



Synergies Europe

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Bilingual education in Europe and beyond: status quo and formulating a research agenda

Call for contributions

Format: Short reports and long articles

Languages: French, English, German, Italian and Spanish

Deadlines:

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Short practice report: | 30 November 2011 | (max. 1,000 words) |
| Summary of long article: | 30 November 2011 | (200 words) |
| Long article: | 30 March 2012 | (approx. 20,000 characters) |

Bilingual two-way immersion (TWI) or dual-language education usually unites learners considered as native speakers of one language and learners considered as speakers of another language in one class and uses two languages to teach content.

This educational model has been widely adopted in the USA and Canada since the 1960s, and has been hotly debated by the international research community, by policy circles and in the press. However, it is less well known that there have been important European developments, e.g. in Germany, in the Spanish Autonomous states, or in Wales, and most recently also in England. This started in some instances in the 1960s but has accelerated since the 1990s. These developments in Europe have not been well documented and many hardly ever been mentioned in English language research literature (Meier 2010). This means that initiators of new TWI projects are sometimes not aware that a range of important and interesting European TWI models exists.

TWI projects have usually addressed language contact in a variety of contexts for instance to provide bilingual education for historically or more recently formed multilingual populations, as well as in border areas where languages and their speakers come in contact with each other

Research has shown that the added value of a well-implemented TWI programme is that all children learn to read and write in two languages to a relatively high standard (e.g. Willig 1985, Green 1998, Genesee and Dándara 1999, Gräfe-Bentzien 2001, Reich and Roth 2002, Kielhöfer 2004, Söhn 2005). Furthermore, "the development of additive bilingual and biliteracy skills entails no negative consequences for children's academic, linguistic, or intellectual development" (Cummins 1996:109) and that in some situations it can also bring cognitive (Baker 2006), as well as social and intercultural benefits (Freeman 1998, Bekerman and Horenczyk 2004, Meier 2010). Indeed, in terms of teaching children a modern foreign language, it is often seen as the most effective way of school-based language education (Reich and Roth 2002: Fäcke 2007) and it has been argued that this could well serve as a model for education in multilingual centres (Zydatiß 1998). Challenges identified have related to the sustainability of outcomes (Freeman 1998), recruitment of a balanced number of pupils speaking either language (Meier 2010), employment conditions of teachers (Gleeson and Hertz 1998), as well as to political and societal attitudes to TWI projects (Cummins 2001) among others. There have been some meta-analyses including European programmes (e.g. Söhn 2005, Reich and Roth 2002), but to date research and practice related to European TWI programmes have not been collectively discussed.

Thus, this issue of Synergies Europe aims at taking stock of and critically interrogating current European research and practice, also in comparison with international TWI developments. This is envisaged in order to contribute to a wider understanding of the European TWI sector across linguistic and national, as well as across methodological and disciplinary, boundaries. Finally, we would like to identify the most important research questions that will have to be addressed in the future.

Based on the above, we invite scholars, researchers, practitioners and other stakeholders to contribute research articles and short practice reports related to one or more of the following broad aims of this issue:

- To summarise current academic understanding of the TWI situation in Europe from an interdisciplinary stance, i.e. we invite contributions from the fields of education, (socio-) linguistics, psychology, policy etc. While the issue has a European focus we also welcome comparisons between European and other non-European regions or continents; to interrogate the status of TWI education in and outside Europe, including curriculum and methods, as well as the underlying processes and long-term outcomes, in order to improve and refine conceptual frameworks relevant to practice.*
- To formulate a European TWI research agenda, outlining its most pressing questions as well as other research concerns that enable researchers to jointly focus on building relevant theories in the longer term. Thus we invite authors to outline research needs for the future so that the European TWI movement and our understanding of it can be defined and furthered based on current evidence.*
- To illustrate the need for a network of TWI education programmes in Europe so that schools no longer need to work in isolation but can learn from one another linking research and practice across borders. For this purpose, we invite teachers or other observers to compile short reports or reflections that relate to TWI education in Europe (max. 1000 words, to be inserted in the section "Carte blanche"). These*

should incorporate a brief description of the project, its context and history, as well as outcomes and challenges.

For the purpose of this call, we define TWI as follows:

- *According to Christian (1994) TWI programmes «strive to promote bilingualism and biliteracy in addition to grade-level academic achievement for all students».*
- *Children of two different family languages, and children who are bilingual at school entry, are integrated for at least 50% of the time;*
- *Content and literacy instruction in two languages is provided to all students together;*
- *Programmes which aim to balance the number of children of each language, and bilingual children, with each group ideally making up one third to two thirds of the school class.*

Thus, we are interested in all types of research (case studies, comparative studies, meta-analyses or literature reviews) relating to TWI programmes that loosely comply with the definition given above and that also have the following features:

- *Programmes in the framework of state or private education. However, preference will be given to accounts from state schools, or those private models from which conclusions can be drawn to benefit the state sector;*
- *Projects situated on the European continent. However, other examples will be considered, as long as inferences can be made that define/inform the European TWI movement, related conceptual frameworks or the research agenda;*
- *All levels of education, but preference will be given to primary and secondary schooling.*

An initial proposal in the form of a short summary should be submitted to the editors as soon as possible and no later than November 30th, 2011. Once the proposal has been accepted, the full article in the following format: Word, Times New Roman 10 font, should be submitted before the end of March, 2011.

Blind copies of the articles will be reviewed by two anonymous readers. Authors will receive the results of the review as well as the suggestions for potential amendments if the article is accepted.

The articles should be preceded by an abstract in French and another in English and some key words in both languages and should follow the attached style-sheet. They should be written primarily in French but in keeping with the comparative and multilingual spirit of Synergies Europe, they will also be accepted in English, German, Italian and Spanish.

SHORT REPORTS

Moreover, this issue of Synergies Europe continues the “Carte blanche” section by inviting local grassroots actors, teachers and trainers to write an experiential report or a reflection on the themes of the issue. If you wish to participate in the “Carte blanche” section, please

submit a shorter paper with no summary.

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