2. Development of the project

This project responds to ECML's third medium-term programme (2008-2011) entitled EMPOWERING LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS: Competences - Networks - Impact - Quality. Following the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, one of the aims of the materials produced throughout this project is to develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place.

CONBAT+ strongly contributes to language education practice and the project has grown out of the large networking opportunities offered by the ECML through the development of rich, varied and useful materials as well as through the dissemination of its vision.

3.Rationale...
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3.1 Content Based Teaching (CLIL).
3.1.1 <u>Content-based teaching in Europe</u>

The European Commission's position with regard to content-based teaching is clear: '[the approach] in which pupils learn a subject through the medium of a foreign language, has a major contribution to make to the Union's language learning goals' (Just year and pages – put full ref in the biblioCommunication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: an Action Plan 2004 – 2006**).**

This view is justified by the belief that content-based teaching provides immediate relevance for language learners. In other words, the transfer from being a *language learner* to becoming a *language user* happens at the time of learning as opposed to a putative later stage. Moreover, the approach allows pupils to experience the language differently as well as view the content from a different perspective. Another advantage associated with Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is the potential time-saving component that the integration of a language into curriculum content affords. Key data on teaching languages at school provided by Eurydice (2008) indicates that content-based teaching 'is included in normal provision in most education systems', yet the report also acknowledges that 'no more than a minority of pupils are catered for'. Although regional and/or minority languages are among the languages integrated into content (see for example the Basque and Catalan experiences below), the provision of English still dominates the language learning landscape of Europe. English is compulsory in 13 European countries (more than 90% of learners in secondary education). In countries where English is not compulsory, pupils choose this language in equally large numbers (close to 90%). Learning English at primary level is also on the rise, particularly in the Latin countries of southern Europe.

Encouraging evidence emerges from the Basque Country where content-based teaching/learning has prevailed for the past 20 years. Similarly, and as far back as 1983 the linguistic immersion programme was introduced for the first time in Catalonia beginning at the pre-school age. It was a turning point in the consideration of Catalan as the main teaching and communicative language in schools. Spanish is the second language and English and/or French are the 3rd or 4th languages in Primary and Secondary Education. Recently many schools introduced CLIL in secondary education and some primary schools are using Catalan, Spanish and English to teach the different subjects of the Curriculum. The Catalan and the Basque educational context appear to enable the concept of plurilingualism to flourish within a CLIL approach where learners are expected to achieve a B2 CEFR level for Basque/Catalan and Spanish, a B1 for English and/or an A2 for French at the end of compulsory education.

A longitudinal study conducted between 2004 and 2006 explored learners' competence in English, in subject content and how other languages (Basque and Spanish) were affected. In terms of linguistic competence CLIL learners showed superior competence to non-CLIL students. This difference increased longitudinally. With regard to content knowledge, learners performed equally well when compared to non-CLIL students who had learned the content through Basque or Spanish (Ruiz de Zarobe and Lasagabaster, 2010). More evidence in this regard continues to emerge (see Ruiz de Zarobe, Sierra and Gallardo del Puerto, in press). Interestingly one of the success factors in this experience was attributed to teachers' high motivation linked to the fact that these teachers had a language degree but most importantly, to the support they received in the design of materials as well as training seminars. Our hope is that the ConBaT+ materials provided here will contribute further to supporting teachers in their plurilingual CLIL endeavours.

3.1.2. Key competences for lifelong learning - a European reference framework (2006)

Many a language teacher will be familiar with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* which enables the mutual recognition of language qualifications to facilitate educational and occupational mobility. Apart from this, curriculum developers may be aware of the *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* framework, which in turn, proves most relevant for the development of CLIL programmes.

This framework aims to inform national educational bodies when revising curricula. However, the framework can also assist schools and their teachers in setting up a CLIL programme by examining the set of skills which they might like to emphasise at any given time. The framework reflects European efforts to achieve commonly agreed educational objectives.

Each key competence combines a set of *knowledge, skills* and *attitudes* described in a document available at the address mentioned below[1].
There are eight key competences in this European framework:

1) Communication in the mother tongue;
2) Communication in foreign languages;
3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
4) Digital competence;
5) Learning to learn;
6) Social and civic competences;
7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and
8) Cultural awareness and expression.

The following description shows how this framework will prove particularly relevant to teachers when developing CLIL programmes and associated materials, since overlapping of competences, with language and culture for learning at its core, characterises CLIL itself:

> Many of the competences overlap: aspects essential to one domain will support competence in another. Competence in the fundamental basic skills of language, literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technologies (ICT) is an essential foundation for learning, and learning to learn supports all learning activities. A number of themes are applied throughout the Reference Framework: critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking, and constructive management of feelings play a role in all eight key competences (2006:3).

In parallel, the European Qualifications Framework provides a useful set of indicators from level 1 in primary education to level 8 at tertiary level. This document can help match each key competence with the desired outcome at the appropriate level[2].

Mindful of the eight key competences mentioned above, it may be useful to consider a few basic content-based learning principles that contribute to the enrichment of content teaching while fostering the acquisition of *knowledge, skills* and (positive) *attitudes*.

3.1.3. Conceptualising content-based teaching
While there are many models of CLIL delivery, the approach is characterised by a language-sensitive approach to the teaching of content. Focus on language has led

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf
[2] This framework is available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF

to the consideration of the type of language needed by learners (and in some cases by teachers) in order to make the content accessible. In the context of the Canadian bilingual programmes, Cummins (1984) identified two linguistic dimensions in formal instruction, namely Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive and Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Each dimension plays a role in the learning process: BICS places fewer demands on the learner as the language is highly contextualized and supported by other means of communication, e.g. gestures. On the other hand, CALP relates to the language required for the learning of the content and places greater cognitive demands because of its de-contextualised nature. Some twenty years later, another similar model emerged in Europe also recognizing the tension between the linguistic and cognitive challenges presented to learners (CLIL Matrix 2004-2007). Both the Canadian and the European models recommend that content be cognitively challenging but supported by more accessible and contextualized language. However, Coyle (2007) argues that the dual focus on language and content is not sufficient in itself to realize the full potential of CLIL. A more holistic approach to CLIL pedagogies, varied as these may be, needs to be articulated within a coherent framework. This framework allows the following four dimensions – the *4 Cs* - to be taken into account when embarking on the development of CLIL pedagogies: **content/communication/cognition/culture**.

> 'The 4Cs Framework focuses on the interrelationship between content (subject matter), communication (language), cognition (learning and thinking) and culture (social awareness of self and 'otherness'). It takes account of 'integration' on different levels: learning (content and cognition), language learning (communication and cultures) and intercultural experiences' (Coyle 2007, p.550).

Coyle believes that 'Culture(s) permeates the whole' (2007, p. 550), to such an extent that context and culture constitute the actual frame of the recently revised *4Cs* framework (see model below) in order to foster what Cummins (2004) describes as global citizenship and/or social awareness of self and otherness (Coyle 2007, p.550).

Context

Culture   Culture

Content   Communication

Cognition

Culture

Context (rotated, left side)
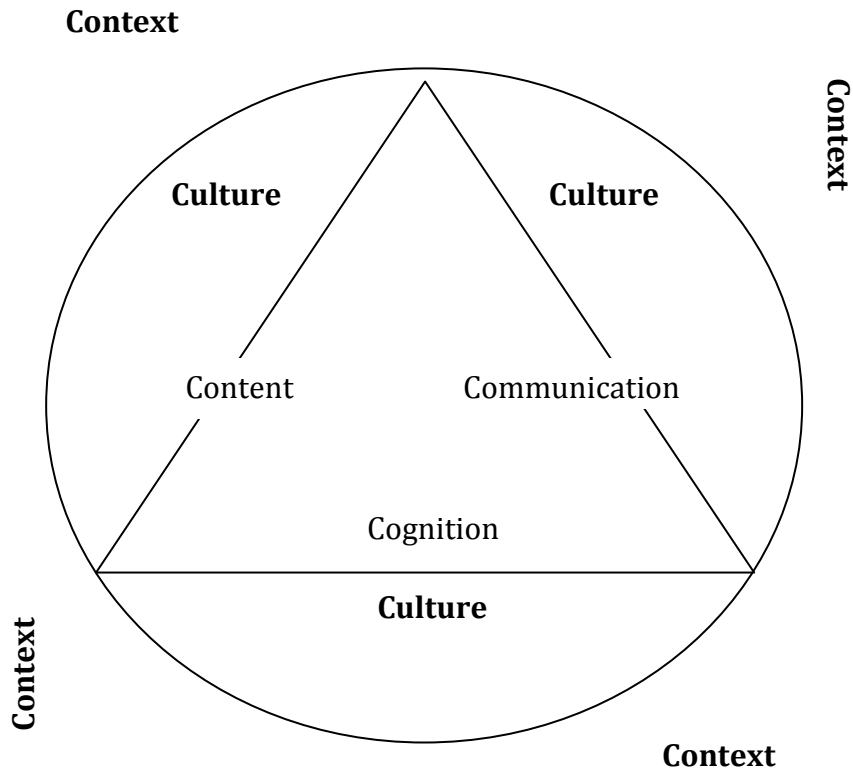Context (rotated, right side)

Context

Figure1: The 4Cs Framework (adapted from Coyle et al 2010, p. 41)

Similarly, the European Commission prioritises intercultural knowledge, understanding and communication skills by placing these dimensions at the top of their list of benefits associated with a CLIL approach as evidenced below:

> **'CLIL's multi-faceted approach can offer a variety of benefits. It:**
> - **builds intercultural knowledge and understanding**
> - **develops intercultural communication skills**
> - **improves language competence and oral communication skills**
> - **develops multilingual interests and attitudes**
> - **provides opportunities to study content through different perspectives**
> - allows learners more contact with the target language
> - does not require extra teaching hours
> - complements other subjects rather than competes with them
> - diversifies methods and forms of classroom practice
> - increases learners' motivation and confidence in both the language and the subject being taught
> (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc236_en.htm).

In a communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Europe acknowledges that learning one *lingua franca* is not enough to

grow as a truly multilingual community and to create 'individual multilingualism' (the European Indicator of Language Competence, 2005, p.3). This aspiration led to the recommendation that all Europeans should acquire '2 languages+ mother tongue'.

However, a 2009 Eurydice comparative study recognizes that Europe also comprises a significant immigrant population and calls for measures to foster 'communication with immigrant families and the teaching of heritage languages for immigrant children'.

> 'A number of European countries have recently established strategic policies concerned with the phenomenon of migration in their educational systems that see the linguistic diversity linked to the mother tongue of immigrant pupils as a benefit and reflect a readiness to cultivate this diversity. (Eurydice,EACEA 2009, p.27)

In this context and given Coyle's view of culture permeating the framework for CLIL, the question of integrating the reality of classroom diversity into CLIL teaching practice emerges.

3.2 Plurilingualism and Pluriculturalism /Awareness of languages and cultures

Contemporary societies are characterized by multilingualism and complex cultural exchanges. This social diversity goes together with the complexity of identities at the individual level. Educational institutions can no longer ignore the challenge offered by the encounters and interactions between languages and cultures in the classrooms.

The aim of the ConBat+ project is to take this dimension into account and to enhance learners' "plurilingual and pluricultural competence" (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 1997). It does not consist of the juxtaposition of competences in several languages but constitutes a global and composite competence and varies according to the specific combinations of linguistic and cultural abilities experienced by each individual. The *Common European framework of reference for language (CEFRL)* defines it as "the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures" (*CEFRL*, Council of Europe, 2001: 168). This definition relies on the numerous studies conducted in the fields of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics which have shown that languages and cultures cannot be seen as separate entities co-exiting in isolation and added in a cumulative way throughout individual experiences but interact under flexible and diversified dynamic interactions both at social and individual levels. Cook (1992, 1993) and, later, Herdina & Jessner (2002) described the multilingual proficiency as a "wholistic" system. The description of the plurilingual competence as a system enables to include its complexity and its unity within the same coherent whole. In other words, the specificity of any single language coexists with the mutual influences and connections between the components of the individual repertoires : "This means that on the one hand the dynamic model is separatist or

modular in interpreting the involved language systems and factors as separate modules, but assumes on the other hand that the subsystems outlined interact with each other and influence each other in the complex and dynamic system we call multilingualism" (Herdina and Jessner, 2002 : 149-150).

Recent empirical studies focusing on how to raise the awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and how to develop plurilingual proficiency at school have been conducted at the European level. The main outputs of projects like *Evlang*[3] (1996-2001), *Janua Linguarum*[4] (2000-2004) and *Language Educator Awareness*[5] (*LEA*, 2004-2008) were published teaching materials (*Evlang*, *Janua-linguarum*) and teacher-training modules (*LEA*) favouring the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills related to otherness, plurality and diversity. Those projects took their roots in the movement initiated by Hawkins (1984) who proposed to introduce a "bridging subject" called "awareness of language" into the British curriculum. This approach aims to complement language learning by learning about language and languages and to stimulate not only the pupils' curiosity and interest in languages and cultures but also their observation skills and language analysis skills. The main objectives are to challenge pupils to ask questions about language and discuss diversity in order to set the foundations of a general "language education", which the *CEFRL* now puts forward as a major issue for language teaching.

The awareness of languages, cultures, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, in the senses defined above, is the major aim of ConBat+. The teaching materials assembled in the present publication have been conceived to foster positive attitudes towards other languages, their speakers and their cultures by offering learners the opportunity to compare the target L2 to others languages whether they are or not their mother tongues. Another challenge, closely linked to the first one, is to enrich the knowledge of any subject-content with the various points of views offered by other languages and cultures on this particular content and to emphasize the connections and exchanges between languages and cultures.

At the same time, pupils whose L1 is different from the official language(s) of instruction have the opportunity to see that the languages in their repertories are valued and referred to as different but equal in ways of representing reality through language.

For all the learners, whatever their repertoires and cultural backgrounds, the distanced approach to content because of the L2 is enhanced by the inter-linguitic and inter-cultural comparisons; thus, the approach promotes "the favourable development of the learner's whole personality and sense of identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture" (*CEFR*L, p.1). It combines the promotion of attitudes like the acceptance of differences and the valorization of plurality and the development of skills in the field of metalinguistic and metacommunicative abilities by stimulating learners' reflection about language. The integrated approach to languages and cultures proposed in the project is both trans- and inter- disciplinary. It includes the integration of all

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[3] European Commission, Socrates Lingua, coordinator : M Candelier

[4] European Commission, Socrates Comenius and ecml (Graz, Council of Europe), coordinator : M Candelier

[5] LEA, ecml (Graz, Council of Europe), coordinator : M Bernaus

the languages and cultures present in the classroom (the official language(s) of instruction, the L2 used for content, the other languages taught and the languages of the individual , i.e., the repertories of the pupils) within non-linguistic subjects.

3.3 ConBaT+: reconciling CLIL and PLurilingualism and Pluriculturalism

The "+" in the acronym ConBaT+ suggests that content-based teaching needs to be complemented by some added-value. This added value is related to linguistic and cultural diversity. The project places the concepts of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism at the core of a content-based approach. The aim of the "Content Based Teaching +" project is to produce CLIL materials in three languages: English, French, and Spanish, to teach other subjects at primary and secondary level. Concrete support is provided for the CLIL practitioner wishing to integrate the concept of plurilingualism/culturalism in his/her class. How can awareness of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism be raised in the context of CLIL? First, by using an L2 to teach any subject in the curriculum, and second, by offering the pupils whose L1 is a minority language the opportunity to use it for specific activities. At the same time, those pupils may contribute to enrich any topic presented in the subject in question, by comparing the way in which the same topic is viewed in his/her country of origin.

Furthermore, the materials present an intercultural approach In this connection, empirical research shows that more positive and accepting views of other cultures are more likely to be held when learners experience other languages (Rubenfeld, Clément, Lussier, Lebrun and Auger 2006).
Moreover, this project and its products which aim to reconcile different approaches to language learning and teaching take into account views articulated by Wolff (2002) :

> " It is absolutely necessary to reform language teaching… what is new is the way in which different language learning approaches which have developed in isolation, are brought together in order to promote more efficient language teaching and multilingualism" (p.184)

As pointed out by Candelier (ALA 2006), a plurilingual approach is not content-dependent; any subject may introduce a plurilingual aspect to the content. Equally,"CLIL is methodologically neutral" and can incorporate any learning/teaching approach (Little 2003, p.39). Consequently the integration of a plurilingual approach into content-based learning is both sensible and innovative. CONBAT+ proposes a means to manage diversity through a plurilingual and pluricultural approach that can help to relieve the increasing pressure on teachers to accommodate diversity. Pressure associated with over-crowded curricula can also be alleviated through content-based instruction designed to be cross-curricular i.e. a content-based and plurilingual activity can be linked to several subjects of the curriculum.

Finally, with regard to a pedagogy for Conbat+, the combination of three approaches enables the realisation of the project aims: first, considering the key competences for lifelong learning, a competence-based approach with a focus on tasks should be adopted. Focus on task accommodates a focus on content – i.e. text or input -, which in turn accommodates a plurilingual approach focusing on languages and their speakers – i.e. the learners. Such a combination fosters the development of positive attitudes as illustrated below in Figure 2.
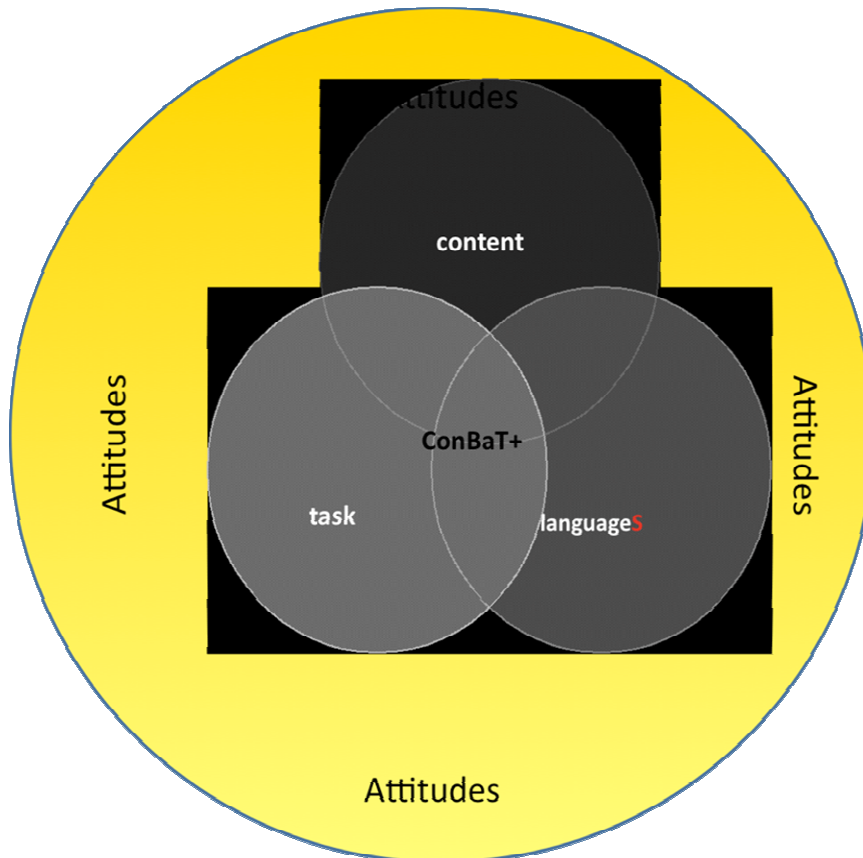

Figure 2: A pedagogical approach for ConBaT+

To summarise, ConBaT+ :
- evolves from the experience of previous projects,
- impacts on reform processes in language teaching by integrating pluriligualism, pluriculturalism into content-based learning,
- provides concrete support to practitioners through the production of quality materials for the plurilingual/cutural CLIL classroom,
- brings tangible added value to content-based learning,
- contributes to change processes in national contexts by empowering professionals of languages to manage ethnic and cultural heterogeneity as well as over-crowded curricula.

3.4 A languageS-sensitive curriculum

A key feature of best practice in content-based teaching is to adopt a language-sensitive approach to content. This implies that all language skills are considered and exploited in a way that will enable learners to access content as well as use language in a meaningful way. To this effect language learning strategies are activated and include reading strategies, writing strategies, speaking strategies and listening strategies. An example of the promotion of these strategies is found in the following activity prepared for this project:

> 'You need to become real experts, so use as many strategies as you can to become more and more familiar with the content of the expert card: one of you explains, the others listen and help, ask each other questions, quiz each other...
> When your teacher tells you to, work in pairs with someone from your "expert" group. Take turns explaining the text to each other without looking at it. The listener can look at the text and help the speaker' (from *A symphony of fractions* by Oriol Pallares and Carlota Petit).

This example shows the high level of interaction which takes place between the content and the learner as he/she engages with cognitive challenges as well as the wide variety of language learning strategies that promote both comprehension and social interaction in a real communicative situation. This particular activity is cross-curricular as both music and mathematics are targeted. However, as pointed out in 3.2 , educational practitioners can no longer ignore the linguistic and cultural diversity that exist in our classrooms. Therefore, it is up to us teachers to provide opportunities for this diversity to be heard by all the learners. The following excerpt taken from the same unit of activities mentioned above shows how it is possible to evolve from a language-sensitive approach to content to a languageS-sensitive behaviour in the classroom:

> '2. Allegro, π, mezzo forte, ß, lied,… Can you think of languages and cultures that are important in the world of music? And in the world of math?
> 3. In some of the expert cards some languages and cultures are mentioned. In teams, take one of the languages you consider important in the world of music, and make a new expert card which contains new relations between music and/or math and the new language you have chosen.
> 4. What about your mother tongue? And what about other languages you may know? Taking everything you have learnt in this first and second part of the project, think of how many of these new music and math concepts you can say in the languages you know. Make a word cloud like the one in activity 1. You can use the online tool Worlde (www.wordle.com). (from *A symphony of fractions* by Oriol Pallares and Carlota Petit).

The focus on music and math opens a window onto other languages through the terminology associated with these disciplines. The terminology also enables the smooth transition from 'academic' language to the languages of the class.

The following example shows how a plurilingual approach to content contributes to the development of language awareness and the strategic skills that learners can develop when confronted with multilingual information:

> **Observe les phrases suivantes dans les différentes langues ci-dessous :**
> • *Il fait chaud aujourd'hui ! (français)*
> • *Hace mucho calor hoy (espagnol)*
> • *Es ist heute warm (allemand)*
> • *It is warm today (anglais)*
> • *fa calor avui (catalan)*
> • *fa caldo oggi (italien)*
> • Discute avec ton voisin. De quoi est-il question ?
> • Reconnais-tu des mots ?
> • Il y a des points communs (mot que tu reconnais, ordre des mots) ? Des différences ?
> • Peux-tu traduire cette phrase dans d'autres langues que tu connais ?
> • Partage ces nouvelles phrases avec le reste de la classe et ajoute-les aux phrases ci-dessus.
> • Regarde maintenant plus attentivement la construction de toutes ces phrases ?
> • Réflexion en groupe-classe : que pouvez-vous en conclure ?
> (from *Notre Terre Nous Nourrit* by Nathalie Auger)

Here, the target language is French and the task involves the comparison between the same expression in French, Spanish, German, English, Catalan and Italian. Children are encouraged to look for words they can recognize, to consider the word order in each of the sentences and to identify similarities and differences. This activity was conceived for a Geography unit.

Another example of the integration of plurilingualism in a content-based approach involves work on the etymology of words and their origins as shown below:

> **Look for the … meaning [of these words] in a dictionary and try to guess which language they were borrowed from**
>   avalanche : ----------------
>   canyon : -------------------
>   fjord : ----------------------
>   geyser : -------------------
>   golf : ----------------------
>   iceberg : ------------------
>   jungle : --------------------
>   toundra : -------------------

(from *Motion in the Ocean* by Martine Kervran)
This last example illustrates the cognitive challenges that the approach also offers; moreover, the activity promotes learner autonomy and gives useful opportunities for learners to develop dictionary skills.

Finally, it is likely that awareness of the potential of plurilingualism on the part of the CLIL teacher will lead to the systematic integration of a languageS-sensitive approach to content. Given that CLIL best practice places culture at the centre of its conceptual framework, one simply needs to recognize the diversity and dynamism that fundamentally characterise *culture* since there is no culture of one. Similarly, if learners' linguistic repertoires are actively promoted in the classroom, the coexistence of languages as well as the linguistic and cultural influences will emerge naturally. Hence, plurilingualism becomes a useful instrument for the development of language learning strategies, creates a cognitively enriching experience of the content and is a means of acknowledging the languages of the class that, so often, remain unheard and separate from the shared reality of learners during school hours.