

# Bilingual education in Dutch education

Challenges, quality and sustainability

Amsterdam, AIE, 6 October 2017

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Team coordinator



## Trust us, we know what we're doing







# The Netherlands

- 17,1 million inhabitants
- 41.413 km<sup>2</sup>
- 995.500 students in secondary education
- 33.000 in bilingual education



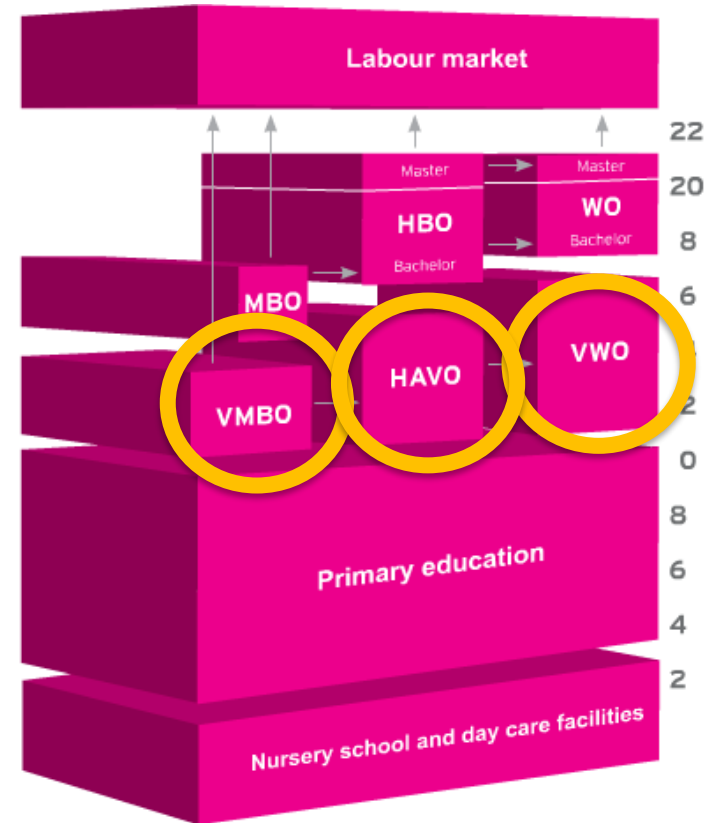
# The Dutch education system

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**

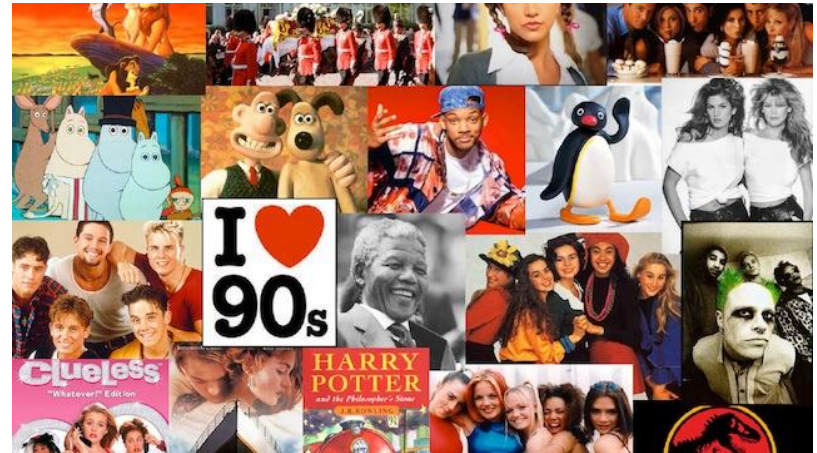
Slow but steady growth

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

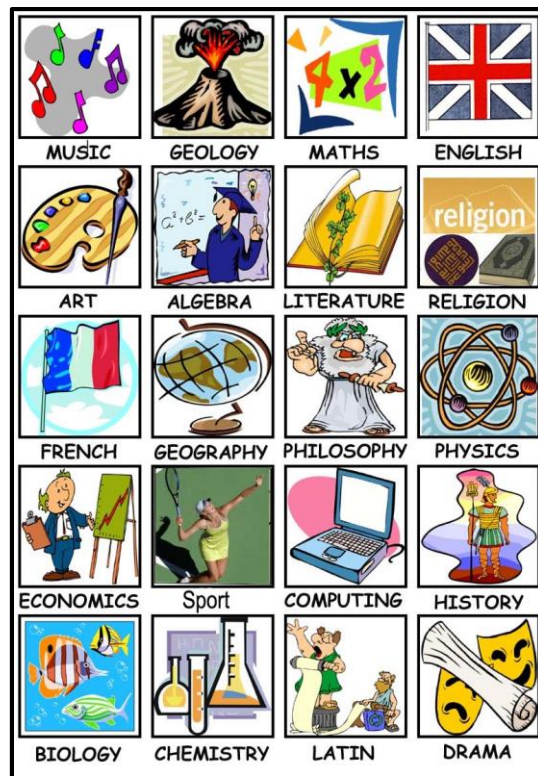
Students reach B2 in year 3 (age 15)

Teachers have B2 from the start

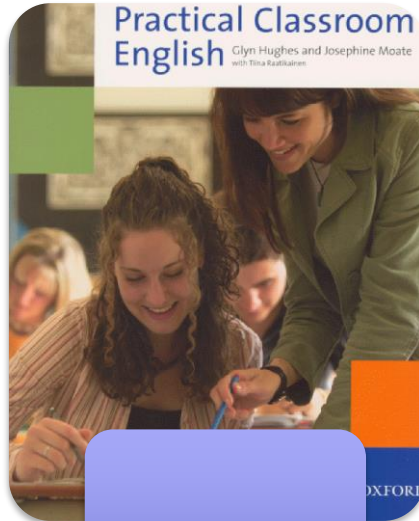
Lessons taught through CLIL

Dutch + subject content does not suffer

IB English in upper forms



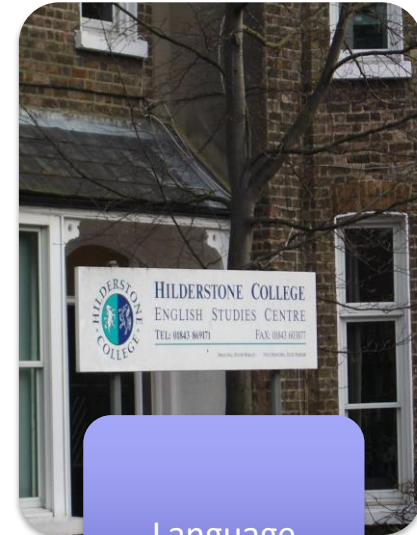
## Team schooling



Classroom  
English + CLIL



Cambridge  
Advanced (CAE)  
Cambridge  
Proficiency  
(CPE)



Language  
Course Abroad

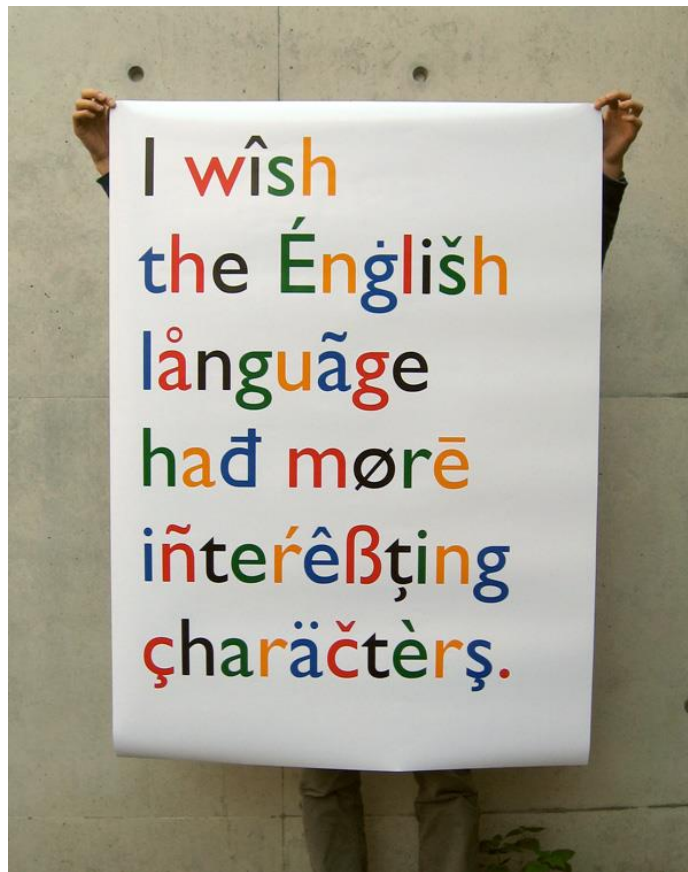
## CLIL

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



*lid van het landelijk netwerk  
voor tweetalig onderwijs*



## 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

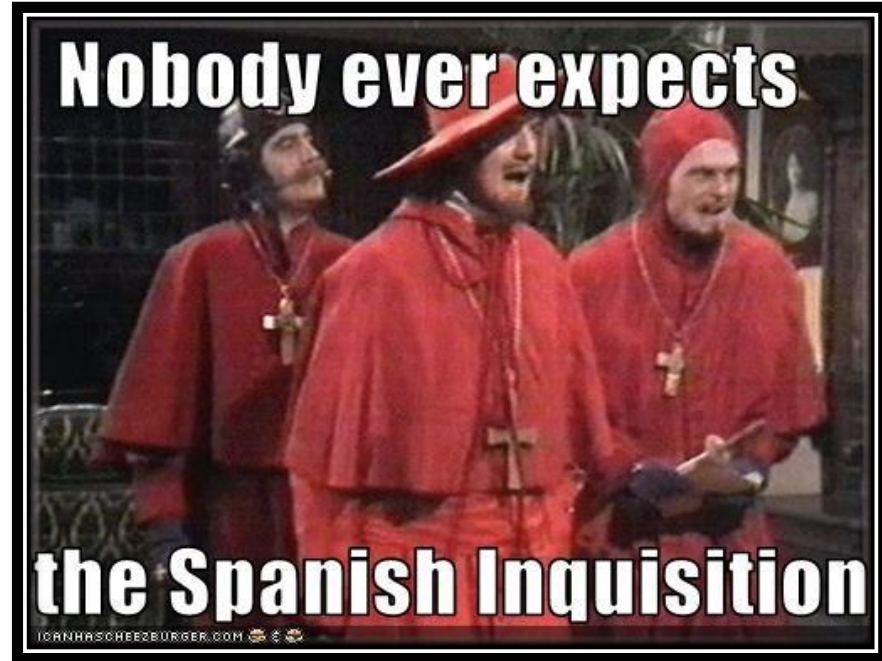
Talks with management, teachers,  
Students, parents

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?

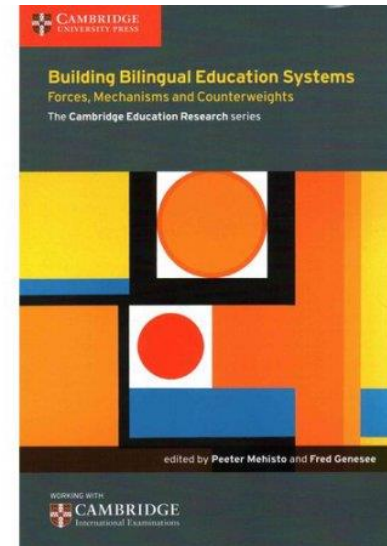




## Further reading

**The Netherlands: Quality Control as a Driving Force in Bilingual Education** (De Graaff, Van Wilgenburg)  
publication description In: Building Bilingual Education Systems: Forces, Mechanisms and Counterweights  
(Peeter Mehisto and Fred Genesee, eds.) Cambridge University Press.

[Bilingual education in Dutch Schools. A success story](#) (Nuffic)



## Any Questions?

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