Bilingual education in Dutch education
Challenges, quality and sustainability

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Trust us, we know what we’re doing
The Netherlands

- 17.1 million inhabitants
- 41.413 km²
- 995,500 students in secondary education
- 33,000 in bilingual education
The Dutch education system

Everybody goes to primary school: 8 yrs

Selection at age 12: three main levels

It is possible to go up or down the levels, but not very common (“piling up”)

Bilingual education mostly at secondary school level.
Building bilingual departments

Schools **add** a department

Extra **choice** for students (and parents, and teachers)

Becoming fully bilingual is **illegal**
Beginnings: 1989
The 1990s

Development started in international education

Slow but steady growth

Grassroots movement: schools organized themselves

Ministry of Education tasked Nuffic to co-ordinate

Schools started discussing the ‘brand’ bilingual education

Year 2000: 26 schools
Standard Bilingual Education

50% of subjects taught through English

International co-operation

Students reach B2 in year 3 (age 15)

Teachers have B2 from the start

Lessons taught through CLIL

Dutch + subject content does not suffer

IB English in upper forms
Team schooling

Classroom English + CLIL

Cambridge Advanced (CAE)
Cambridge Proficiency (CPE)

Language Course Abroad
CLIL

Subject teacher is language teacher

Interaction /communicative approach

Feedback

Increasing focus on literacies
European and International orientation

The raison d’être of bilingual education
Integrated into curriculum
Cross-curricular projects
International co-operation
Bilingual education is a brand – a strong profile
Quality assurance

Standard has been operationalized into Quality Framework

48 indicators: results, outcomes, content

Some crucial, others ‘to strive for’

Regular accreditation visits
Accreditation visit

Talks with management, teachers, Students, parents

Lesson observations

Questionnaire, policy plan

One full day, ends with report

Certificate valid for 5 years
Future developments

Tto 2.0

Accreditation sometimes not stimulating

Do we need 48 criteria?

More room for individual choices while maintaining the brand

Bilingual education in more areas of education: primary, higher vocational, higher ed?
Further reading


Bilingual education in Dutch Schools. A success story (Nuffic)
Any Questions?

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