Critical and creative engagements facilitated through a CLIL approach in the Ideas and Exposition (IEM) classroom

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Abstract
This article argues for the transferability of CLIL’s philosophy and practice to a more broadly defined language-and-content classroom. The writers attempt to illustrate how they have applied concepts from CLIL to their content-heavy writing classes, thereby aligning themselves with CLIL’s dual approach. Students are supported in mastering challenging content, together with a “discourse” unique to the content. Applying rhetorical strategies, students construct meaning through the use of content-related terms and language they have mastered. The writers further explain how strategically raising students’ awareness of the relationship between content and different discourses, critical and creative thinking can be generated.

Introduction
Since the term was launched in 1996 (Marsh, 2009), CLIL as an educational approach to the learning of languages has both gained popularity and been questioned for the anomalies (Bruton, 2011) that have surfaced in the assessment of its effectiveness. Georgiou attaches a fairly disparaging adage to CLIL, calling it the new “fashionable” approach, and quotes Do Coyle in suggesting that CLIL is now poised at a “dangerous moment” with risks of becoming not only ineffective, but also frustrating (2012, pp. 497-498). Georgiou is particularly concerned with the sacrificing of L1-level content, because of the necessary focus on language-acquisition. It should be pointed out that Georgiou regards criticism such as her own as part of a healthy debate around the strengths and weaknesses of CLIL, a sentiment supported also by Hüttner and Smit (2014, pp. 160-161), and a necessary part of a process that should carry this practice beyond “fashion” into established classroom practice. One of her concerns is that the CLIL could become a victim of its own success, in that it is (sometimes, often, always?) applied in inappropriate contexts. It is with some caution then
that we approach our task, and with careful reflection on how to be true to the spirit and execution of CLIL, that we argue for CLIL’s successful “transferability” (Georgiou, p. 497) within our own content-driven writing programme.

The Ideas and Exposition Modules (IEM) are writing courses that were created as part of the National University of Singapore’s concept for its University Town (UTown) residential learning programme. This suite of first- and second-level modules are content specific and rhetorically intensive. Each module is designed by a lecturer from the Centre for English Language and Communication, and is unique in content, although it shares its intended outcomes with all the other modules from the programme. So, one can have modules that offer very diverse content, such as Photography and Society and English, Singlish and Intercultural Communication. However, at the heart of each module is the lecturer’s guidance on “how to best construct evidence-based arguments that show readers why it is reasonable to problematize a previous analysis and resolve the problem in a particular way” (see http://www.nus.edu.sg/celc/programmes/iep.php for more detail). In other words, these are writing courses taught through content that have been designed to appeal to students from all disciplines, and to excite research interest.

Claiming that the NUS Writing Programme modules share a compatibility with a CLIL framework may seem, on the surface, a misunderstanding of CLIL aims and strategies. The emphasis for most teachers and learners when first coming to CLIL is on the acquisition of a new language through content-heavy courses. Brooke (this special issue) however, makes a case for seeing language acquisition not only in terms of foreign language learning, but as the acquisition of “target content-specific language” and incidental learning of “general cross-curricular academic language in context”. Although students do not learn a foreign language as such in the IEM classroom, they are immersed in a new discourse related to the topic that they have elected to study, and are expected to have mastered that discourse within 13 weeks. Ting (2011) reinforces this more flexible approach to how we define a “new language” by claiming that it is of less significance whether the language is mother tongue or a foreign language. “In fact, regardless of the subject matter or whether it is our L1 or an FL, attending to how learners are ‘languaging understanding’ automatically puts ‘literacy’ on the learning agenda” (2011, p. 316).
The IEM programme likewise, provides students with the rhetorical skills and content-specific discourse through which to experience how content comes with a language specific to that topic, and that understanding content happens through content-specific language, thereby “languaging understanding” (Ting, 2011, p. 316). In other words, it is through a particular discourse that meaning is constructed, and that writing is facilitated.

This article will attempt to show how the Ideas and Exposition Modules (IEM) and CLIL are shaped by their common dual-focus approach. It will furthermore attempt to explain how context and a learner-centered approach have contributed to the philosophies underpinning CLIL and the IEM programme. Drawing on the observations and experiences of authors active in the CLIL field, (Georgiou, 2012; Marsh, 2009, 2010; Ting, 2011) this article will argue that CLIL’s influence has moved beyond the EFL classroom, and will offer examples of how its integrated approach has been applied in selected IEM modules. In fact, one of the weaknesses that Georgiou recognizes in CLIL, namely the tendency to privilege language learning at the cost of L1-level content, is redressed in the IEM programme. Finally, the article will illustrate how these factors contribute toward an environment that is perfectly poised to generate a critical, as well as creative, approach to learning.

**Single approach, multiple models**

Georgiou (2012) warns that using CLIL as an “umbrella term” (Mehisto, in Georgiou, p. 497), i.e. all-inclusive of various settings and contexts in which the acquisition of language and content material are accorded equal status, could lead to a watered down product. Marsh (2009) acknowledges that as in any pedagogical context, there is the danger of uninspired classroom practice, and subsequent less successful outcomes, eliciting concerns such as those expressed by Georgiou. However, this should not detract from the sound principle of foregrounding both content and rhetoric, in whichever way that is more effective to individual course needs. Situated within the Centre for English Language Communication, the IEM programme is supported by an environment which regards pedagogy highly. Regular staff seminars on effective classroom practices are reinforced by ELTWO, a CELC open-source publication that contains articles sharing ways in which learning may be achieved effectively and creatively (see [http://blog.nus.edu.sg/eltwo/about/](http://blog.nus.edu.sg/eltwo/about/)). A quick survey of the contents of ELTWO will confirm the rich pedagogical pickings from which IEM tutors can construct meaningful learning situations, doing justice to both content and language
acquisition. These strategies include blended learning, flipped classrooms, authentic learning situations, and creative use of technology, such as peer reviews on Google docs, and simultaneous viewing of and commenting on films through TodaysMeet (see https://todaysmeet.com/).

Marsh describes CLIL as “a single educational approach which involves very different models” (2009), a description most pertinent to the IEM programme. This article will illustrate, through examples from different IEM modules, how this “single approach” is open to application through multiple models. In both CLIL and the IEM programme, there is a very clear set of achievable outcomes. Marsh explains CLIL outcomes vary clearly: CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which a new language is used for the learning and teaching of content with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels (2010). Likewise, in the IEM programme, tutors work from a common template to reach achievable rhetorical outcomes, but have the flexibility to employ methodologies they find appropriate to their different content areas. The holistic approach to curriculum design and student support through immersion in a topic and its discourse (Brooke, this special issue) offers a basis for individual interpretation and application within the classroom.

The IEM modules each offer a unique content-specific topic, but in each case the outcome is the same: students learn about the process of engaging with academic texts, comparing and contrasting different academic opinions, and identifying worthwhile further research. In this way, while students are involved in quite intensive research on the topic of their choice (acquiring a “language” or discourse unique to their topic), they are simultaneously experiencing different rhetorical strategies in which information is communicated. One could argue that while students are researching their topic, “incidental learning” (Georgiou, 2012 p. 496) takes place with regard to the process of critical thinking, research and writing. Students are learning about the rhetoric of persuasion, as well as the language unique to their topic.

Although one may argue that a crucial difference between CLIL and the IEM programme pertains to the issue of foreign-language acquisition, which traditionally defines CLIL, it is more important to recognise the shared emphasis on a “dual purpose,” namely the acquisition of both content and its concomitant language on a sophisticated level.
Pedagogical context

Students taking an IEM module are working outside of their disciplinary comfort zone. They are confronted with the interdisciplinary demands of modules engaging, for example, ethical questions around food choices, experimentation around human enhancement, sport and drugs, or considering how popular culture exposes hierarchies of power. This interdisciplinary focus resonates with the origins of CLIL in a globalising world. The need to communicate across cultural and linguistic lines has become more urgent in a globalized world, and CLIL has emerged as a pedagogical response which strives to facilitate this process, consciously creating circumstances under which content and language acquisition happens concurrently.

Coyle, Hood and Marsh claim that CLIL is “an innovation which emerged as education for modern times” (in Paran, 2013, p. 137), and Marsh sums up the driving forces behind CLIL as “Globalisation, globalisation, globalisation... The socio-economic drivers are very strong” (2009). Georgiou refers to the role of EU policymakers in supporting CLIL as an educational strategy in tune with the linguistic needs of a newly-created European Union (p. 496). One could argue that the breaking down of geographical boundaries has had a knock-on effect on universities, in the form of a less exclusive approach to disciplinary boundaries. The North American liberal arts colleges have long realised the benefits of inviting students to see connections between science, business and the arts in their choice of undergraduate courses. The incentive behind the IEM courses is certainly rooted in the belief in a creative potential for learning within a space that is not defined by a specific discipline. The philosophy behind IEM, as in CLIL, seems to fit into a larger trend of “knowledge economy and interdisciplinarity” (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, in Paran, 2013, p. 137) that endorses moving beyond compartmentalizing knowledge into discrete areas. Students in the IEM classroom, like in the CLIL classroom, are encouraged to “develop plurilingual interests and attitudes … study content through different perspectives …(and) access subject-specific target language terminology” (Monserrat, 2012). In short, NUS, like other 21st Century universities, is opening up the boundaries between disciplines, and the well-rounded graduate is informed in intellectual discourses beyond their vocational discipline. This may be seen as an outcome of, as well as a response to, globalization.

A learner-centered environment
The incentive for a learner-centered approach to learning is the belief that it will “increase learner motivation” (Monserrat, 2012), and although it is known to be very labour-intensive for the teacher (Marsh, 2009), in the experience of IEM teachers the intellectual investment comes with huge benefits in increased teacher and student motivation. Teachers are selected for a combined proficiency in teaching academic writing as well as individual subject interests that bring intellectual passion into the classroom.

Ting (2011) ascribes a large part of CLIL’s success to how it “focuses our attention on the process of learning and not the act of teaching: CLIL obviously attends to how the learner - not the teacher - is acquiring, using, and mastering the (foreign) language” (p. 314). Marsh ascribes the efficacy of this way of learning to the emotional connect it makes with students: “Why are the results so good? We are now thinking that this relates mainly to the emotional dimension of learners; the ways in which CLIL connects them to their own ‘worlds’ using multi-mode technology; and the impact on the brain when language learning becomes ‘acquisitional’, and not just ‘intentional’” (2009).

IEM topics have been selected as much for their academic substance as for their potential to stimulate critical, and creative, thinking. Cross (2012) makes a case for the often neglected relationship between critical and creative thinking, and for the important role that creativity plays in learning, an aspect which is integral to CLIL. Similarly, the IEM topics have been selected to appeal to students from all disciplines. Some examples include Eating Right(s): The Politics of Food, Women in Film, Ethics in Outer Space, Sports and Socialization, Science Fiction and Empire, Public Persona and Self-presentations, as well as Blood, Death and Desire: Interpreting the Vampire. Students are invited to consider, and take positions, in the debates inherent in these topics. They are exposed to ideas through selected readings, documentaries, feature films and invited speakers. In small groups of 12 students, each student gets many opportunities to voice opinions, and get immediate feedback from peers and the tutor, thereby having the opportunity for ongoing intellectual stimulation and growth.

The rest of this article is devoted to three case studies referencing first-level year IEM modules, all conforming to the three ideals stated above. Lynette Tan in her section Women in Film considers how Contix, the content dimension of CLIL, is facilitated through film and gender terminology. Coleen Angove, in Prizes and Popular Culture, illustrates how setting
two discourses in conversation, i.e. that of the prize, and of popular culture, enhances the potential for critical thinking. Anuradha Ramanujan, in Food Right(s): The Politics of Food, offers a closer look at how reading is selected and scaffolded so that students come to an increasing awareness of meaning construction through language. The common thread that runs through the three case studies is how a CLIL approach contributes toward creative and critical thinking.

**Case Study 1: Women in Film**
To recapitulate, the inarguable link between the CLIL approach and the IEM modules is a methodology that is “dual-focused,” where “an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (Marsh, 2010, p. 234). Through content that investigates the representation of women in film, the module, Women in Film, goes a step further in teaching students not only the academic discourse stemming from Gender Studies, but also the additional language of film analysis. The focus of this section is how one of the key dimensions in the rationale for CLIL, what Marsh calls “Contix” or “the content dimension” (Marsh et al., 2001), can shed light on the role of creativity within pedagogy. Parallel to Contix, Women in Film introduces students to the topic through various perspectives (such as history, genre, and ideology), equips them with the language and terminology to understand these perspectives, and then motivates them to form their own perspectives through an application of the new terminology to specific films.

Cross bemoans the current lack of clarity in how creativity fits within prevailing models of pedagogy (Cross, 2012, p. 436) and discusses instances of the creative in a unit of work using the CLIL approach that combines geography and the Japanese language. His notion of creativity stems from the works of Vygotsky, and in particular, the moment of catharsis. Learning that begins as human imitation is followed by the creative process of externalization, and Cross quotes Marjanovic-Shane et al. in elaborating about this process:

*Catharsis occurs when the creative juxtaposition of conflicting emotions implodes to produce something novel that has not existed before….creative education provides ample opportunities for cathartic moments including the sudden “a-ha” one feels when grasping a new concept (Marjanovic-Shane et al., as cited in Cross, p. 437).*
With reference to language learning, catharsis or creativity refers to the moment when the student moves from being “taught” the meaning of a word (what it denotes) to being engaged in the creative process of what it may connote.

An intersection of catharsis with the CLIL dimension of Contix explains the place of creativity in Women in Film. Contix has three components: it provides students with opportunities to study content through different perspectives, it enables students to access subject-specific target language terminology, and it prepares students for future studies and/or working life (Marsh, 2010, p. 241). The “ah-ha” moment, when imitation moves to catharsis, and the student uses the specific term in analysing a new section of a film, or another film altogether, is the catalyst for creativity. In the following an instance of such creativity is explored with Women in Film.

At the beginning of the module, students are taught the formal elements that comprise the style of a film, one of which is cinematography. Cinematography, according to Bordwell and Thompson, encompasses qualities that impact on “how” a shot is filmed, including the photographic aspects, the framing, and the duration (2013, p. 162). When they are taught about how the framing of a shot (in this instance the mobile frame or camera movement) creates meaning, students are alerted to a particular scene from one of the films that have been screened for them, Alfred Hitchcock’s Notorious (1946). In that scene the female protagonist Alicia (played by Ingrid Bergman) is in bed recovering from a night of heavy drinking. Hitchcock visually communicates the message that her perspective is compromised with a disorientating 360 degree pan of the camera following the movements of Devlin, the male protagonist played by Cary Grant, as he walks into the room. This is a “point of view” shot, where the camera enables us to see through the eyes of Alicia. The understanding of how the mobile frame relates to meaning (denotation) is then applied to other parts of the same film, to other films that feature in the module (Rupert Sanders’ use of the 360 degree pan in Snow White and the Huntsman, 2012), and in the latter half of the module to a film that the student selects (connotation).

In turn, that visual message is also correlated with the academic discourse specific to the module: how we view the female perspective has an impact on the ideology that relates to women in film. In this case, Alicia’s perspective is shown to be impaired, and this limits her
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narrative agency. The academic discourse is familiarised through the reading of articles and book chapters centered on the representation of women in film as well as in discussions, written assignments and oral presentations. Fluency in academic discourse and the ability to decode films are highly transferable skills, particularly with the increased use of film across academic disciplines and in undergraduate English-based Departments - an observation made by Ellen Bishop as early as in 1999 in her seminal work on film in writing courses. As a global cultural phenomenon, a versatility with the language of film can also, arguably, prepare students not only for future studies, but also for working life, the third component in Contix.

Both CLIL and IEM are innovative educational approaches that raise students from an awareness of the meaning of language to an ability to use that language in context. This moment of catharsis, and therefore creativity, is enabled by the dual focus of content and language, the foundation of CLIL and the IEM modules.

Case Study 2: Prizes and Popular Culture

In Prizes and Popular Culture, students are exposed to the world of prizes, and invited to consider who benefits from prizes, what roles prizes fulfil, and what they reflect about cultural values and preoccupations at any specific time. To talk and write about prizes in a way that elevates the pop cultural to the academic, students need to learn a language that enables them to do so. CLIL’s dual approach is employed, where students are exposed to content and its concomitant discourse in an authentic exploration of original ideas. I use two seminal texts, one by Street, “Showbusiness of a serious kind: A cultural politics of the arts prize” (2005) and the other by English, The Economy of Prestige (2005). Both writers have studied the prize phenomenon and have created a discourse around the topic that students can apply in their own research.

In “Showbusiness of a serious kind’: A cultural politics of the arts prize,” Street offers a foundational discourse for his analysis of the prize phenomenon, and we spend a large part of a class unpacking the language in the first few paragraphs. I underline the words and terms that offer the opportunity for analysis:
This article explores the cultural politics of the arts prize, in an attempt to make sense of the economic, aesthetic and political interests that are organized into the phenomenon, and to assess its impact on cultural policy and practice. My general point is that the arts prize plays an important part in contemporary culture, but that it has not received the attention it warrants. It has practical consequences for cultural policy and cultural discourse, and it has theoretical consequences for arguments about aesthetics. My more narrow point is that we need to understand the arts prize as a particular kind of media event, one that is constructed through the actions of a variety of stakeholders (sponsors, media institutions, culture industries) and then deployed in the making and marketing of cultural artefacts.

One reason why the arts prize has been overlooked may lie in its apparently anomalous character. It embodies a form of critical judgement that defies those who bemoan a decline into ‘relativism’ and those who welcome the unseating of traditional claims about aesthetic ‘standards’.

After a discussion in class about the possible meanings of the underlined phrases, students engage with Street’s implicit appropriation of these terms and ideas through examples and illustrations of how they manifest in the prize industry. The readings to this point provide a contextual framework, that is, one directly related to the topic, and one that provides a language through which to think, write and talk about prizes.

However, to elevate this discussion beyond a generally more descriptive level, I introduce students to readings on popular culture. These readings offer contradictory analyses of the function of pop culture. In some readings, such as Macdonald’s stridently damning article, “A Theory of Mass Culture” (1957), pop culture is described in terms such as “like chewing gum” (p. 22), “for mass consumption” (p 22), “to exploit” (p 23), etc. In others, pop culture is explained as being empowering, “culture by the people and for the people” (Danesi, 2008, p.4). In providing a popular cultural approach as conceptual framework, with its unique discourse pertaining to cultural studies, students are invited to revisit the world of prizes, and review this world through the conceptual framework of popular culture. Another set of linguistic tools have been provided, in this case the language through which popular culture is theorized, and students are exposed to this language and the debates within the discipline to
equip them with high order content and an appropriate language to think and write about that content.

In positioning two discourses in terms of one another, that of “prizes” and of “popular culture”, students discover how when different discourses intersect, new opportunities for creative thinking arise. In the spirit of CLIL, the acquisition of language and content is inseparably linked and happens concurrently. This “purposeful” reading allows for a critical, as well as creative reading process, a process identified by Paul as happening at the intersection of critical and creative thinking (1993).

Paul (1993) makes a strong case for the often-neglected role of creativity in critical thinking. He offers a very comprehensive description of the process of critical thinking, which essentially entails re-constructing the “logic” within a text, and assimilating this within your existing understanding of the context and ideas shaped by the text. Paul describes this (often unwitting) process as one of “reasoned creation” (p. 28). This assimilating process should never be uncritical, but one in which we “critically dialogue” (p. 28) with the text, thereby responding to questions that arise from the text, and through answering those questions engender new ideas and meanings. Students employ the language provided by Street and James to verbalize their understanding of how prizes from the Nobel to American Idol are constructed and to what effect. The language provided by readings on popular culture provides them with contradictory interpretations of the role of popular culture, and subsequently they enter into a process of critical dialogue with the texts, a process which allows for “reasoned creation” of original insights. Through bringing different discourses to a phenomenon, in this case the prize, students re-read the prize in a “purposeful” (Paul, p. 22) way, and generate original ideas and questions in the process. Paul believes that through reinforcing the habits of reading with care, precision, “respectful of evidence, responsive to good reasons” (p.31), i.e. aware of good argumentation, and constant self-reflection, students become empowered and more critically independent. In short, this process, although reasoned and methodical, is most successful when the outcome has entailed a creative engagement with the text. Critical Thinking is “purposeful” thinking “(p. 22).

Reading with a purpose goes beyond the ingesting and accepting of information, and is an energetic reading process. In the case of Prizes and Popular Culture, the prize phenomenon,
usually regarded as mere “spectator sport” (Street, p. 819) and form of entertainment, can be revisited, and its inception, results or narrative can be re-evaluated as social commentary, whether reinforcing conservative ideas, or empowering marginalized voices. Contextual and conceptual frameworks can provide both the discourse needed to “language content”, as well as the focus and purpose that Paul regards essential to critical and creative thinking. But, fundamental to the process is a sensitivity to how language empowers, and how it is inseparably linked to the content learners are engaging with. I recognise a resonance with Ting’s claim that “Potentially, CLIL can open a new chapter in 21st century education, one which must provide learners with a deep-level comprehension of concepts rather than a myriad of facts (2010, p.14).

**Case Study 3: Eating Right(s): The Politics of Food**

In the three units that comprise Eating Right(s): The Politics of Food, students examine how current practices of food production, trade and consumption impact communities, landscapes and species worldwide and why, therefore, ‘eating’ is a political act. Course readings are selected to serve the dual purpose of familiarizing students with important concepts and debates in the topic area and promoting critical engagement by explicitly modeling how arguments are constructed. As explained earlier, our students do not learn a foreign language in the conventional sense. However, through their immersion in a discursive field, they acquire “skills and competencies” in a new academic language that, as is fundamental in CLIL, facilitate their “active” participation in “authentic, meaningful communication” on the topic (Georgiou, 2012, p. 495). Although the topic of the politics of food lends itself quite readily to multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives, echoing the inclusive approach of CLIL, I take special care to ensure that the readings appeal to students with varied experiences, knowledge and academic interests. For example, in Unit 2, where we examine the debates surrounding agricultural biotechnology, students read four academic articles that focus on a range of interrelated concerns. They include an economist’s view that global food security can only be achieved by boosting yields through large-scale, corporate driven agriculture and genetically modified (GM) crops; a political scientist’s call for public investment in biotech plant research and infrastructure to empower small farmers and conserve land and biodiversity in the developing world against corporate monopolies; scholarship at the intersection of science and social justice that questions the motivations underlying the United States’ GM food aid to Africa; and the work of a biologist who, upon examining the medium-
and long-term social and environmental impacts of agricultural biotechnology, concludes that it will exacerbate global poverty and hunger and cause irreparable damage to ecosystems and biodiversity. Documentary films and other materials sourced by students provide additional insights and points of view.

Through carefully scaffolded reading and writing activities, students are prompted to consider and make connections between various aspects of the arguments in order to gain a deeper understanding of the issues at stake. Rather than reading primarily for information, they focus on how ideas and viewpoints are presented. As they identify purpose, research questions and main claims, recognize how ideology shapes perceptions, which inferences are based on unexamined or dubious assumptions, what constitutes evidence in different disciplines and the ways it may be effectively integrated in argumentation, students learn to be more discerning readers of others’ work. And understanding the process of meaning-making in academic writing (the ‘new’ language) enables them to critically/creatively incorporate specific strategies and structures used by published authors into their own essays to engender fresh questions and perspectives on concepts and debates pertaining to the modular topic.

More challenging, however, is the task of cultivating open-minded, self-reflexive reading and thinking. While students are quick to detect prejudices and gaps in the logic of others, they are often unaware or reluctant to examine their own assumptions and biases. For example, some students may be persuaded that a scientist’s argument about biotechnology is credible even before properly evaluating it, because of deference to “expert” opinion. Such acceptance could also be due to personal ideological biases that students have not reflected on or are unaware of. Ideological biases are more easily pinpointed in arguments that unsettle or oppose the status quo and/or the student’s beliefs, and a single instance of inadequate evidence may be considered sufficient to dismiss an entire argument especially if it does not affirm the student’s opinions.

The peer review process during which students read and offer written feedback on essay drafts is another case in point. I sometimes find that students who provide perceptive and detailed comments on others’ arguments are unable to read their own work with the same critical eye. Teaching students to be “fair-minded” readers and writers “confident in reason” and willing to “equally consider all relevant viewpoints” (Paul and Elder 2006, p. 194) before
arriving at a conclusion involves creating a supportive classroom environment in which they can trace and reflect on the “moves” they make in their own thinking (Eldem and Paul 2010, np). More importantly, it necessitates being open-minded and well-informed ourselves, seeing value in complexity and ambiguity and resisting the inclination to oversimplify or even shape student responses by repeatedly asserting our own positions on issues and texts. The seminar style and blended classroom formats of IEM, in which the instructor acts as a facilitator or co-investigator rather than the final authority, also help to foster critical independence.

Conclusion
As indicated above, Georgiou acknowledges the value of CLIL in creating “a context for authentic, meaningful communication” and “active learning” that helps “transcend the isolation that sometimes characterizes the language learning field” (2012, pp. 495-496). Likewise, by establishing an environment in which students consistently “use the language” to analyze and produce knowledge about the world through “a dialogic relation with their peers, the teacher and the materials,” the IEM Programme circumvents the exam-centered and purely structural, skills-based curricula that Georgiou identifies as a key source of discontent in many language classrooms (2012, pp. 496-497). The IEM programme, we believe, allays Georgiou’s concern that, in practice, CLIL could result in a superficial or inaccurate engagement with content that fails to challenge students cognitively. The high standards of intellectual engagement expected in the IEM programme ensure that there is no compromise as far as content is concerned. The conscious selection of teachers who have content expertise, as well as investment in the importance of good writing practice, conforms to Georgiou’s insistence on the importance of teacher training in multiple areas as crucial for the successful implementation of CLIL. In their recent book on the subject, Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) advocate team teaching and other alliances between content and language experts. The IEM programme was conceptualized as evolving through collaborations between content experts with interdisciplinary research and teaching interests, specialists in rhetoric and composition and ELT scholars. Today, five years since its inception, the programme is largely staffed by content experts with varying degrees of research and/or teaching experience in either or both rhetoric and composition and ELT scholarship. This fusion of competencies and training guarantees that course materials are intellectually challenging, comprehensive and up-to-date, and that teachers are capable of guiding student
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projects. Additionally, although modular topics and texts reflect individual interests and expertise, overall curriculum design continues to be a team effort.

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