A Corpus-based Approach to Content and Language Integrated Learning

Mona Arhine
Mihaela Gheorghe
Doru Talabă

Transilvania University of Braşov/ Romania
Aims

- to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in CLIL

- to suggest a corpus-based approach to CLIL as an alternative methodology

- to establish a better balance between content and language acquisition
Preliminaries

- increasing number of international study programs
- research evidence in CLIL
- commonalities of CLIL contexts in European countries
- EU policies
Our focus

- CLIL at academic level
- English as working language
- Participants: non-native speakers of English
Resources for non-native specialists in ESP

- on-line bilingual/ monolingual dictionaries – prevailing
- www
- terminological data bases
- glossaries
Corpus

- “a body of texts put together in a principled way and prepared for computer processing”
  (Johansson 1998)

- “A corpus is a collection of pieces of language text in electronic form, selected according to external criteria to represent, as far as possible, a language or language variety.”
  (Sinclair 2005)
Corpus Type for CLIL

a. multilingual – core subcorpus: English
b. comparable: similar subcorpora in several languages
c. written language
d. LSP (specialized) – coursebooks, reference material scientific work
e. monitor corpus
Corpus Features for CLIL

Reliability
- representativeness
- authenticity: original work
- authorship: native speakers; specialists
- size
- timeliness (synchronous)

- accessibility
- user-friendliness
1. Notified open issues not addressed in the standard contract
2. [BLC2:31:01358] # Subject: Service level of your contract
3. [BLC2:31:01466] # Subject: Terms of new contract
4. [BLC2:31:01714] This was the third delivery on contract #2005; the contract has a remaining balance of $,
5. [BLC2:10:02713] This is the third delivery on our contract #4999934, which now has a remaining balance to be
6. tion of a 5% cash discount on our seasonal moving contract (April through November).
7. [BLC2:31:01649] According to the contract (Section 4, Clause 8) you will be assessed a pena
8. [BLC2:31:01667] According to the contract (Section 4, Clause 8) you will be assessed a pena
9. fication that we accept your changes to PPA/FPEI contract 34,099 with one exception.
10. [BLC2:31:01520] We need to enter a clause in the contract about the return of unsold merchandise.
11. of free exposure that’s available to you as a 12x contract advertiser!
12. ay already know, we have succeeded in winning the contract after a series of strenuous negotiations with the
13. [BLC2:31:00574] I’m glad we were able to renew our contract again, too.
14. This letter will confirm certain details of our contract agreement.
15. t ve paid you the final balance of the additional contract amount of £17,000 by ****Bank check No. 270699
16. [BLC2:31:02458] Our payments made for the additional contract amount were as follows:
17. [BLC2:10:03610] Securing higher initial contract amounts
18. [BLC2:10:03597] The contract amounts have been left blank to allow for negotia
19. Our credit terms are 50 percent upon execution of contract and 50 percent upon delivery.
20. d nailed a letter of intent as preliminary to the contract and am in the process of drafting a full contract
Advantages of corpora in CLIL

Contextualization + the use of concordancers
- multiple meaning of terms
- comprehension of (E)SP
- collocation retrieval
- clarification of false friends
- terminology acquisition

- information on language structures

- a specialized corpus narrows down the search results to the relevant field
Dictionary search (business)

verb + “contract”

Bilingual Ro-E on-line dictionary:

contextual use: “a încheia un contract”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>seal</strong></th>
<th><strong>vtr</strong></th>
<th>(assure, confirm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>arrange</strong></td>
<td><strong>vtr</strong></td>
<td>(reach agreement or understanding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>contract</strong></td>
<td><strong>vi</strong></td>
<td>(make an agreement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>button</strong></td>
<td><strong>vtr</strong></td>
<td>(shirt, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>conclude</strong></td>
<td><strong>vtr</strong>, (meeting)</td>
<td>(despre ședințe, întâlniri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>conclude</strong></td>
<td><strong>vi</strong></td>
<td>(last words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dismiss</strong></td>
<td><strong>vtr</strong></td>
<td>(law: case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ink</strong></td>
<td><strong>vtr</strong></td>
<td>(deal, contract: sign)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Făcea presiuni să încheie odată afacerea.*

The two sides arranged a deal.

Câte două părți au încheiat un contract. Câte două părți au ajuns la o înțelegere.

*He contracted with the company to provide services.*

A încheiat cu compania un contract (or: o convenție) de prestări servicii.
Bilingual dictionary definitions to *a încheia* (*un contract)*:
  to end, to close, to finish, to fix, etc.

Corpus-based KWIC:  to conclude
  to sign  a contract
  to execute
Collocation retrieval in BLC – KWIC

deal

1. Verb + noun collocate
to close/ strike a deal

2. Adjective + noun collocate
a great deal
a good deal

3. Verb + preposition collocate
to deal + with + in
Specialized terminology comprehension and acquisition

brick and mortar

Corpus in contrast to dictionary

adj.+ noun collocates: brick and mortar businesses
sales
stores
commerce
retailers
competitors

pl. noun: bricks and mortar
Disadvantages of dictionaries in contrast to corpora
(prevailing resource)

- shortage of specialized dictionaries
- problematic choice of definitions
- deficient contexts: - source
  - authorship
- examples - often irrelevant
  - not always authentic
  - cover the meaning partially
- no complete overview of use and usage
Benefits of corpus-driven activities in CLIL for trainers

- Preparation of lectures and in-class presentations
- Translation of material already written in native language
- Conceiving of exercises for specialized language practice based on authentic specialized material
Benefits of corpus-driven activities in CLIL for trainees

- access to reliable scientific language
- development of reading and writing skills
- acquisition of content knowledge and English
- contact with specific language beyond search item
- autonomous learning
- learning other languages
Further development of corpus and corpus-driven activities

- translation of English KW into corpus languages
- KW search in the other sub-corpora for similar info:
  - in native language
  - in other languages
- monitor corpus
- additional sub-corpora (other languages and fields)
Interdisciplinary openness

The use of quality corpora for various purposes

- Lexicography: - dictionary-making
  - LSP glossary creation
- Translation Studies: resource for translator trainees and practitioners
- Language studies research
- Computational Linguistics
- Information Technology: software for key-word extraction, frequency lists, etc.
Conclusions

1. corpus-driven activities can improve teaching and learning in CLIL as alternative methodology
2. enhanced balance between the acquisition of content knowledge and language skills
3. increased overall effectiveness of CLIL
4. fostering the international dimension of CLIL
5. enabling CLIL participants to move freely in European educational and professional environments