

Are CLIL learners simply faster or also different? Evidence from L1 use in the repair sequences and discourse markers of CLIL and EFL learners

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Abstract

This study compares the linguistic abilities of CLIL and EFL learners regarding their need for repair sequences, their ability to avoid L1 use and their production of discourse markers while narrating stories in English. Data were collected from a CLIL and an EFL group (n. 15 and 11) of (Spanish/Basque) adolescents narrating a story twice over a two year period (ages 13 and 15). The analyses of the learners' production revealed differences between groups as well as changes in both groups over time. Repairs in the CLIL group were often generated in English and dropped over time unlike in the EFL group. Also, the CLIL learners incorporated the repairs gradually less often in their subsequent speech while the EFL learners did so more and more frequently suggesting two different attitudes towards the language. Finally, discourse markers were used in the L1 in both groups but the EFL group underutilized them.

Keywords: CLIL, EFL, discourse markers, repair sequences, L1 use.

Resumen

Este trabajo analiza cómo estudiantes en contexto AICLE y de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (ILE) producen secuencias de reparación, evitan la L1 y utilizan marcadores discursivos cuando narran en inglés. Los datos se recogieron en dos momentos con un intervalo de dos años (a las edades de 13 y 15 años) y proceden de alumnos bilingües euskera-castellano divididos en dos grupos: los que aprenden en contexto de AICLE (n. 15) y los que únicamente aprenden ILE (n. 11). Los resultados muestran diferencias intergrupales e intragrupalas. En el grupo AICLE las reparaciones se generan mayoritariamente en inglés y decrecen con el tiempo, al contrario que en el grupo de ILE. Además, los alumnos AICLE incorporan las reparaciones menos a menudo mientras que los alumnos ILE las van incorporando con mayor frecuencia. Los marcadores del discurso aparecen en las L1s en los dos grupos pero el grupo ILE apenas los utiliza.

Palabras clave: AICLE, ILE, marcadores discursivos, secuencias de reparación, uso de la L1.

1. Introduction

Studies on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodologies in the context of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have repeatedly reported that CLIL learners outperform learners who only receive EFL lessons. This advantage includes general proficiency in English (Coyle, 2007; Dalton Puffer, 2007; Lasagabaster, 2008; Lorenzo, Casal and Moore, 2010) and also some specific areas of the language, for instance, CLIL learners have been claimed to display a faster morphosyntactic development (Lázaro Ibarrola, 2012; Lázro Ibarrola and García Mayo, 2012; Ruiz de Zarobe, 2008 among others), a more intelligible and less irritating foreign accent (Gallardo, Lecumberri and Gómez, 2009), greater fluency (Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Gallardo, Lecumberri and Gómez, 2009), a greater amount of receptive vocabulary (Jiménez Catalán and Ruiz de Zarobe, 2009) and greater abilities for discourse and interaction (García Mayo and Lázaro Ibarrola, 2015). In addition to these general and specific advantages in proficiency, some authors (Coyle, 2007; Dalton Puffer, 2007 among others) have also underscored that CLIL methodologies promote specific linguistic abilities or behaviours that have been typically associated with effective language learning. These include risk-taking and problem solving skills, linguistic confidence, independence and linguistic spontaneity.

While the general advantages in proficiency for CLIL learners could be directly connected to their more intense exposure to the target language (more hours of English), the development of specific linguistic behaviours could rather be connected to the qualitatively different type of input to which CLIL learners are exposed. In fact, many of the above mentioned authors have also emphasized that CLIL learners are not only exposed to more hours of English but also to a type of input that is qualitatively different from the input in regular EFL lessons (Lázaro Ibarrola and García Mayo, 2012; Coyle, 2007; Marsh, 2002; Muñoz, 2007). The input provided in CLIL lessons has the aim of conveying knowledge about a subject matter and is, therefore, communicatively more meaningful than the input provided in EFL lessons, which is often artificially manipulated for the sake of teaching the language. In addition, in CLIL lessons the learners become accustomed to using the language for interaction either to ask for contents or forms. For example, in a science class if a learner does not understand the term “uvula” or its function, he or she will use English to ask the teacher about it. Accordingly, CLIL students might consider and use the target language as an instrument of communication prioritizing a focus on meaning.

By contrast, EFL students might see it merely as a school subject, as an object to be learnt, thus prioritizing a focus on form.

All this provides the theoretical basis for expecting CLIL learners not only to achieve higher levels of proficiency but also to approach the learning process in a different way (with more confidence, creativity, etc.). Thus, this paper aims to explore the possibility that the speech of CLIL learners might display linguistic features that tell them apart from EFL learners. This will be done by analysing the use (or avoidance) of the L1s in the repair sequences (henceforth RSs) and discourse markers (henceforth DMs) found in the oral narratives of two groups of Basque-Spanish bilinguals learning English in high school: a group of 15 learners who receive CLIL and EFL instruction (henceforth we will refer to this group as CLIL group) and a group of 11 learners who only receive EFL lessons (henceforth we will refer to this group as EFL group). RSs and DMs have been selected as the focus of the present study because they might be particularly affected by CLIL methodologies. On the one hand, the fact that CLIL learners are used to interacting in English might make them more able to avoid RSs or to generate them in English. On the other hand, the fact that they are exposed to a more natural type of language might facilitate the acquisition of DMs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Repair Sequences

According to Serra (2007), when learners tell stories to an interviewer they become aware of what they do not know in the target language and might use the L1 to ask the interviewer for help thus generating a repair sequence. This author defines repair as a threefold sequence with the following three conversational turns illustrated with one example from our data in (1):

- (i) Obstacle: learners are unable to find an L2 item, ask for the researcher's help and produce the item needed in the L1.
- (ii) Repair: the researcher provides the L2 item needed.
- (iii) Ratification: the learner incorporates the L2 item in his/her production and goes on with conversation (Serra, 2007: 588).

(1) Learner: he take at the dog and he went to the bosque [Spanish: forest].

Researcher: forest

Learner: to the forest. The boy look [...]

Serra (2007) conducted a longitudinal analysis of the RSs occurring between the researcher and the pupils in oral narrative tests. The pupils were speakers of German learning Italian or Romansh as a second language in a CLIL context. Among other aspects, she analysed how the learners used the L1 in the RSs and how they incorporated the items provided by the interviewer in their subsequent speech. Serra (2007) clearly found that L1 use dropped as learners gradually gained a better command of the target language and that most of the items provided by the interviewer were regularly incorporated (ratification) and reused by the learners in subsequent narratives, suggesting that the RSs were potential loci for acquisition. Finally, at further stages this author also found that the developed competence in the target language enabled pupils “to explore other strategies” (Serra, 2007: 590), such as paraphrasing the unknown L2 items without resorting to the L1. This finding is consistent with previous research which, within different frameworks and methodological designs, has also found that learners’ use of the L1s decreases with proficiency (Agustín Llach, 2009; Herwig, 2001; Navés, Miralpeix and Celaya, 2005) whereas learners’ ability to make use of paraphrase strategies increases (Buck, Byrnes and Thompson, 1989; Fernández Dobao, 2001; Jourdain 2000; Liskin-Gasparro, 1996; Paribakht, 1985; Si-Qing, 1990). However, it is worth noting that recent studies have also suggested that the relationship between proficiency and amount of L1 use might be more complex and that other factors, such as motivation or task difficulty, might also play a role (García Mayo and Lázaro Ibarrola, 2015; Lázaro Ibarrola and Azpilicueta-Martínez, 2015).

2.2. Discourse Markers

While the acquisition of linguistic forms has generated a plethora of research, there are comparatively fewer studies on the acquisition of the pragmatic aspects of language (Alcón Soler and Martínez Flor, 2008; Hellerman and Vergun, 2007; Kang, 2004; Müller, 2004, 2005; Romero Trillo, 2002). These studies have emphasized the need to include a good command of pragmatics when defining a fluent and proficient speaker of a second or foreign language. More precisely, some authors have claimed that native-like use of English pragmatic DMs, operationalized as lexical items such as *well, so, you know* etc., which do not have meaning and whose basic function is to facilitate flow of speech (Lee, 2004), is crucial to become a competent speaker of the target language (Hellerman and Vergun, 2007; Romero Trillo, 2002). It stands to reason: DMs are a pervasive and perceptually salient feature in colloquial English (Miller and Weinert, 1995; Watts, 1989) whereas they are rarely found in prepared or rehearsed speeches. In fact, DMs constitute one of the features distinguishing spontaneous speech from planned talk (Fox Tree and Schrock, 1999).

Regarding the acquisition of DMs in foreign language contexts, a correlation has also been found between proficiency and native-like use (Hays, 1992; Lee, 1999). However, even high-proficiency learners underutilize DMs and/or fail to use them appropriately (Hellerman and Vergun, 2007; Romero Trillo, 2002; Weinert, 1998). One explanation is the fact that, despite their acknowledged importance, DMs are not properly taught in school contexts or not taught at all (Hays, 1992; Müller, 2004, 2005; Romero Trillo, 2002; Sankoff, Thibault, Nagy, Blondeau, Follonosa and Gagnon, 1997; Weinert, 1998). In the same vein but with the opposite effect, Müller (2004) found that German students of English overused some DMs when compared to native speakers of the language and she explained that this was probably connected to how the discourse marker “well” was presented in the English textbooks. Other authors have also suggested that “well” appears frequently in teacher talk and may thus be learned incidentally (Hellermann and Vergun, 2007).

Finally, while all the studies mentioned above in foreign language contexts have reported that learners do not have a good command of DMs in the target language, some other studies, mainly from bilingual contexts, have also reported that it is very common for learners to code-switch the DMs from their L1, that is, to use L1 DMs when speaking in the foreign language (see Hlavac, 2006).

3. Hypotheses

This paper aims to explore the effects of CLIL instruction on L1 use in RSs and DMs in the oral narratives of two groups of Basque/Spanish bilinguals: a CLIL and an EFL group. All learners were studying English in high school and data were collected at two testing times (henceforth T1 and T2) over a two year period. Accordingly, two hypotheses are formulated, one regarding the evolution of the groups between testing times and the other regarding the comparison between groups.

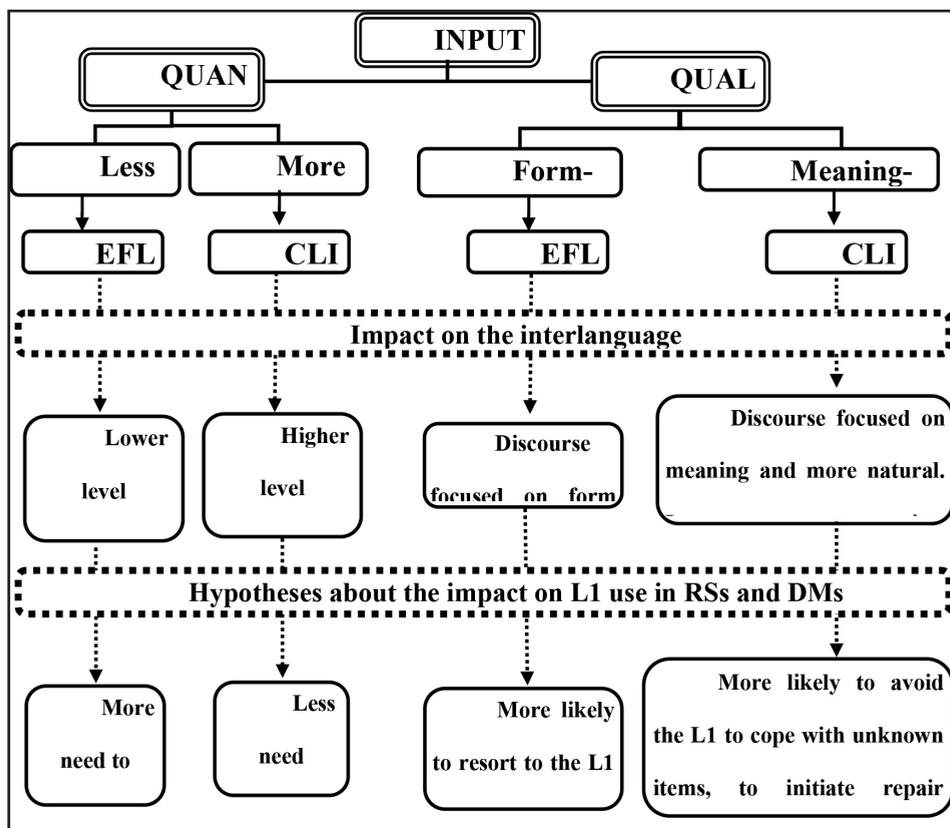
Starting with the evolution of both groups in the two year period and based on the studies presented above, we formulate the following hypothesis: Hypothesis 1. An overall decrease of L1 use from T1 to T2 is expected in both groups in DMs and in RSs.

Regarding the comparison of the two groups, as learners in CLIL contexts have been claimed to be more creative, risk-taking and independent we expect that they will be more able to avoid asking the interviewer for help (less RSs) and, if they ask for help, they will be more able to do so in English. Also, we expect that they will be more able to incidentally learn English DMs, as they will be more present in the input they receive, not only because they have more hours of exposure to English but also

because the input they receive is more natural, that is, more focused on meaning, and it is precisely in this type of speech (vs. planned talk) where DMs are more frequent. Thus, the following hypothesis regarding comparison between groups was entertained: Hypothesis 2. The CLIL group will use the L1 less frequently than the EFL group at both testing times in RSs and DMs.

The following figure summarizes these two hypotheses about L1 use in RSs and DMs by showing the impact of the purported advantages of CLIL learners vs. EFL learners in connection to the input.

Figure 1. Hypothesized effects of the input on the interlanguage of CLIL and EFL learners.



4. The Study

4.1. *Participants and Procedure*

The participants were 26 bilingual (Basque-Spanish) high-school learners of English divided in a CLIL group (15 learners) receiving EFL and CLIL lessons and an EFL group (11 learners) only receiving EFL lessons. These students are balanced bilinguals in the sense that they possess age-appropriate competence in their L1s. The context in which they are immersed has been defined as additive trilingualism (Cenoz and Valencia, 1994): Basque, the language of instruction, is the minority language, Spanish is the majority language, and English is taught as a foreign language. On the other hand, the Basque education authorities started to launch CLIL programs for EFL in 2003 (ISEI-ISVEI, Basque Institute for Research and Evaluation, 2007) and these programmes have nowadays become the most popular approach to teach English in the school context of the Basque Country.

Learners were asked to narrate the story “Frog, where are you?” (Mayer, 1969) to an interviewer at two testing times using pictures as prompts. At T1 the students were in their 2nd year of compulsory secondary education and their mean age was 13.2 and at T2, two years later, they were in the 4th year of compulsory secondary education and their mean age was 15.2. The role of the interviewer was limited to listening to the stories and helping the students if they asked for specific words. Data were collected and codified in CHILDES format (MacWhinney, 1991). To mask the learners’ identities, each participant received a number (P1, P2, P3, etc.), the name of the group they belong to (CLIL/EFL) and the reference to the time of data collection (T1/T2). Thus P8-CLIL-T2 refers to participant number 8 in the CLIL group at T2.

The students in both groups belong to two schools that follow the same curriculum and both groups are similar as regards the quantity of EFL lessons they receive: At T1 they had had EFL lessons for 8 school years and at T2 for 10 school years. The number of EFL lessons per week was 5 (approximately 165 hours per school year). These lessons followed a typical communicative methodology including the standard activities covering the four skills. As for CLIL lessons, only the CLIL group received them. At T1 this group had had CLIL instruction for one school year and at T2 for 3 school years. They received around 4 lessons per week (approximately 132 hours per school year) and the subjects taught in CLIL lessons during the 1st and 2nd year were: arts and crafts, tutorial, science, religion, and geography. Thus, both groups received the same EFL instruction but the CLIL group received additional instruction in English in the form of CLIL lessons.

4.2. Data coding

All instances of RSs and of DMs were coded. These were the only elements in which our learners used their L1s.

4.2.1. Repair Sequences

The overall number of RSs was coded and they were classified according to the strategy used to generate them: (i) the learner uses a formula in English to ask for the item, as in (2); (ii) the learner only uses the L1 (either with a formula or by directly inserting the item), as in (3); (iii) the learner remains silent and the interviewer directly provides the missing word, as in (4).

(2) (P4-CLIL-T2)

Learner: the same day at night eh the frog eh went out of the # *how do you say pecera [Spanish: fish bowl]?*

(3) (P10-CLIL-T1)

Learner: and he *¿cómo se dice buscar?* [Spanish: how do you say look for]

(4) (P2-EFL-T1)

Learner: # the dog is see a ##.

Interviewer: beehive.

Also, following Serra (2007), we analysed whether the learners just ignored or simply repeated the item provided by the interviewer, as in (5), or whether they incorporated the items into their subsequent speech, as in (6):

(5) Repetition (P13-CLIL-T2)

Learner: [...] the frog's frasco

Interviewer: pot

Learner: pot

Learner: eh then the boy goes [...]

(6) Incorporation (P1-CLIL-T1)

CHI. the owl eh go eh is flying to#to picar

Interviewer. bite

Learner: to bite him

Finally, in order to obtain a whole picture of our students' production, we also coded the use of paraphrasing strategies to cope with lack of lexical terms, thus avoiding L1 use and the repair sequence, as in (7):

(7) Paraphrasing unknown items:

Learner: in the *bee's house* [meaning: beehive] (P2-CLIL-T1)

4.2.2. Coding of DMs

Regarding DMs, all instances were coded, which includes those in the L1s, as in (8) and those in English, as in (9)

(8) Learner: eh *ba* [Basque: well] there is a boy who has a dog and a frog (P8-CLIL-T2)

Learner: and they *bueno* [Spanish: well] the dog and the boy eh go to the bed (P8-CLIL-T2)

(9) Learner: eh *well* eh there is a kid with her dog and a frog (P7-CLIL-T2)

Finally, to complete the analysis not only of the language used in the DMs but also of their frequency of use, the learners' use of other hesitation phenomena was also coded, namely, non-lexical DMs, as in (10) and pauses, as in (11).

(10) But the dog the frog *eh eh* there are children and (P5-EFL-T1)

(11) And the ## and the dog go running (P6-EFL-T1)

The codification of the data was done by means of several rounds of coding between two researchers (one of them, the author). The percentage of agreement was 95% for the use of paraphrases in English and 98% for the rest.

As regards statistical analyses, unilateral one sample conditional binomial tests were used to observe the evolution of every group over time and two-sample unilateral binominal tests to contrast both groups and bilateral conditional binomial test for related measures were used for intra-group comparisons. All tests were carried out at the 5% significance level.

5. Results

5.1. Repair Sequences

Table 1 features the results regarding the overall number of RSs for both groups at both testing times. The numerator reflects the number of RSs and the denominator the total number of words.

Table 1. Repair Sequences.

	EFL		CLIL	
	T1	T2	T1	T2
RSs	1.26% (40/3160)	2.43% (77/3167)	2.41% (88/3646)	1.15% (43/3719)

As Table 1 shows, both groups display the opposite tendency between testing times. In the EFL group the number of RSs goes up whereas in the CLIL group it goes down. Thus, at T1 the CLIL group produces a higher number of RSs whereas at T2 the number is higher in the EFL group. As the number of RSs is very low, we have to interpret these results with caution. However, regarding the comparison between groups, the differences are significant at both testing times (T1, p-value: 0.0004; T2, p-value: 0.005). Likewise, when looking at the evolution of the groups over the two-year period, the difference between testing times is also significant in both groups (p-value: CLIL: 0; EFL: 0).

Table 2 completes these results with the distribution of the strategies used in the RSs over the total number of RSs.

Table 2. Strategies used to ask for missing items in RSs.

Strategy	EFL		CLIL	
	T1	T2	T1	T2
Using a formula in English (+ L1 term) (<i>How do you say pecera?</i>)	7.50% (3/40)	1.30% (1/77)	36.36% (32/88)	37.21% (16/43)
Only using the L1 (<i>¿Cómo se dice buscar?</i>)	32.50% (13/40)	98.70% (76/77)	55.68% (49/88)	53.49% (23/43)
Remaining silent	60% (24/40)	0	7.95% (7/88)	9.30% (4/43)

As can be seen in Table 2, in the EFL group at T1 the interviewer provided an item in the L2 after the students had remained silent for a while 24 times (60%). This never happened two years later (at T2) in this group and only very scarcely in the CLIL group (7 times at T1 and 4 times at T2). Besides, the learners in the EFL group barely use English to ask for missing items (3 times at T1; once at T2), that is, when they do not remain silent, they prefer to directly use the L1s virtually all the time. On the contrary, the use of an English formula to generate a RSs is quite popular in the CLIL group at both testing times although using the L1 is also the most frequent strategy.

Next, Table 3 features the results regarding the incorporation (ratification) of the provided items in subsequent speech. When the learners do not incorporate the items they simply ignore or repeat them and go on with a new utterance.

Table 3. Ratification of the items provided by the interviewer over total number of Repair Sequences.

Are the items ratified?	EFL		CLIL	
	T1	T2	T1	T2
Yes	62.50% (25/40)	77.92% (60/77)	80.68% (71/88)	53.48% (23/43)
No	37.5% (15/40)	22.08% (17/77)	19.31% (17/88)	46.51% (20/43)

As can be seen in Table 3, in the EFL group the number of ratifications slightly increases while in the CLIL group this number decreases quite importantly over time. This evolution is significant in both groups (CLIL, p-value: 0; EFL, p-value: 0.003) and the differences are also significant when comparing the groups at both testing times (p-values: T1: 0.02; T2: 0.006).

Finally, we barely found instances of paraphrasing, only 6 (T1) and 4 (T2) in the EFL group and 3 (T1) and 7 (T2) in the CLIL group. When the learners had to grapple with an item the preferred option was to ask the interviewer for help.

5.2. Discourse Markers

The distribution of L1 DMs and of English DMs can be seen in Table 4. The denominator corresponds to the total number of DMs.

Table 4. L1s vs. English Discourse markers

Discourse markers	EFL		CLIL	
	T1	T2	T1	T2
Spanish and Basque	90% (9/10)	88.37% (38/43)	95.24% (60/63)	95.83% (46/48)
English	10% (1/10)	11.62% (5/43)	4.76% (3/63)	4.16% (2/48)

As can be seen in Table 4, the use of DMs in the L1s is overwhelming, both groups use Basque and Spanish DMs virtually all the time at both testing times. The few English DMs correspond to the discourse marker “well” in all cases. Despite this similarity, the overall number of DMs is extremely low in the EFL group at T1 (only 10). In order to obtain a more complete analysis of this aspect, Table 5 features the distribution of other hesitation phenomena, namely, non-lexical DMs and pauses, over the total number of words.

Table 5. Hesitation phenomena over total number of words

Hesitation Phenomena over total number of words	EFL		CLIL	
	T1	T2	T1	T2
	12.81% (405/3160)	8.71% (276/3167)	4.85% (177/3646)	6.53% (243/3719)

As can be seen in Table 5, the higher rate of hesitation phenomena is found in the EFL group at T1 and it significantly drops at T2 (p-value: 1.41). On the contrary, in the CLIL group the number significantly increases (p-value: 0). The difference between groups is significant at both testing times (T1, p-value: 0; T2, p-value: 0.0006).

To finish this section we would like to summarize these results by emphasizing the most relevant differences and similarities between both groups. The overall number of RSs significantly drops in the CLIL group from T1 to T2 and the learners from this context use English as a strategy to ask the interviewer quite frequently. By contrast, EFL students increase the number of RSs over the two years and mainly use the L1s as a strategy to ask for help (or remain silent at T1). In addition, CLIL learners experience a dramatic decrease in the number of ratifications while EFL learners increase their number over time. Finally, we barely found paraphrases to avoid RSs in any of the groups or testing times. On the other hand, virtually all DMs are used in the L1s and the very few English DMs correspond to “well”. However,

more hesitation phenomena are found in the EFL group where, at the same time, less lexical DMs are also found.

6. Discussion

This section discusses the results by connecting them to the hypotheses and to the theoretical background.

6.1. Repair Sequences

The number of RSs has increased in the EFL group and decreased in the CLIL group over the two years. The decrease in the CLIL group dovetails with previous findings (Agustín Llach, 2009; Herwig, 2001; Navés, Miralpeix and Celaya, 2005) and with Hypothesis 1: In the period of two years the learners have increased their proficiency in English and, consequently, they need to resort to the interviewer less frequently. On the contrary, the increasing number in the EFL group clashes with this interpretation. However, the results regarding the strategies used in the RSs help us to shed light on this unexpected result. While the CLIL learners make wide use of an English formula to ask for unknown items, the EFL learners only use the L1s or, quite often at T1, they simply remain silent until the interviewer helps them. Thus, the lower number of RSs in the EFL group at T1 seems to be due to a reluctance or inability to interact with the interviewer. On the other hand, the higher frequency of use of English in the RSs of CLIL learners could be an effect of their being more familiar with interactions in the target language. On the contrary, the students in the EFL group prefer to directly use the L1, simply as they would do when asking for clarifications in any other school subject. As we speculated, this might be interpreted as an effect of the quantitatively but mainly of the qualitatively different input in both groups: CLIL learners might be starting to see the language as an instrument to communicate while EFL learners might simply see the language as an artificial object to be learnt, thus, the latter do not use English to ask the interviewer for help at any of the testing times.

Regarding ratification or incorporation of the items provided, again, both groups display opposite tendencies: the number of incorporations increases between testing times in the EFL group while it decreases in the CLIL group. Before interpreting these results, it is important to clarify that when the learners do not incorporate the items it does not necessarily mean that they are not able to do so. It might simply be an option they make. Therefore, and although incorporation can be interpreted as a sign of proficiency growth in line with Serra (2007), lack of incorporation cannot

be interpreted as lack of proficiency. In fact, not incorporating the item could be interpreted as closer to a real communicative situation whereas the repetition might be interpreted as a reflection of the type of artificial interaction that often goes on in EFL classrooms where the learner has to repeat whole sentences to show the teacher what he/she knows. Along this thread of thought, in our view and following Serra (2007), the increase in the EFL group can be taken as a sign of an increase in proficiency in a group that is form-focused. In sharp contrast to this, we believe that the decrease in the CLIL group might be taken as a sign of evolution towards a more natural type of speech. Thus, this could be a specific feature of the CLIL students: As would happen in a real interaction in which the focus is placed in communication, they do not feel the need to incorporate the items to show the interviewer that they have this ability.

Finally, results indicate that both groups coincide in the fact that they barely use paraphrasing strategies. The qualitatively different input does not seem to have made a difference in this aspect. Perhaps the fact that the learners identified the interviewer as a speaker of their L1s hindered the learners' paraphrasing abilities. In future work, it would be interesting to explore the behaviour of CLIL and EFL learners when interacting with a speaker of English who does not know the L1s of the participants.

6.2. Discourse Markers

Regarding DMs, the results have been very conclusive as regards L1 use: in line with previous studies in bilingual contexts (Hlavac, 2006), the learners use the L1s virtually all the time with no differences between groups or testing times. The qualitatively different input provided to CLIL students does not seem to have had an effect on this aspect. Thus, hypotheses 1 and 2 do not seem to be confirmed in the case of DMs, as L1 DMs do not drop over the two year period and there is no advantage in the CLIL group. Also, in line with Müller (2004), the few instances of DMs in English correspond to "well".

On the other hand, the rate of use of these (L1) lexical DMs is very scarce in the EFL group, where the overall number of hesitation phenomena is higher. First, the higher rate of hesitations seems to indicate a less fluent speech. Second, as lexical pause fillers are very frequent in spontaneous speech but rare in planned talk (Fox Tree and Schrock, 1999), the lower rate of lexical DMs also seems to indicate that the EFL students at T1 produce a very artificial type of discourse, perhaps more focused on correction. On the contrary, the learners in the EFL group at T2 and the learners in the CLIL group at both testing times might have reached a further stage in which their speech is more spontaneous, as reflected in their increase in the higher number

of lexical pause fillers (although still in the L1) and in the lower number of hesitation phenomena.

7. Conclusions

This study has analyzed RSs and DMs in order to explore the use or avoidance of the L1s in the narratives of two groups of (Spanish/Basque) bilinguals learning English in high school at two testing times over two years. This analysis has aimed to contribute to the wealth of recent studies in CLIL contexts not only by confirming or disproving the advantage in proficiency of CLIL learners but also by attempting to find CLIL-specific features that tell CLIL learners apart from EFL learners.

Our results show that, in line with previous studies reporting on general advantages, CLIL learners seem to be more advanced as reflected in a decreasing number of instances to ask the interviewer for help (RSs) and in an increasing fluency rate (measured by lower rates of hesitation phenomena). Also, when looking at specific features, CLIL learners seem to produce a more natural type of speech (less focused on form and more focused on meaning) in which they ask questions in English to cope with unknown items and don't feel the need to incorporate the items provided by the interviewer. This specificity has been more limited than expected, as the results obtained also indicate that CLIL learners are not more able to use English DMs after one and three years of CLIL exposure than EFL learners. In our belief, and based on the theoretical rationale described in this paper, these differential features could be explained not only by the greater number of hours received by CLIL students but also by the qualitatively different type of input to which they are exposed. However, we cannot guarantee that this has been the case because the learners in the two groups have received a different amount of input. In future studies, it would be necessary to explore the same aspects (RSs, DMs and L1s) with CLIL and EFL students who share a similar amount of exposure to English in order to determine if CLIL methodologies per se are playing a role and if so, to what extent. Likewise, it would be necessary to conduct classroom observations to really know the type of input offered in both contexts.

Next, we would also like to provide some pedagogical implications. On the one hand, the instances of L1 use found in our data show two areas which need improvement. All students have been very far from native in their use of DMs; they either produce them in the L1s or do not produce them at all. This shows that the mere exposure to the language has not been enough to acquire this aspect and that it would be necessary to find ways to train students in the use of English DMs in the classroom (awareness raising activities, oral practices focused on DMs, etc.). Similarly,

and particularly in the case of EFL students, it would be wise to help students to cope with lexical gaps by using different strategies which do not imply resorting to the L1 (paraphrasing or defining the unknown item, using synonyms, using general terms, etc.). On the other hand, it is also true that the students barely used the L1 in spite of their relatively low level of English. In our view, this can be taken as positive sign of their ability to communicate in English and, in turn, of the general effectiveness of the lessons they are receiving.

To conclude, and despite the limitations of our study, we believe that the results obtained are interesting enough to lay the groundwork for future work to investigate the possible specificities of CLIL learners in greater depth.

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