

## FROM THE SCHOOL AND FOR THE SCHOOL

*The teachers of the Liceo Scientifico Gramsci in Ivrea, having summoned in a spontaneous meeting in order to debate about the CLIL project (Contents and Language Integrated Learning) from the Ministry of Education, have come to the conclusion that such educational project, despite the stimulating and enriching implications for both teachers and pupils, has been proposed with a superficial approach and with insufficient preparation resources. Therefore it is the teachers' belief that this activity cannot be successfully carried out for the following reasons:*

1. *Timing.* – The combination of the new curricula of the 2010 school reformation getting to the terminal year and the introduction of the Integrated learning in one subject causing a slowing down in the activity pace, will result in negative outcome of the required learning standards.

If, for instance, each fifth class council chooses a different subject as CLIL, the consequence will be a heterogeneous preparation while we should pursue exactly the opposite to grant students fair assessments and evaluations. Besides, proposing the CLIL model for all the course years will imply a different CLIL subject every year, with the alternation of several teachers, moving from one class or one course to the other, limiting the continuity, theoretically essential,( Moratti's reform) but, more often than not, neglected, with great disadvantage for both students who have difficulties in their own language and for foreign students.

2. *Procedure.* – The acceptance, possibly hasty, of CLIL activity from teachers who do not possess the requirements to perform in a foreign language could easily result in undesired issues and problems that would jeopardize the value of the CLIL experience itself, as the teacher's professionalism and competence could be somehow questioned by the students, who perceive the objective difficulties met by their teachers.

3. *Suggestions.* – On account of these considerations, it would be advisable to narrow the CLIL activities to the classes where the language competence and the methodology efficacy are already present and for the other cases it could be useful to set: *"a flexible educative structure aimed at a better employment of the professional competence present inside the school... video conferences or web in air, with local and international experts... open classes education....multi classes lessons held by specialists..."* (from a note from MIURAOODGOS prot. N 4969, July 25<sup>th</sup>). As a further suggestion CLIL teaching could be limited to technical subjects which use the English language worldwide.

4. *Resources.* – Teachers of English, trained and experienced since university studies, are already a resource of the schools and it would be more productive to increase their role in terms of class hours. On the contrary English lessons have been reduced in the Liceo Scientifico.

5. *Cutting and Reducing.* – It is rather scandalous the devaluation of our national language in school education. The amount of weekly hours of Italian have been diminished both in The Liceo Classico and in the Liceo Scientifico in the Applied Science option, in the Human Science option, in the Istituto Tecnico Economico as well as in Professional Schools. As stated by the Accademia della Crusca, the teaching of the national language should be enhanced, because mastering the native tongue conditions the quality of the learning of the other school subjects, even in the scientific and foreign language field.

6. *Wishful thinking.* – The incoherence of these action is far too evident, considering that, without any possibility or will to invest a single euro in the CLIL proposal by the State, the aftermath can only be negative. Doing without being able to do is a wishful thinking that has no chance to succeed. This mistake has been made by Italian people before and teachers do not wish to repeat it.

7. *Contents.* – Lacking a thorough proficiency the non- language teachers' lessons might result less comprehensible and effective, but surely they will come out more banal and impoverished than if they were conveyed in the native language. Taking into account the fact that these subjects, e.g. History, have already seen a gradual tapering of the total hours, it is inevitable to end up with a

reduction in contents depth and quality. Needless to say that knowledge and awareness will not be favoured by this process, nor will students' curiosity or critical thinking.

Possibly this is one of the purposes of such a proposal, that looks completely improvised and unstructured.

8. *Skills*. – Albeit necessary and inescapable, an illogical fact remains illogical. This educational initiative (CLIL) appears, in fact, out of any logic and unsubstantiated, since none of the teacher of the non-language subjects, forced to embark in this venture, has the requirements or the certifications ( BI/C1) to accomplish such a hard task.

9. *Systematic illogicality*. – An undeterminable series of urgent, owed and necessary facts, but vitiated at the root by illogicality, will, in the end, generate an illogical and fundamentally incoherent system, that, despite their will, no one will be able to avoid. Simone Weil would define it a system of “*valeurs mensongères*” And never ever have we felt “*La pesanteur*” quoted by the worker-philosopher as we do in the presence of this measure.

10. *Consistent inconsistency*. – A measure that is only the last of a long series, all consistently inconsistent, since, although they are issued a little at a time, slowly and gradually adopted, in order not to reveal their substantial incoherence, they can't hide their distorted sense and the undeniable injustice that lies within them. There is no catharsis, no empathy with other people's worse conditions that could dissolve or justify this irresponsible incoherence or that could pass it on as an opportunity for improvement and growth

11. *Uneasiness*. – This measure shamelessly shows the unease felt by the school and by all those who act in it conscientiously. It is the same discomfort felt in the whole country. It is the unease of democracy where “political subjects are reduced to spectators of their own misery” (Carlo Galli), citizens of a country that has always been subjected to “the Reign of Necessity”(Barbara Spinelli), men and women who rely on the bio politics of a “Government of Necessity” (Ezio Mauro). An unease in democratic politics that exploded in all its dramatic nature at the end of the 70s', beginning of the 80s', when, entering our Institution, our republican and democratic House, was like entering a “supermarket of the rights” (Carlo Galli).

12. *The descending bend and the aim of education*. – The CLIL question must then help us start a debate with other educational realities, but it must also show clearly the anti-democratic, and in some ways anti-constitutional bend that Italy is indulging, under the pressure of the crisis and despite the European Semester. Marco Revelli rightly says that we are actually deleting work as a political and historical subject (Art. 1 in Italian Constitution). The school will therefore be considered a privileged place from where we will be able to see the descent, that, through teaching approaches such as the *e-learning* (already foreseen by J.F. Lyotard in the 70s') will make both learners' attendance and teachers' work completely optional.

Despite the long lasting numbness, and in the absence of the students' awareness, we cannot but consider that there is no other conscience in the school and for the school than the teachers'.

Ivrea, 19 November 2014