development of a singular project, specific to the school that is willing to participate in the programme.
- Emphasis on working communicative abilities; active participation of students, either through increased emphasis on spoken language skills, or via students' participation in group projects.
- Content-based and integrated approaches (CLIL, project work, etc).

Every project proposes objectives that are coherent with the realities of the school's student population, and the school's capacity to develop the project to completion. In addition to traditional Catalan immersion, all of them are using the target foreign language as a tool for accessing information, for participating in research or learning tasks, and for interacting in collaborative project work.

These plans include evaluation as part of the project design, are supervised by the territorial authorities and are present in the annual school plan presented to the Inspectorate of Education. The results of these evaluations are expected to provide valuable information, not only on the success of projects, but on what conditions inside the schools favour the best successful projects. Knowing this will help schools develop new initiatives that go directly to creating better environments for learning.

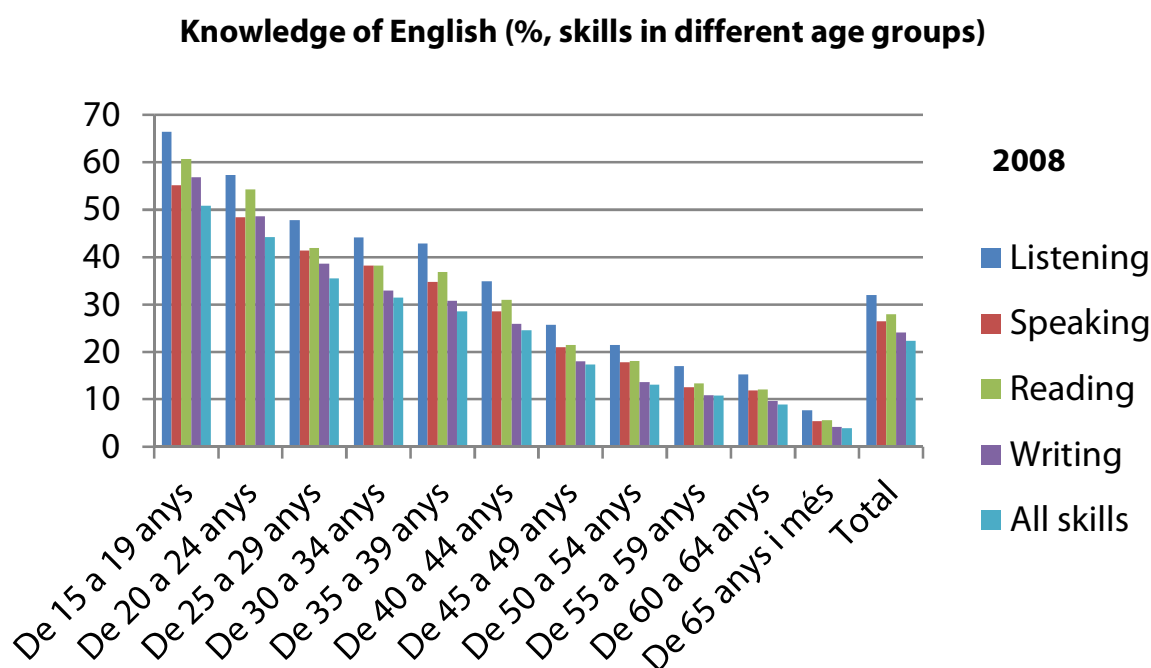
A deeper knowledge of what are the most favourable learning scenarios and the best educational contexts facilitates rubrics for assessment and checklists for designing better projects. The educational administration will obtain comparative data and detailed examples of good teaching practices. PILE projects are useful for schools to implement their singular plans in an autonomous manner and reflect on their own organisational learning processes. They are also useful for the educational administration to develop selection criteria, and to require schools that want to participate in these programmes to provide frameworks for success.

### Assessment results

Results published by the *Institut d'estadística de Catalunya*, IDESCAT, show that the number of Catalan students who have developed foreign language skills, in third and fourth languages, has increased significantly in recent years.

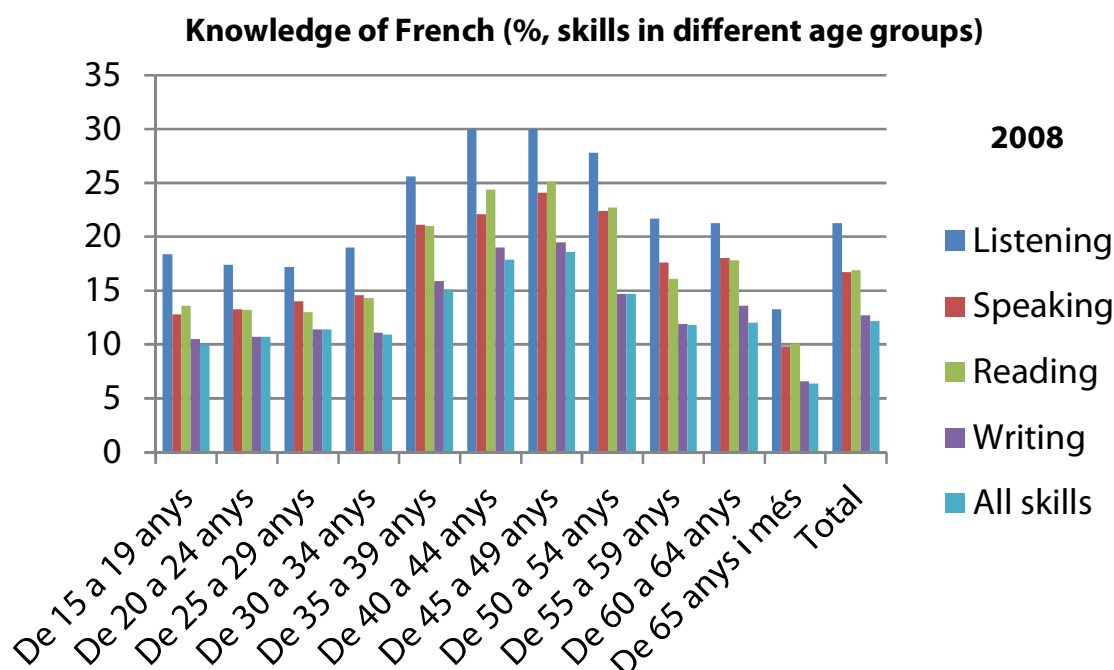
The number of English speakers is significantly higher than the number of French speakers. In the late 70's there was a shift of priorities in foreign language studies, that positioned English as the first foreign language in Catalan schools. Nevertheless, the PELE foreign language programmes also included decisive support for early French language learning. They maintained the introduction of a second foreign language in Primary education, and almost doubled the number of French Language Assistants. Oral and ICT teacher training courses were added, together with EMILE training. These seem to have proved efficient in turning around the tendency and increasing mastery of French among students (IDESCAT, 2008b).

**Table 11. Evolution of English language mastery, 2008.**  
**Different language skills are detailed per each age group**



Source: IDESCAT

**Table 12: Evolution of French language mastery, 2008.**  
**Different language skills are detailed per each age group.**



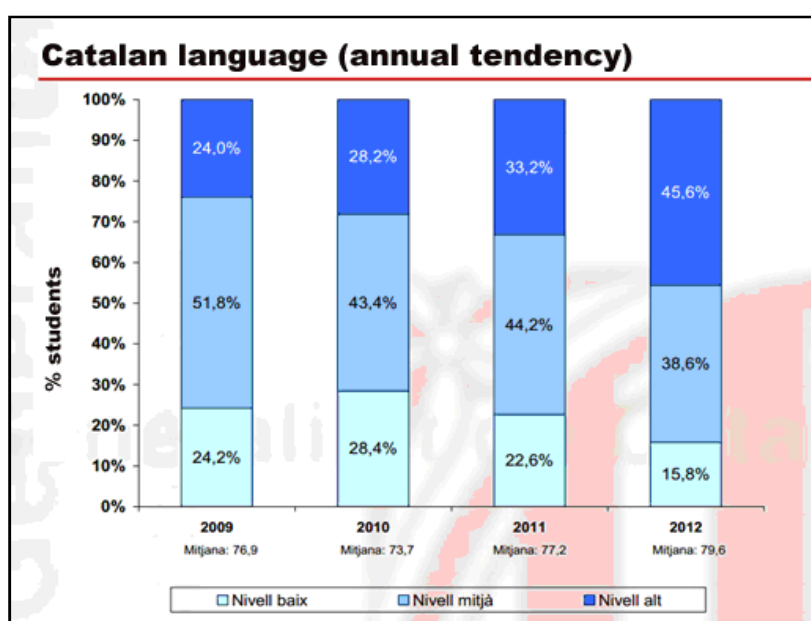
Source: IDESCAT

At the end of Primary education (11-12 years old), the students' results for recent years show clear improvement (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012b). It is important to compare the results in the four languages that the students manage in school, tested by the *Avaluació de les competències bàsiques de l'alumnat de sisè curs de*

*l'educació primària* to understand how much of an effort is required to become plurilingual in at least three languages (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012b). This official test is taken by every student in the last course of Primary education in Catalonia, to provide direct information about results and tendencies to families and schools. Test scores, globally based in PISA levels, reflect what students have learned throughout primary school in Maths and reading literacy (Catalan and Spanish and one foreign language), and it is not used to grade individual students but to detect general needs of the educational system. In 2012, results showed consistent language improvement in Catalan:

- The number of students in the 6<sup>th</sup> course of Primary education with a high level of mastery in Catalan is clearly increasing, in the last 4 years.
- The number of students with difficulties has decreased by almost 10 %.

**Table 13. Evolution of Catalan language mastery 2009-2012.**  
**Students in 6<sup>th</sup> course, Primary education**

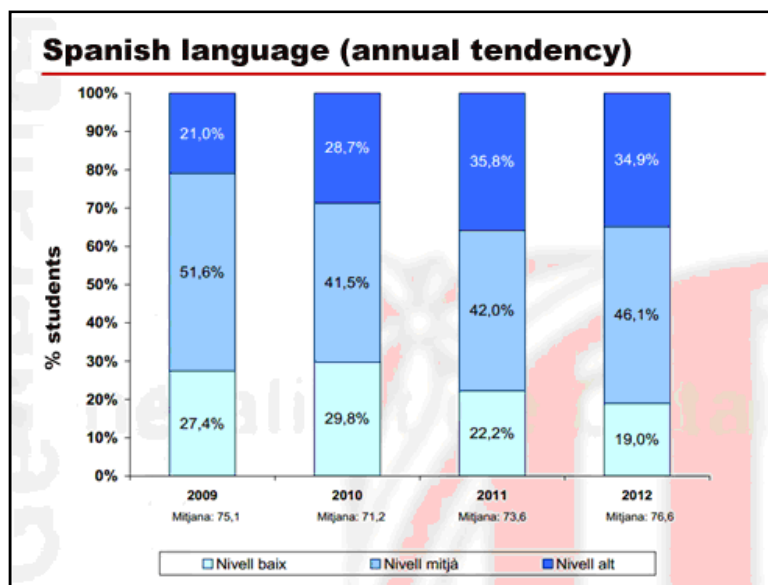


Source: Consell Superior d'Avaluació del Sistema Educatiu (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012b).

Significant improvement can be also found when looking at the results in Spanish language skills:

- The number of students in the 6<sup>th</sup> course of Primary education with a high level of mastery in Spanish is consistently growing.
- The number of students with low levels of Spanish is decreasing

**Table 14. Evolution of Spanish language mastery 2009-2012.**  
Students in 6<sup>th</sup> course, Primary education

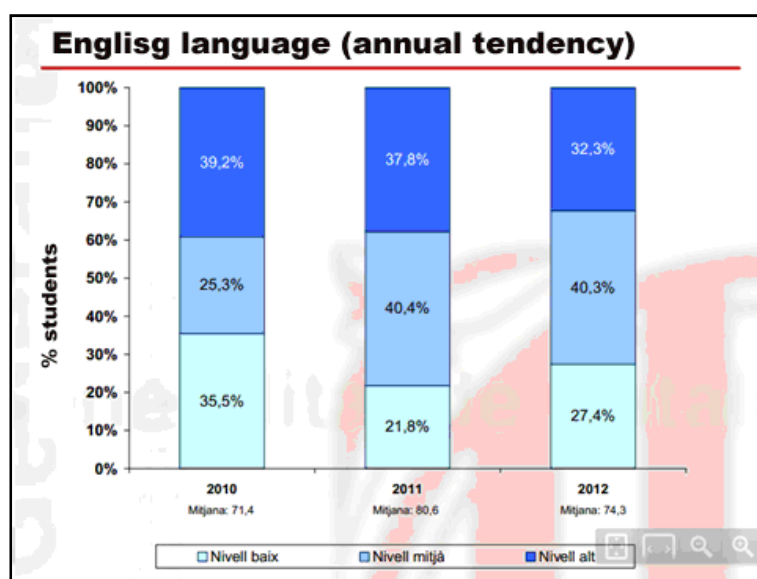


Source: Consell Superior d'Avaluació del Sistema Educatiu (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012b).

Assessment of students' results in foreign languages is a relatively recent issue in Catalonia, and the changes introduced in the test format can be seen in the annual results. Data show how the average results are evolving, for both first foreign language and second foreign language. The results in 2012 were clear:

- The number of students with a high level of mastery in a foreign language (English) is not really increasing in the 6<sup>th</sup> course of Primary education. But the number of students at middle levels of success seems to be clearly improving.
- The number of students with low levels of English is still more than 25%.

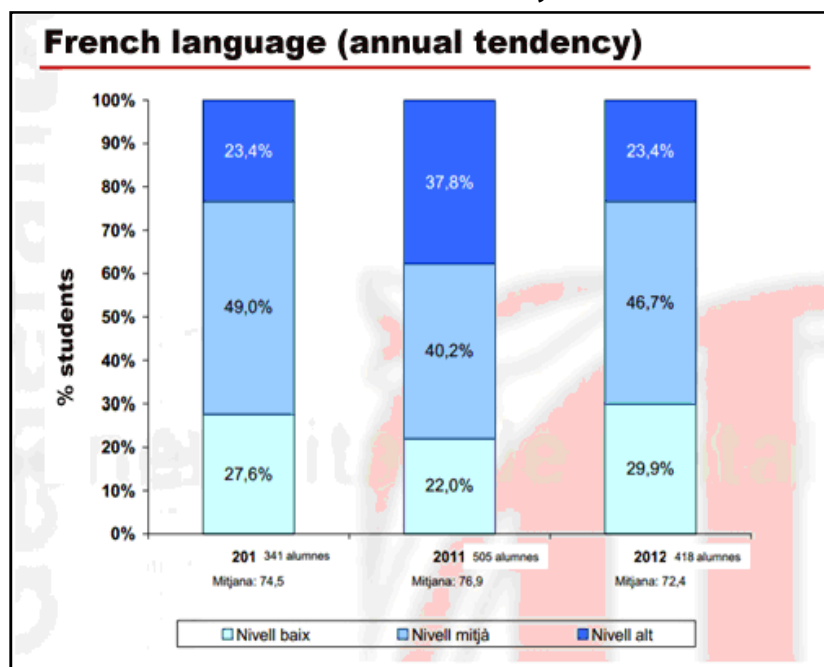
**Table 15. Evolution of English language mastery 2009-2012.**  
Students in 6<sup>th</sup> course, Primary education



Source: Consell Superior d'Avaluació del Sistema Educatiu (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012b).

When assessing a fourth language (French, as second foreign language), results in the 6th course of Primary education show variations, probably due to the low number of students tested in this group. In any case, more than 70% of these students show a middle or high level of mastery in this fourth language studied at school.

**Table 15. Evolution of French language mastery 2009-2012.**  
**Students in 6<sup>th</sup> course, Primary education**



Source: Consell Superior d'Avaluació del Sistema Educatiu (Generalitat de Catalunya [Gencat], 2012b).

Comparing these results with those of other Spanish autonomies, we can see how Catalonia is not in a disadvantaged position when assessing students in Spanish (first language) and English (second languages). International data is available on this subject (MECD, 2012). In the last year, annual results on foreign language teaching have been taken into account and are presented in the national education data (MECD, 2013a). CLIL teaching has also become one of the main national indicators: data can be obtained from the Spanish national indicator *E3. La Utilización de lenguas extranjeras como lengua de enseñanza* (MECD, 2013b).

If we compare training data with the rest of Europe, attention is called our attention to the fact that, in recent years, language teacher's skills have been significantly improving, but the results are not yet satisfactory. The Eurydice report *Key data on Teaching languages at school in Europe 2012* (Eurydice, 2012), allows us to compare Spain with other European countries:

- a) In 2009-2010, Spain is among the five European countries with the highest percentage of students learning English in compulsory education (Eurydice, 2012, p. 60),
- b) The population of primary students accessing English classes is still increasing (Eurydice, 2012, p. 62.)
- c) Students in compulsory Secondary education are more likely to master English than students following vocational studies (Eurydice, 2012, p. 63).

- d) Spain is one of the European countries that does not offer the option to specialise in another subject alongside foreign languages (Eurydice, 2012, p. 88).
- e) Foreign language teachers are fully qualified and languages cannot be taught by uncertified teachers (Eurydice, 2012, p. 92).
- f) In 2010-2011, Spain is one of the countries with very few problems of finding substitute teachers in foreign languages, compared with the rest of Europe (Eurydice, 2012, p. 93).
- g) While in most countries CLIL teachers are not required to have an extra qualification, teachers in Spain are required to have their foreign language accreditation plus extra training or a certified level, usually at least B2, with certain variations in different autonomies (Eurydice, 2012, p. 95).
- h) English is the most popular language for in-service training activities undertaken as part of the Comenius programme in 2009 (Eurydice, 2012, p. 99).
- i) Spain has one of the lowest recommended minimum annual teaching times for foreign languages as compulsory subjects in full-time compulsory general education, in 2010/11 (Eurydice, 2012, p. 112)

## Conclusions and recommendations

The official plurilingual policy in Catalonia requires keeping track of student's results in at least four languages: Catalan, Spanish, English and French. For effective plurilingualism in education, other family languages should be included in school plans and projects.

Assessment data confirms that bilingual mastery in Catalan and Spanish comprehension is widely acquired at school, even if records show the need, still, to prioritise Catalan for maintaining levels of achievement and to guarantee social cohesion.

Young generations are acquiring lifelong plurilingual skills using CLIL methodologies and content-based project-work at school, in different languages. In 2012, 441 schools in Catalonia declared themselves to be running a CLIL project in foreign language. Assessment results in third language (generally English) are showing clear improvement in the last ten years, even if the general average is still far from desired levels, compared to other European countries in the same socio-cultural context. Integrated approaches seem to be very effective in developing transversal skills and life-long learning competencies.

Fourth language mastery results (usually French) place Catalonia among the best in Europe for second foreign language acquisition. The existence of this strong linguistic curriculum is not affecting results in Maths or Science negatively, and Catalan schools are in the same range as other monolingual autonomies in Spain.

Further studies need to be carried out to detect efficient educational scenarios and models that can be scaled up to a larger population.

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## *Informe y valoración de la evolución de los programas AICLE en Cataluña*

**Resumen:** En este capítulo se ofrece una visión general de los planes de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en los últimos diez años en Cataluña. En la introducción se revisan los planes de inmersión bilingües para aprender catalán y castellano que fueron diseñados en la segunda mitad del siglo xx; este es el punto de partida para entender el desarrollo de las políticas educativas catalanas multilingües. A continuación pasamos a describir los principales programas de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras que permiten a los estudiantes catalanes aprender una tercera lengua y aprender en una tercera lengua, basados en el trabajo por proyectos y en el aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y de lengua extranjera (AICLE). También se presentan estadísticas de participación en los distintos programas y resultados de las evaluaciones de los idiomas estudiados y de contenido curricular. Por último, se analizan los principales factores escolares y las prácticas de aula que correlacionan con el éxito educativo y las puntuaciones elevadas en los resultados internacionales, y se examina su impacto en las escuelas catalanas.

**Palabras clave:** AICLE, plurilingüismo, aprendizaje holístico e integrado, programas de aprendizaje de lenguas

## *Rapport et évaluation de l'évolution des programmes EMILE en Catalogne*

**Résumé:** Cet ouvrage offre une vision générale des plans d'enseignement des langues étrangères de ces dix dernières années en Catalogne. Dans l'introduction, il révisé les plans d'immersion vers le bilinguisme en catalan et castillan qui ont été conçus au cours de la deuxième moitié du xxe siècle. C'est le point de départ pour comprendre le développement des politiques éducatives catalanes multilingues. Il passe ensuite à la description des principaux programmes d'enseignement de langues étrangères qui permettent aux étudiant(e)s catalan(e)s d'apprendre une troisième langue et dans une troisième langue, ce qui est fondamental dans l'apprentissage par projets de contenus et dans les perspectives de l'enseignement de matières par l'intégration d'une langue étrangère (EMILE). L'ouvrage présente les statistiques de participation et les résultats des évaluations des étudiant(e)s en langues et en contenus du cursus. Enfin, il analyse les principaux facteurs scolaires et les pratiques de cours qui sont en corrélation avec le succès académique et les autres ponctuations dans les résultats internationaux, et il examine leur impact dans les écoles catalanes.

**Mots clés:** EMILE, plurilinguisme, apprentissage holistique et intégré, programmes d'apprentissage de langues

## *Informe i valoració de l'evolució dels programes CLIL a Catalunya*

**Resum:** En aquest capítol s'ofereix una visió general dels plans d'ensenyament de llengües estrangeres en els últims deu anys a Catalunya. A la introducció, es revisen els plans d'immersió vers el bilingüisme en català i castellà, que van ser dissenyats en la segona meitat del segle xx. Aquest és el punt de partida per entendre el desenvolupament de les polítiques educatives catalanes multilingües. Després passem a descriure els principals programes d'ensenyament de llengües estrangeres que permeten als estudiants catalans a aprendre una tercera llengua i en una tercera llengua, que es fonamenten en l'aprenentatge per projectes de contingut i en els enfocaments d'aprenentatge integrat de contingut i llengua estrangera (AICLE). També es presenten les estadístiques de participació i els resultats de les avaluacions dels estudiants en idiomes i en continguts curriculars. Finalment, s'analitzen els principals factors escolars i les pràctiques d'aula que correlacionen amb l'èxit acadèmic i amb les altes puntuacions en els resultats internacionals, i examinem el seu impacte en les escoles catalanes.

**Paraules clau:** AICLE, plurilingüisme, aprenentatge holístic i integrat, programes d'aprenentatge de llengües