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SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT

Content and Language Integrated Learning in
Modern Languages in British Higher Education.

A case study of German at Aston University

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Doctor of Philosophy

ASTON UNIVERSITY
October 2014

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Aston University

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Summary

This thesis investigates Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in German undergraduate programmes in the UK. At its core is a study of how one German department integrates the teaching of language and content in its undergraduate programmes and how instructors and students experience this approach. This micro-context is embedded in the wider macro-context of UK Higher Education and subject to outside forces - be they political, economic, socio-cultural - whose effects will manifest in more or less obvious ways. Data was collected via an online survey of Heads of German at British universities to determine the *status quo* of CLIL in UK Higher Education and to investigate how certain institutional parameters determine the introduction of CLIL in Higher Education. This project employs a mixed-method case study approach and is based on student questionnaires and semi-structured interview with German teaching staff. The study brings to light a number of significant aspects. For example, contrary to popular belief, content provision in the L2 is rather common at British universities, which is currently not reflected in the research. Student data indicates that German students perceive clear advantages in the university's approach to CLIL. They consider German-taught content classes challenging yet beneficial for their language development. Staff interviews have yielded intriguing information about perceived advantages and disadvantages of CLIL, about its implications for classroom practice, and about instructors' attitude towards teacher training, which echo findings from similar investigations in European contexts. Finally, the results of the macro-analysis and the case study are compared and contrasted with findings from European research on ICLHE/CLIL to determine differences and similarities with the British context, a set of recommendations is made regarding CLIL practice at the case study institution, and some implications these findings may have for the future of CLIL in British higher education are discussed.

Key words: Content and Language Integrated Learning, UK Higher Education, German as a Foreign Language, MFL Teaching and Learning, Case Study

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List of abbreviations

ASG – Academic Subject Group

AU – Aston University

BICS – Basic Interactive Communication Skills

CALP – Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CILT – National Centre for Languages

CLIL – Content and Language Integrated Learning

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

DAAD – Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)

DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007-2010)

DfE – Department for Education (2010-present)

DfES – Department for Education and Skills (2001-2007)

ELF – English as a lingua franca

ELL – English language learner

EME – English medium education

EMI – English as a medium of instruction

ESL – English as a second language

FoF – Focus on form

GFL – German as a Foreign Language

HE – Higher Education

HEA – Higher Education Academy

HEFCE – Higher Education Funding Council for England

IA – Integrated Approach

IL – Interlanguage

IBML – International Business and Modern Languages

IWLP – Institution-wide language programme

L1 – First language (learned from childhood)

L2 – Second / foreign language (learned in addition to L1)

LEP – Limited English proficient student

LLAS – Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies at the University of Southampton

LSS – School of Languages and Social Sciences

LTS – Languages and Translation Studies section within LSS

MFL – modern foreign languages

NNST – non-native speaker teacher

NST – native speaker teacher

OeAD – Austrian Academic Exchange Service

QAA – The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

TBE – Transitional bilingual education

TL – target language

TP – teaching period

TS – Translation Studies

UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

UG – Universal Grammar

USP – unique selling point

UWLP – University-wide language programme

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

Introduction

The Higher Education systems of most European countries have experienced a sea change since the Bologna Declaration was signed in 1999, leading to fundamental reforms of many education systems across Europe. Second language (L2) teaching in non-linguistic university programmes has a long history in Europe, but has experienced a boom since the Bologna Process opened up the education systems of the signatory states as a way to “promote the European ideal of Mother Tongue + 2 languages” (Coleman 2012: 14). One of the underlying aims of the reform was to create a framework which would allow for smooth student (and staff) mobility so that students could prepare for their entry into the labour market by gaining valuable language, communication and social skills as well as develop their intercultural awareness. Inevitably, however, the reform led to the irrevocable establishment of English as the *lingua academica* (Greenstein 2006) or *lingua pedagogica* in European Higher Education, and “market competition has ensured that internationalisation and Englishisation go hand in hand” (Coleman 2012: 14). The consequence has been the rapid proliferation of English-medium degree programmes – either newly developed ones or existing ones, hastily dressed in new clothing – which catered to non-linguists who wanted to study their discipline, e.g. business, engineering or law, through the foreign language. This development has far-reaching consequences for many stakeholders in Higher Education, from programme designers and admissions coordinators to the academics who are, in the end, responsible for delivering the programmes in the target language.

This explosion in English-medium degree options was swiftly followed by a growing number of research publications investigating these newly created English-language settings. Bilingual education was not a new phenomenon in Europe, but for most of the 20th century, at least, it was mainly the purview of secondary education, where different permutations of bilingual education have a long tradition, for example in the form of immersion education in regions where a minority or community language is used as the medium of instruction for reasons of language maintenance or political motives, etc., such as in Wales or Catalonia. Increasingly, however, bilingual education also entered mainstream education, where such programmes usually aimed at developing foreign language skills among the majority language group of the country. Here, the medium of instruction is almost always English. In the early 1990s, a new term was coined to provide a label for the many different types of bilingual education which had developed across Europe; there are now more than 40 terms in use to describe such programmes (Greere / Räsänen 2008: 4). *Content and Language Integrated Learning*, or CLIL, as this approach was now known, was intended to describe European bilingual education practices and set them apart from earlier bilingual models such as immersion which many thought was too

closely linked with its Canadian origins to be a good fit for the European context. CLIL, originally applied to pre-tertiary settings, was initially also used to describe L2-medium education in non-linguistic disciplines at university, but from the early 2000s, this approach was increasingly labelled Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE), after an international conference with that same title had brought together experts from across Europe and beyond who were involved in L2-medium tertiary education as practitioners or researchers. Since then, the amount and range of research literature in the field has grown exponentially. The issues investigated in these studies range from case studies describing how the approach is realised in different settings (e.g. Costa 2009 for Italy; Dafouz Milne 2011 for Spain) to the role different stakeholders play in the implementation of CLIL/ICLHE¹ (e.g. Lehtikoinen 2004), language policy in Higher Education (e.g. Fortanet-Gómez 2013), the experience of teachers and students involved in L2-medium education (e.g. Aguilar / Rodríguez 2012), the different challenges facing content and language specialists involved in bilingual tertiary education (e.g. Airey / Linder 2006 for physics in Sweden), the linguistic demands of and support for English-medium instruction (e.g. Ball / Lindsay 2012), didactical-pedagogical implications of CLIL (e.g. Dafouz Milne / Perucha 2010), and the economic benefits of non-specialist language education (e.g. Mehisto / Marsh 2011).

The descriptor CLIL has also been used to describe educational settings where the main object of teaching and learning is content rather than language, where language development is seen as added value rather than an explicit outcome of the teaching and learning experience, at least for the learners, but also for the subject teacher whose main goal it is to impart the subject knowledge but who may or may not have a clear idea of the desired language outcomes. Finding the balance and defining appropriate outcomes for both subject and language development is a key factor in successful CLIL implementation. This becomes even more important when one teacher fills both roles, i.e. ‘wears the hat’ of the subject teacher *and* the language teacher. As Greere and Räsänen (2008: 4) have found,

Adopting a CLIL approach presupposes that there are separate goals for content learning and language learning. Language, however, is seen very differently by different people and in different contexts. While it is a tool for interaction and strategic communication for every single user, for a language teacher and learner it is a subject (i.e. content) to be taught and learnt. For linguists, then, it is their discipline and object for research. Finally, for an academic professional, language is a tool and mediator for constructing knowledge and sharing one’s expertise. It is this last viewpoint that is the most significant in CLIL, because it is of concern in both teaching and learning. It is important for both subject specialists and language specialists to agree on what “language” and “language learning outcome” might mean in the CLIL context.

¹ The terms are used interchangeably in this study; for a discussion of the terminology, see Chapter 3.7.

In comparison with the aforementioned surge in interest in L2-medium instruction across Europe, CLIL has received far less research attention in UK Higher Education, which is not surprising, given that the majority of CLIL in Europe is conducted in English. In Anglophone UK, there are studies investigating English-medium programmes for international students, but these usually fall under one of the many labels associated with English language provision, such as English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as lingua franca (ELF), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (cf. Melles et al. 2005, Coffin / Donohue 2012).

CLIL is a relatively new approach in UK language teaching. A small, but dedicated number of secondary schools influenced by the Canadian immersion movement introduced major European languages such as French, German and Spanish as the medium of instruction from the 1970s and 1980s onwards. The number of schools offering bilingual instruction in some core subjects such as History and Geography increased in the 1990s and especially since the turn of the millennium (Coyle 2007b: 172).

However, very little academic literature reports on CLIL in UK Higher Education for Languages other than English (LOTE). Most researchers, such as Do Coyle, who, along with David Marsh, is one of the preeminent authorities on CLIL in the UK context, focus on compulsory and higher secondary education, with rare excursions into primary education and far less time devoted to tertiary or Higher Education. This lack of research literature could be interpreted as evidence that LOTE do, in fact, rarely feature as a medium of instruction in British universities. This is all the more curious because there is one discipline which seems predisposed to the use of a language other than English in teaching, namely Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) programmes. After all, the object of study in these programmes is the target language which is intrinsically linked with its cultural context, literature, history, economy, etc. Therefore, MFL degrees would seem the ideal context for CLIL.

There is one British university which has implemented a CLIL approach in its modern language programmes since the 1970s. What sets the undergraduate language degrees at AU's School of Languages and Social Sciences apart from other modern language programmes is the fact that they apply what they call an 'Integrated Approach' to language teaching and learning which means that at AU, the foreign language – French, German or Spanish – is used as a medium of instruction in content modules from Year 1 through to graduation. Accordingly, all content modules in the MFL undergraduate programmes are taught and assessed through the L2, providing students with maximum exposure to the foreign language and enhancing the learning experience, while also allowing the students to acquire essential transferable skills (see Grix / Jaworska 2002: 18-21, Reershemius 2001: 34-35).

This study intends to use this particular university to exemplify the role CLIL can play in UK tertiary education. Especially in light of the changing UK language landscape, where a significantly lower number of pupils choose to take an A-level in a modern language, which has a logical knock-on effect on UG student numbers, universities have to position themselves in an increasingly competitive HE market. For Aston, CLIL could serve as an invaluable USP, while also providing an essential pedagogical tool as the university strengthens its focus on employability, non-specialist language education and transferable skills. These, then, are the research questions which this project intends to answer:

1. What is the extent of L2-taught content provision in German undergraduate programmes in the UK and how do certain institutional parameters determine the introduction of such CLIL-type provision in UK Higher Education?
2. How do students and instructors perceive L2-medium content instruction as implemented in the School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University and do their experiences align with or differ from findings from similar European settings?

In order to investigate how Content and Language Integrated Learning is implemented at AU, this project employs a mixed-method case study approach and combines quantitative data and qualitative data collected from three different sources, the first of which are the Heads of German of 28 German departments in the United Kingdom. Since the German department at the core of the case study is subject to outside forces - be they political, economic, socio-cultural - whose effects will manifest in more or less obvious ways, a survey of German departments across the United Kingdom was designed to investigate the current proliferation of CLIL in British Higher Education in general, providing the macro-context for the case study itself. The online survey set out to answer the following questions: What is the current proliferation of CLIL-type provision in UK German departments? What are the motives behind introducing L2-taught content teaching, and what are some of the reasons not to do so? How do institutional parameters influence the implementation of content teaching in German?

The data collected from German departments around the country then serves as the backdrop for the investigation of AU's CLIL practice which is presented as a case study. The case study was defined as the German section in the School of Languages and Social Sciences (LSS) and rests on qualitative and quantitative data collected from two sources: Firstly, the students enrolled in undergraduate German programmes at AU were asked to complete a questionnaire which elicited information on the linguistic background of the students, their motivation for studying German, and for doing so at AU and their experience with target-language teaching prior to entering university before delving into their experience of and attitude towards the bilingual CLIL approach at AU. Secondly, all members of the German staff who were involved in teaching content modules that are

offered as part of the German undergraduate programmes at AU at the time of data collection were interviewed individually in semi-structured interviews and asked to comment on how they balance content and language teaching in their modules, what they perceive to be the advantages and disadvantages of the approach, what the pedagogical and practical challenges are, etc.² Among the questions the study intends to answer are the following: What, if any, are the problems inherent in this 'Integrated Approach'? Are the students aware of the potential benefits of this approach? How do they cope with the daunting task of learning and communicating solely in the L2? Are there situations where they think they would benefit more from instruction in their L1³? If used at all, what are the contexts where either teachers or learners draw on the learners' L1?

Overall, this study aims to examine how instructors ensure that students get the maximum amount of learning out of the learning opportunities they are provided with in L2 content classes. CLIL classes have two goals: the students are to acquire both content knowledge and the linguistic structures and vocabulary to reproduce, discuss and critically process said content information. Therefore, they need to be provided with what Krashen termed 'comprehensible input'. In CLIL contexts, this will necessarily mean both content and linguistic input. For Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009: 30), the advantages are self-evident:

The most potent, true, and non-deceptive language is the spontaneous one which arises when we are completely involved in something other than language. This holds true for bilingual subject-matter teaching, when other school subjects are taught in the medium of a foreign language. This is a means of widening both the scope and quantity of language input and reflects the drive to break through the restrictive, often unstimulating boundaries of the language classroom.

The case study also investigates what kind of pedagogical support in general and language methodological training in particular the subject specialists interviewed for this study have received or would like in order to provide successful and effective CLIL instruction; the study also addresses the linguistic challenges students face in a CLIL setting and the support measures that are in place to support them in their transition to university and throughout their programme.

This thesis consists of nine chapters in total. Chapter 1 gives an overview of theories of second language acquisition (SLA) and different approaches to second language teaching and learning which underpin the theory and practice of CLIL. In Chapter 2, we turn to early North-American forms of bilingual education such as Canadian immersion and Dual-Language education which were precursors to European models and have had

² See Appendix 3 for the interview guide.

³ L1 in this context is taken to mean English. While the increasing number of international students recruited by AU means that the average learner group now comes with a variety of different L1s (see Chapter 8.1.3), their shared experience of living and studying in the UK (and the fact that the university requires international students to provide proof of a relatively high level of English) allows us to posit English as the common working language which takes the traditional role of the L1.

considerable impact on the development of CLIL. We trace their history and the conditions under which they came into being, and report on research findings which have provided evidence for the potential benefits of such bilingual approaches, but have also brought to light problematic issues with regard to both the underlying pedagogical principles and the practical implementation in the classroom.

Chapter 3, then, turns to European variants of bilingual education and traces the development of CLIL as an umbrella term for different bilingual programmes. It shows how research evidence from, for example, Canadian immersion has led to structural and pedagogical-methodological adaptation in European contexts, and how European examples of multilingual education such as the European Schools model have influenced the development of European language policy. Chapter 4 investigates the monumental changes European Higher Education has experienced since the inception of the Bologna Process which has had a fundamental impact on the language policies of many European universities. This process of internalization has significant impact on the teaching practices of discipline experts who, all of a sudden, are expected to implement a strategic language policy set by the institution, often without having been consulted beforehand. According to research findings from a variety of Higher Education CLIL contexts across Europe, many of these academics are now expected to teach their students through the medium of a language which, in most cases, neither party grew up speaking.

These four chapters lay the groundwork for the case study which lies at the heart of this thesis. Chapter 5 briefly discusses the role of and research on teacher beliefs as part of the wider context of teacher cognition, while Chapter 6 outlines the research design and describes the research instruments and the data collection and analysis process. Chapter 7 focuses on the macro-context of the case study, detailing recent developments in the British modern languages landscape, such as pressures exerted on MFL departments in light of falling student numbers and financial austerity. Attention then turns to a description of the status quo of German Studies in the UK before presenting and analysing the data on the proliferation of CLIL in UK German departments which were gathered via an online survey. Chapter 8 presents the micro-context, namely the case study investigating how the German section at AU's School of Languages and Social Sciences implements CLIL in its undergraduate programmes. This section analyses data collected from students and staff to address a number of questions which are at the heart of the CLIL approach, including the students' motivation for studying German, their awareness of the Integrated Approach, what they - and the instructors - perceive to be the main benefits and challenges of CLIL, how content and language instruction are balanced and how language (L1 and L2) is used in the classroom. The chapter asks whether instructors consider themselves content or language experts - or both? - and addresses the controversial topic of CLIL teacher training, which is a difficult issue in many European ICLHE settings, as well as

assessment and feedback, and takes an external view at AU's CLIL approach by way of a short analysis of a series of internal documents. The final chapter summarizes and synthesizes the findings of Chapters 7 and 8 and contrasts them with the results of similar research studies in other European contexts to determine differences and similarities. It provides a concise description of AU's approach to L2-mediated content teaching, makes a series of recommendations regarding CLIL implementation at AU and discusses implications for the future of CLIL in British Higher Education.

Chapter 1: Theories of Language Learning and Teaching

The present project aims at tracing the development of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), a genuinely European approach to bilingual education. Before we can turn our attention to this variety of bilingual education, its precursors and development, theoretical framework and practical implementation in the context of German Studies in UK Higher Education, we first have to understand how, over the past 100 years, research in language acquisition has provided a rich well of theoretical models and pedagogical innovations. Innovative methodologies such as CLIL draw on findings from earlier bilingual models, as we will see in Chapters 2 and 3. Their development was directly influenced by some of the key linguists whose theories, hypotheses and models explaining how language is learned are presented in the following brief overview of theories of second language learning and teaching.

1.1 A brief history of Second Language Acquisition research

First and second language acquisition research and theory have undergone a number of paradigmatic shifts in the last century, generally mirrored in similar developments in second and foreign language learning theory and teaching methodology.

The most basic question of all, which is one that all theories of language acquisition try to answer, is whether language acquisition happens through environment and upbringing (*nurture*) or as a matter of predisposition or genetic programming (*nature*); all theories fall somewhere on an axis between *nativist* and *constructivist* explanations. Before Second Language Acquisition (SLA) emerged as a field of research in the early 1970s, research into how learners acquired a second language - based on behaviourist approaches to language learning (Skinner 1957) - was mostly contrastive in nature, analysing the learners' L1 and L2⁴ in the hope of being able to predict areas where the languages differed enough to potentially cause difficulties for the learners, often in the form of negative transfer⁵. This procedure was known as Contrastive Analysis, where "descriptions of the two languages were obtained and an interlingual comparison carried out" (Ellis 1985: 7). When learner errors themselves were analysed, it was found that certain error patterns, e.g. overgeneralization, were typically also found in first language acquisition, yet could not be ascribed to imitation of the target language, which "was taken

⁴ For a definition of how L1 and L2 are used in the present study, see Chapter 2.1.1.

⁵ Lightbown / Spada (2006: 205) define transfer as the "influence of a learner's first language knowledge in the second language", also termed 'interference'. For a long time, both terms implied a negative influence leading to mistakes in L2 production; more recently, especially in the cognitivist paradigm, evidence of L1 influence is interpreted as the result of strategic 'borrowing' by the learner to facilitate communication.

as support for Chomsky's proposal that the acquisition process was essentially one of rule formation, not habit formation" (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 316). These empirical findings "raised grave doubts about negative transfer as a major factor in the process of SLA" (Ellis 1985: 7) and caused researchers to refocus their interest elsewhere, away from simple error analysis to analysing the learner's performance as a whole (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 317). It seemed that the process of L2 acquisition was more complex, more creative, and also more idiosyncratic than previously thought.

1.1.1 Interlanguage: Making it up as you go along

As seen earlier, error analysis as the sole perspective was insufficient to give a full picture of how learner language developed, as it was soon found that learners avoiding errors by not using the more complex TL structures may be a feature of their "systematic L2 performance" (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 82).

To describe this 'performance system', Selinker (1972) coined the term *interlanguage* (IL). Using a performance analytical approach, he set out to analyse what he called 'meaningful performance situations'. These he defined as "the situation where an 'adult'⁶ attempts to express meanings, which he may already have, in a language which he is in the process of learning" (1972: 210). Interlanguage, then, describes "a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a TL norm" (ibid: 214). With regard to how this IL develops, Kellerman suggests that the development of the IL should be studied "as a function of the learner's perception of the interrelatedness of L1 and L2" (Sharwood Smith 1983: 196).

IL has been found to move through specific stages during development, stages which tend to be similar regardless of the learner's L1, the context in which learning takes place and the individual characteristics of the learner, such as age. These findings indicate that - similar to the developmental stages of L1 acquisition - the SLA process follows certain 'universal' pathways, a fact which is attributed to "the faculty for language that all human beings possess and which was also responsible for L1 acquisition" (Ellis 1985: 42). An important aspect of such a mentalist view of learner language is that it involves what is called *hypothesis testing*. This concept from L1 acquisition describes the learner's (be it the child acquiring an L1 or somebody learning an L2) task as "that of connecting his innate knowledge of basic grammatical relations to the surface structure of sentences in the language he [is] learning" (ibid.: 44). In SLA, this practice of hypothesis testing was

⁶ Selinker defines 'adult' as being over the age of 12, following Lenneberg's claim (1967) that, with the onset of puberty, the brain has matured past a 'critical period' which made it "difficult to master the pronunciation of a second language" and caused language development to "freeze" (Selinker 1972: 210, footnote 4). This is referred to as the Critical Period Hypothesis.

thought to “explain how the L2 learner progressed along the interlanguage continuum” and included a variety of strategies: Corder (1967), for example, proposed that “learners make errors in order to test out certain hypotheses about the nature of the language they are learning” and considered this to be a conscious strategy and “evidence of learner-internal processing” (Ellis 1985: 47).

These new performance analysis findings caused a move towards constructivist models of SLA. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, for example, referred to the SLA process as “creative construction: the subconscious process by which language learners gradually organize the language they hear, according to the rules they construct to understand and generate sentences” (1982: 276; quoted in Larsen-Freeman 1991: 317). Investigations of longitudinally collected speech data showed that all language learners passed through so-called developmental sequences which looked like neither the learners’ L1 nor the L2 they were in the process of acquiring. This reinforced the observation that, rather than simply reshaping their L1 to approximate the L2, learners “were creatively constructing the L2 through a process of gradual complexification” (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 317), which in turn led researchers to investigate the IL of learners as a meaningful step in the acquisition process rather than seeing it as “an incomplete version of the TL” (Bley-Vroman 1983).

Generally speaking, then, theories of SLA⁷ can be slotted into three broad classifications: Some follow *behaviourist* or environmentalist tenets, which explain learning as “imitation, practice, reinforcement [...], and habit formation” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 34); others are *nativist* in nature, postulating that “learning depends upon a significant, specialized innate capacity for language acquisition” (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 323); and the third group take an *interactionist* or developmental perspective where “both internal and external processes are responsible” for language learning (ibid.).

In the *behaviourist* view, “[t]he linguistic environment is seen as the crucial determining factor”, whereas the learner is considered to be merely ‘a language-producing machine’ (Ellis 1985: 128) who is dependent on the linguistic environment as a source of stimuli and feedback (ibid.: 129). SLA is perceived as a process of habit formation through provision of stimuli, followed by imitation and reinforced by repetition and practice.

1.1.2 Transfer - interference - influence: L1’s long shadow

According to behaviourists, errors occur when “old habits get in the way of new habits” (Ellis 1985: 21). In this paradigm, incorrect L2 production is thought to be the result of

⁷ According to Larsen-Freeman (1991: 323), “the early days of SLA research were appropriately consumed by descriptions of what learners do [...]”, and calls for “theory construction and explanations of the acquisition progress” only began to be made in the mid-1980s.

interference of L1 habits with newly discovered L2 habits, therefore the influence of the L1 is mainly seen as negative “evidence of non-learning” (ibid.: 22). In an effort to find a way to predict when errors would occur, *Contrastive Analysis* was developed by structural linguists who thought that comparing language pairs would help teachers identify those areas where L1 and L2 differ to such a degree that L2 production could be hampered. Transfer theory stipulated that “the greater the difference, the greater the difficulty and the more numerous errors will be” (Ellis 1985: 34). However, empirical research soon proved that this was not always the case, that L1 transfer was heavily dependent on context and on complex linguistic and psychological factors. Ellis lists three sets of factors which are likely to be involved in SLA:

universal factors, i.e. factors relating to the universal way in which natural languages are organized [...];
specific factors about the learner’s L1;
specific factors about the L2. (Ellis 1985: 36)

In addition, identifying differences could predict some, but not all mistakes, and even if there were linguistic *differences*, they did not automatically equate with learning *difficulties* (ibid.: 26). Thus, empirical research, testing the hypotheses of behaviourist theories, generated growing scepticism toward their applicability in SLA, which echoed Chomsky’s harsh criticism of behaviourism and prompted researchers to refocus their attention along more mentalist avenues.

Nativist views of SLA put the learner at the centre of the learning process, insofar as SLA is thought to be guided by “internal mechanisms” which are activated by input (Ellis 1985: 128). Most nativist models owe some debt to Chomsky’s concept of Universal Grammar in that they presuppose certain innate linguistic principles or, more generally, innate cognitive strategies applicable to all kinds of learning, including SLA. In fact, “the failure [of Contrastive Analysis] to explain learner ‘errors’ in terms of language transfer is treated as supportive evidence for the continued operation of [a specific language-learning] faculty” (Ellis 1981: 70).

In a cognitive approach to SLA, the role of the L1 in SLA is recast as not simply negative interference, but as a learner strategy in that the “learner’s L1 may facilitate the developmental process of learning a L2, by helping him to progress more rapidly along the ‘universal’ route when the L1 is similar to the L2” (Ellis 1985: 37). Especially at the beginning of the L2 learning process, learners have limited access to L2 resources and tend to ‘borrow’ from their L1 to facilitate successful communication (for example by using cognates). Thus, what was negative ‘interference’ becomes positive ‘intercession’ and the learner becomes “an active contributor to SLA” (ibid.: 38).

In a parallel to this re-evaluation of the notion of linguistic transfer in a more positive light, the term transfer itself, strongly connected with behaviourist theory, came under fire.

Sharwood Smith (1983: 193) proposes instead the term 'cross-linguistic influence' (CLI) which "allows for the influence of second or other languages as well as for the influence of non-native languages on the learner's own L1", thus removing the negative connotations of the older term and expanding the boundaries of the concept to open it up to possible impact of additional languages the L2 learner may know and potential influence of the L2 on the learner's L1.

That still does not answer what many consider the central question in SLA theory in the mentalist paradigm: If we follow Chomsky and agree that children are able to acquire their L1 because of an innate 'language acquisition device', but that this LAD only works for a limited number of years before the child 'grows out' of her/his Critical Period for language learning, how is it possible for adults to successfully acquire an L2 in the first place? Selinker solves this issue by suggesting that those adults who successfully reach L2 native-like proficiency "continue to make use of [or, in fact, reactivate] the acquisition device", which Selinker calls *latent language structure*, following Lenneberg (Ellis 1985: 49). The reason why not all adults take recourse to this structure is that some of them no longer have access to it; instead, they employ a more general cognitive mechanism, or *latent psychological structure*, which is deemed responsible for learning more generally, not specifically for language acquisition, and is therefore less effective. The ensuing learning process was termed 'creative construction' (ibid.), which forms the centrepiece of more constructivist theoretical approaches to SLA.

The third major paradigm in SLA theory aims to integrate internal and external factors by viewing the SLA process as "the result of an interaction between the learner's mental abilities and the linguistic environment" (Ellis 1985: 129). In this *interactionist* view, language is successfully acquired when learners and interlocutors collaborate to shape communication in a process which "involves a dynamic interplay between external and internal factors" (ibid.).

This view mainly draws on Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky's view that social interaction is key to successful language acquisition, which forms the basis of what Mitchell and Myles (2004: 193) and others call *socio-cultural* theories of SLA. The central idea here is that learning is a mediated process, "mediated partly through learners' developing use and control of mental tools" (of which language is one, perhaps the most important), and also socially mediated, "dependent on face-to-face interaction and shared processes" (ibid.: 195).

1.1.3 Input - intake - output

It is a truth universally acknowledged that input is an indispensable variable in language acquisition. Questions regarding what kind of input and how much input is necessary for

successful acquisition, and who is to provide this input, are a different matter. Let us first look at different definitions of what constitutes input before we discuss different hypotheses about the significance of input in SLA.

Ellis defines input as “the language that is addressed to the L2 learner either by a native speaker or by another L2 learner” (1985: 127). This definition is both more expansive and more restrictive than others; more expansive because it includes utterances by non-native speakers and other learners, and more restrictive since only utterances directed at the learner are considered, while other sources of L2 language material such as print, audio and visual media are not accounted for in Ellis’ definition.

Mitchell and Myles (2004: 164-5) affirm that “[i]t has always been obvious that comprehensible and appropriately contextualized second language data is necessary for learning to take place.” For *behaviourist* models of SLA, for example, input played a significant role in the learning process. It was thought that, if the right amount of carefully selected input was provided and the learner was encouraged to practise until “each feature was ‘overlearned’ (i.e. became automatic)” (Ellis 1985: 12), the learning process could be controlled externally. External ‘seeding’ through input, rote repetition and reinforcement were considered far more important than any active cognitive engagement by the learner.

This view of input was challenged when *nativists* like Chomsky pointed out that learners often produce language they could not have observed in the input they received from the environment. They theorized that this mismatch between input and output could only be explained by the existence of what Chomsky called the learner’s ‘language acquisition device’ (LAD), a “set of mental processes inside the learner’s mind which were responsible for working on the input and converting it into a form that the learner could store and handle in production” (Ellis 1985: 12). In his mentalist model, language learning is an entirely internalised process where input serves “merely as a trigger to activate the device” (*ibid.*).

Perhaps the most widely known, hotly debated and, at times, strongly contested perspective on input in SLA comes from Stephen Krashen and is part of his five hypotheses about SLA, or Monitor Model. Central to Krashen’s overall model is the idea that there is a crucial difference between *learning* a language, which occurs “through conscious attention to form and rule learning”, and *acquiring* a language, which happens “as we are exposed to samples of the second language we understand in much the same way that children pick up their first language - with no conscious attention to language form” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 36). Acquired linguistic knowledge, therefore, is the “result of participating in natural communication where the focus is on the meaning” (Ellis 1985: 261), and as such, is the key factor in language comprehension. For SLA to take place, Krashen proposes that language exposure alone is not enough, but that “the learner needs input that contains exemplars of the language forms which according to the natural order

are due to be acquired next” (Ellis 1985: 157), in other words, ‘comprehensible input’. Krashen (1982: 20-21) describes comprehensible input (i.e. input which enables language learning) as containing $i + 1$, where i is the current level of competence. To progress to the next stage in the ‘natural order’ of language acquisition, the learner needs to “understand language that contains structure that is ‘a little beyond’ [what is] not yet acquired” (ibid.: 21)⁸. Therefore, for input to be comprehensible, it must be very carefully selected, modified and precisely contextualized.

In a further step, comprehensible input has to become ‘intake’ in order to really facilitate SLA. ‘Intake’ denotes “input that has been understood” (Krashen 1981: 102), or, to expand further, intake is “that portion of the L2 which is assimilated and fed into the interlanguage system” (Ellis 1985: 159), “information that can subsequently be used for acquisition” (Truscott / Sharwood Smith 2011: 498). How this selection process works is still not completely understood. Krashen proposes that ‘filters’ such as socio-affective factors (e.g. learner motivation) and affective factors (e.g. anxiety) control “how much input is let in and how much is excluded” (ibid.). In this case, it is the learners themselves who seem to control - consciously or subconsciously - the type and amount of language material that is integrated. Some aspects of Krashen’s input hypothesis have drawn considerable criticism, for example with regard to the difficulty in precisely defining the “learner’s present state of knowledge (‘i’) [...] or indeed whether the ‘ $i + 1$ ’ formula is intended to apply to all aspects of language, including vocabulary and phonology as well as syntax” (Mitchell / Myles 2004: 165).

Whatever the various definitions and views of input, most theorists agree that not all input is *good* input. How successfully learners integrate input into their L2 repository will likely depend on many factors: the learning setting (i.e. incidental or instructed), the type and level of language material provided (i.e. unmodified or adapted), learner-specific factors (i.e. age, motivation, etc.) and so on. If language learning is understood as a collaborative process (e.g. in the interactionist view), then communication between teacher and learner or among learners with limited proficiency is actively constructed by the participants and will involve modified language material and the use of conversational strategies such as “repetitions, confirmation checks, comprehension checks or clarification requests” (Mitchell / Myles 2004: 167). This kind of language modification has been termed ‘teacher

⁸ Long, for example, reports that, when L1 speakers and L2 learners of that language interact to solve oral tasks, the L1 speakers use “a modified but well-formed version of the target” language (Long 1983: 178) in order to solve communication problems. This is not necessarily intended as a conscious teaching opportunity, but when they “struggle to maximise comprehension”, the inadvertently end up “fine-tuning the second language input so as to make it more relevant to the current state of learner development”, thus ensuring that “the learner is receiving $i + 1$, in Krashen’s terms” (Mitchell / Myles 2004: 167).

talk' in formal educational settings⁹ and 'baby talk' ('motherese') or 'foreigner talk' in natural learning settings of L1 acquisition and migration situations respectively.

In the socio-cultural view of SLA, following Vygotsky, for example, input is the raw material that feeds interpersonal communication and thus enables learning. Learning is thought to take place most productively in the Zone of Proximal Development which denotes "the domain of knowledge or skill where the learner is not yet capable of independent functioning" (ibid.). In order to achieve successful learning and become independently skilled, the learner engages in "supportive dialogue which directs the attention of the learner to key features of the environment" (ibid.), also known as *scaffolding*¹⁰. The role scaffolding plays specifically in CLIL contexts will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, but essentially it means providing appropriately modified linguistic input and flexible language patterns and creating opportunities for collaborative dialogue to enable the L2 learner to understand, reformulate and produce L2 utterances.

What happens then, once comprehensible input becomes language intake, that is, is understood, assimilated and integrated in the learner's interlanguage? Language acquisition can really only be considered successful if the language material is then available for production. Swain (1995, 2005) was among the first to propose that input that is understood by the learner (as claimed by Krashen) was not, in fact, sufficient for second language acquisition (Swain 2000b: 98). Based on her experience with Canadian immersion, she argued that "if learners do not have regular opportunities to speak or write the language (that is, to produce *output*), their production skills (speaking and writing) would lag considerably behind their comprehension skills (listening and reading)" (Mackey / Abbuhl / Gass 2014: 8, their emphasis). Her Output Hypothesis emphasises the critical role producing output plays in the development of the L2, since it affords the learner space for language practice and helps automatize production. When producing output, learners can test their own hypotheses regarding the L2, it forces them to focus on formal language structures and they explore the gaps in their interlanguage (ibid.). In that respect,

output pushes learners to process language more deeply - with more mental effort - than does input [and] may stimulate learners to move from the semantic, open-ended strategic processing prevalent in comprehension to the complete grammatical processing needed for production
(Swain 2000b: 99)

Producing output usually relies on interaction with a communication partner and generally involves a certain degree of negotiation of both meaning and form, by way of requests for

⁹ With regard to formalised instruction, Long (1985), for example, found that "lectettes' pre-scripted and delivered in a modified, Foreigner Talk Discourse style were more comprehensible to adult second language learners than were versions of the same talks delivered in an unmodified style, thus supporting the argument that linguistic modifications could promote comprehension of input" (Mitchell / Myles 2004: 167).

¹⁰ The concept of scaffolding derives from cognitive psychology and L1 research and states that "in social interaction a knowledgeable participant can create, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which the novice can participate in, and extend, current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence" (Donato 1994: 40).

clarification or corrective feedback as “learners seek solutions to their linguistic difficulties when the social activity they are engaged in offers them an incentive to do so” (ibid.). Where Krashen’s Monitor model sees SLA as an entirely internal and individualistic process, this interactionist approach externalises parts of the process and understands SLA as a collaborative, social practice.

1.1.4 The role of the learner in SLA

One question which has long occupied SLA research is how to explain the fact that - barring inhibiting physiological or mental factors - all individuals fully succeed in acquiring their first language but inevitably meet with varying success when attempting to learn a second. Researchers agree that individual differences are likely to account for different achievement levels in SLA, among them age, aptitude, social-psychological factors such as attitude and motivation, personality, cognitive style, and learning strategies (Larsen-Freeman 1991).

Age is seen as a factor, although hypotheses differ about whether its effects are positive or negative. On the one hand, research indicates that it is almost impossible to attain native-like pronunciation in the L2 if L2 learning starts post-puberty (ibid. 329). Older learners, on the other hand, have been found to learn more efficiently, using metalinguistic knowledge, sophisticated memory strategies and problem-solving skills to make the most of language instruction (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 69).

Language learning aptitude is the term used to describe “special abilities thought to predict success in language learning” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 57). Researchers have developed aptitude tests devised to measure an individual’s ability to carry out tasks identified as significant in SLA, such as a) identifying and memorizing new sounds, b) understanding the function of particular words in sentences, c) figuring out grammatical rules from language samples, and d) remembering new words (ibid.: 58). While these tests cannot guarantee success in the L2 learning process, they have been found to be good indicators for what Cummins (1980) termed cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP), a learned capacity to deal with decontextualized language. Such aptitude tests may be a less reliable measure for basic interpersonal communication skills, or BICS, which are thought to be an innate capacity. (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 329-30)

The social-psychological factors attitude and motivation “have long been thought to have an important bearing on language learning success” (ibid.: 330). Learners’ attitude towards the second language, its speakers and its culture is thought to have, if not direct, then indirect implications for success in SLA, although it is difficult to know “whether positive attitudes produce successful learning or successful learning engenders positive

attitudes” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 63). Like attitude, motivation is a complex phenomenon. A distinction is made between *instrumental motivation*, used to describe “language learning for more immediate or practical goals”, and *integrative motivation* to denote “language learning for personal growth and cultural enrichment” (ibid.: 64). Garcia and Baker (1995: xv) define the former as “wanting to learn a language for utilitarian reasons (e.g. to get a better job)”, and the latter as “wanting to learn a language to belong to a social group (e.g. make friends)”. Both terms were coined by Gardner and Lambert in 1972. Both types of motivation have been shown to be related to successful SLA, but depending on the learning environment, it is not always easy to clearly denote which type of motivation is most beneficial. However, some findings indicate that “the intensity of the motivation is more important than the type” (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 330). More recently, Dörnyei (2001) developed a process-oriented model of motivation, wherein the learner’s motivation is said to undergo three phases: ‘choice motivation’ (getting started and setting goals), ‘executive motivation’ (carrying out tasks necessary to maintain motivation), and ‘motivation retrospective’ (appraising and reacting to performance) (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 64). Teachers can help students generate and maintain motivation by using appropriate teaching methods.

Similarly difficult to identify and measure are personality traits or characteristics which likely have an effect on SLA. Among the traits investigated are self-esteem, extroversion, reaction to anxiety, risk-taking, sensitivity to rejection, empathy, inhibition, and tolerance of ambiguity (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 331). Generally, these traits have been found to be most beneficial (or least disruptive) when exhibited to a moderate, rather than extreme degree either way; e.g. anxiety at a moderate level has been denoted as ‘tension’ and found to “have a positive effect and even facilitate learning” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 61).

The term cognitive style is used to describe the “preferred way in which individuals process information or approach a task” (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 331, following Willing 1988). Field independent learners “tend to separate details from the general background”, whereas field dependent learners “tend to see things more holistically” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 59). Which of these styles lead to greater success in SLA may depend on whether learning takes place in a classroom environment or in untutored natural learning settings (Larsen-Freeman 1991: 332).

Closely related to cognitive style is learning style, which Reid (1995) describes as “an individual’s natural, habitual, and preferred way of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills” (cited in Lightbown / Spada 2006: 59). The term is generally used to describe perceptually-based learning styles such as ‘visual’, ‘aural’ and ‘kinaesthetic’, which denotes how a learner uses eyes, ears and physical actions to access

learning. Ideally, teachers should provide input in a variety of modes and “encourage learners to use all means available to them” (ibid.).

How, then, do these various factors interact to either facilitate or hinder the acquisition of a second or foreign language? One of the earliest models which put such learner factors at the centre of the SLA process was developed by Schumann in the late 1970s. In his *Acculturation Model*, the term ‘acculturation’ is defined as the “social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language (TL) group” (Schumann 1986: 379). It was initially “designed to account for SLA under conditions of immigration where learning takes place without instruction” (ibid.: 385). However, as Schumann himself admits, “the Acculturation Model [...] may also be applicable to other groups” (ibid.: 389), as many of the factors included in the model can be used to discuss SLA in educational settings where organised instruction takes place. In this model, language acquisition is thought to depend on the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target language group, which, in turn, is based on broad concepts of social and psychological distance (Baetens Beardsmore 1993).

Schumann’s model is interesting in that it puts the spotlight on social and psychological factors influencing second language learning and views SLA as just one aspect or outcome of a wider process of acculturation. However, despite the acculturation model’s usefulness in explaining ‘natural’ SLA in migration contexts, it is often considered of limited use in more formal educational settings. Still, if we take a closer look at some of the factors it is built around, it becomes clear that the model may also help us understand SLA in a context such as the one under investigation here: With regard to the social factor attitude, Schumann (1986: 382) hypothesizes that a positive attitude towards the TL culture facilitates TL acquisition. In this case, problematic views of German/y in UK a) may explain the fact that German numbers are weakening (along with a view of German as a ‘difficult’ language), and b) could influence the acquisition process as negative images of German/y in the mass media may cause reluctance to fully engage with both target language and culture.

Schumann also theorizes that the longer a learner intends to stay in the target language area, the more likely s/he is to “develop more extensive contacts with the TL group” (ibid.), which would in turn facilitate L2 acquisition. Therefore, it makes a difference whether you want to acquire a few useful phrases for a two-week holiday in Southern France or whether you are permanently moving to a different language area for professional, personal or other reasons. AU students know from enrolment that they will spend at least 6 months in the German-speaking world; they will have to navigate ‘Alltag’ in Germany, Austria or Switzerland which will require more of them than simple ‘tourist’ language. For Schumann, SLA “is one aspect of acculturation and thus the degree to which the learner acculturates to the TL group will control the degree to which the learner acquires the L2” (Larsen-

Freeman 1991: 333). It is likely that the reverse is also true: the more proficient AU students are in the L2 when they venture into their Year Abroad, the easier it will be for them to adapt, to 'acculturate' to the new environment. In this light, Schumann's factor of 'intended length of residence in TL area' could be seen as closely linked to motivation for language learning.

1.2 Similarities and differences between L1 and L2 acquisition

As we have seen, SLA theories vary in their estimation of the similarity between L1 acquisition and second language learning. In the mentalist paradigm, a number of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies were devised to investigate interlanguage development, specifically the question whether the acquisition process of the L2 was different to the 'natural' way children acquire their L1. Ellis (1985: 55-64) provides an overview of the findings of these studies, which can be summarized as follows:

- Cross-sectional research provides evidence that certain grammatical functors are generally acquired in the same order, regardless of the individual differences among the sample groups. These findings allowed researchers to detail groups of morphemes which are acquired concurrently and place them in a hierarchy.
- Adults and children follow a similar L2 acquisition path.
- The L2 acquisition order is different from the L1 acquisition order.
- Longitudinal studies have shown that all L2 learners pass through certain developmental stages toward full knowledge of L2 rules regarding certain grammatical features (e.g. negation, questions, relative clauses). Learners generally go through the same developmental stages, although learners of different L1s may at times exhibit individual deviations from the path.
- Overall, the findings point towards the existence of a 'natural route of development', tempered by differences attributed to L1 influence and individual learner factors.

To summarize, while the L2 seems to be acquired along a universal sequence of developmental stages which is shared by most learners, regardless of their individual background, this acquisition order is different from the L1 sequence of acquisition. Beyond this basic claim, it has been very challenging to conclusively prove that L1 and L2 are learned in a similar fashion, mainly because of the complex network of factors that potentially influence the SLA process. This multitude of factors – among others, age, personality, L1 and other previously acquired languages, learning context, motivation, and availability and quality of input – has meant that any investigation can only ever shed light

on a small piece of the puzzle, and that SLA theory is still unable to provide a comprehensive model which can successfully incorporate them all.

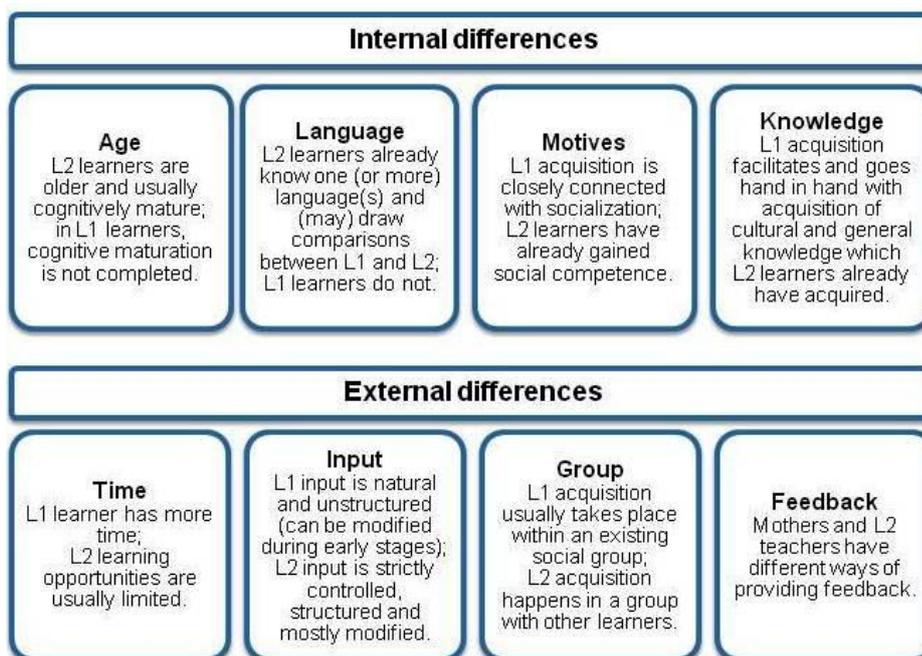


Figure 1: L1 and L2 acquisition compared (adapted from Edmondson / House 2006: 146, following Ellis 1990: 42)

However, there are some general statements we can make about fundamental differences between L1 and L2 acquisition (see Figure 1). These statements concern both internal and external factors; it must be noted, however, that internal factors can be applied to ‘natural’ and ‘instructed’ L2 learning, whereas the external ones are more specifically applicable to ‘instructed’ L2 acquisition (Edmondson / House 2006: 146).

1.3 Approaches to second language teaching: To use or not to use L1

The various theories about how we learn first and second languages have necessarily influenced theories and methodologies governing the teaching of second and foreign languages¹¹. As we will see, these methodological approaches can be placed in a continuum, with behaviourist SLA principles on the one end and cognitive tenets on the other. One central feature which helps differentiate the various approaches is the role of the SL learners’ L1 in the L2 learning process, and since this questions stands at the very heart of the present research project, the following overview of pedagogical approaches to SL teaching will be built around the leitmotif of L1 use in L2 classrooms.

As we saw earlier, second language acquisition theorists have, to varying degrees, understood the learners’ L1 to be either beneficial or a hindrance to the SLA process. The

¹¹ For a detailed overview of early and modern approaches to MFL teaching with a specific focus on German as a Foreign Language, see e.g. Jaworska 2009.

same is true for the various theories about and approaches to SL teaching which, for a long time, tended to move from one extreme to the other. The grammar translation method, a product of the Enlightened principles of reason and logic, was based on the idea that “the basic rules of one language were the same as those of all languages”. These rules were thought to be “embedded in its grammar”, and translation allowed for the universal rules to be manipulated: “Surface appearances might be different, underlying principles were essentially the same.”¹² (Rowlinson 1994: 9) The learners’ L1 was a natural springboard for the exploration of how these rules manifested in other languages. Predominant throughout the 19th century, his rather academic and intellectual approach to language learning proved inadequate once language learning was re-discovered as a practical tool of communication rather than one of “mental discipline” (ibid.: 10). The advent of the science of phonetics – marking the first time linguistics had direct influence on foreign language didactics, a relationship which continues to this day (Dahl 1997: 474-5) – and a movement towards more pragmatic, communicative approaches inspired by developments in continental Europe¹³ led to the development of a new pedagogy called the Direct Method. One of the preeminent proponents of this pedagogical approach was Otto Jespersen who advocated “natural, useful language material, careful listening, direct association of word with object or idea, grammar derived from language known, and the foreign language as the principal if not only means of communication in the classroom” (Rowlinson 1997: 11). Similar to the Direct Method was the Natural Method, which put an even greater emphasis on the similarities between how children learn their first language and how second languages should be taught. Neither of these ‘reform methods’ gained much ground in Britain¹⁴, where teachers – bound to working towards traditional modes of examination – generally adopted some of the methods proposed by the reformers, but largely maintained traditional classrooms based on translation and explicit grammar instruction.

¹² A view reminiscent of the mentalist understanding of language acquisition espoused, for example, by Chomsky.

¹³ Chief among them Wilhelm Viëtor’s pamphlet ‘Der Sprachunterricht muß umkehren’ [‘Language teaching must change course’, my translation], published in 1882, in which the author “nahm die Dominanz der Grammatik, die Verwechslung der gesprochenen Sprache mit der geschriebenen Sprache, den deduktiven, also von der Regel ausgehenden Grammatikunterricht, das Festhalten an den Kategorien der lateinischen Grammatik und die in der »Grammatik-Übersetzungsmethode« enthaltene präskriptive, also vorschreibende Sprachwissenschaft aufs Korn. Bei Viëtor wurde das Sprachkönnen, und nicht das Sprachwissen zum obersten Ziel des Fremdsprachenunterrichts erklärt.” (Dahl 1997: 474) [“zeroed in on the dominance of grammar, the confusion of spoken with written language, deductive, that is, rule-based grammar teaching, the insistence on the categories of Latin grammar, and the prescriptive linguistics of the grammar-translation method. Viëtor declared language proficiency rather than language knowledge to be the ultimate aim of foreign language teaching.” my translation].

¹⁴ Unlike Germany, where reform pedagogies such as the Direct Method successfully propagated pragmatic, phonetic and skills-oriented language instruction. Their declared aim was to impart knowledge and skills useful to the learners’ later professional life. This utilitarian approach to FLA will be eerily familiar to anyone following the current debate about employability and ‘preparing students for the job market’.

The most significant impact of these new methods was their movement towards language as communication, which was taken up by Harold Palmer. He introduced the thoroughly modern idea that language courses should be fitted to “the aims of the actual students rather than some abstract goal” (ibid.: 12), which, by its very nature, precluded the existence of ‘one right way’ of teaching language. For him, exposure to the language to be learnt was key, going so far as to immerse his students in the foreign language for three months before allowing them to actively use it. Palmer was a pioneer in many ways: he was the first to devise large-scale pattern drills, he first pointed out the difference between intensive and extensive reading and their roles in the language classroom, and in his ‘magpie’ approach to picking and choosing from different methods, he predated the modern postmethod philosophy advocated by, among others, Kumaravadivelu (1994).

It wasn’t until after World War II that technological developments allowed for the wholesale implementation of a new approach built on behaviourist principles. Behaviourism, we recall, understood language learning as habit formation, and success was determined by the richness of the linguistic environment. The learners’ L1 had no place in such a scenario. Through repetition of ‘real’ L2 examples with the help of tape recordings, spoken language was practiced until it became automatic, open slots in the utterance allowing for substitution of words to provide variation. This ‘audio-lingual’ method was later expanded to include still pictures on film strips, thus becoming ‘audio-visual’. Its focus was always spoken language, overlearned through constant repetition, at (near-)normal speed and with exact pronunciation. After an initial grace period, mostly due to infatuation with the new technology, the limitations of this approach soon became clear: rote-learned phrases allowed little to no transfer or recombination to generate new utterances, the learners were unable to adapt what they had learned by rote to new contexts.

In the end, behaviourism and the teaching methods it inspired were unable to stand up to criticism from various sources. Initially, it was Noam Chomsky’s mentalist concept of Universal Grammar which “stressed language as rule-governed behaviour and suggested that the mechanism for formulation of these rules to generate ‘new’ language was a good deal more subtle than mere habit-formation” (Rowlinson 1994: 14-15).¹⁵ To properly learn these rules, learners had to be exposed to vast amounts of L2 material and given the opportunity to apply their linguistic knowledge in practice to foster fluency. All this generally took place in newly-developed language laboratories which were initially touted as ideal instruments for individualised learning, but “proved inefficient, dehumanising, and [...] led to concentration on one small formal aspect of language”. The language labs were

¹⁵ Chomsky never intended for his theories about first language acquisition to be applied to L2 teaching, but his - and other mentalists’ - view of language acquisition as a universal *process* implied that there were stages, or sequences of language development, an idea that underpins most subsequent teaching approaches, particularly with regard to grammar progression.

eventually deemed cost-ineffective, when comparing the vast investment to the eventual learning outcome.

Moreover, many grew tired of this 'mechanisation' of language learning, in both the literal and the figurative sense of the word. The advent of pragmalinguistics in the 1970s paved the way for language pedagogy to refocus its attention to the individual learner, their communicative intentions and needs (Dahl 1997: 479). Especially Austin and Searle's speech act theory, concerned as it is with how a speaker achieves specific communicative goals by using language to perform certain acts, proved rich ground for what was to be known as communicative language teaching.

Despite growing criticism of the formulaic nature of communicative language teaching, resulting from the implicit normative structure within linguistic practice laid bare by speech act theory (Green 2009), the communicative or pragmatic turn in language teaching that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s has dominated the foreign language classroom ever since. One of the 'prime directives' of this didactic approach was that all teaching should be carried out exclusively in the target language, as L1 was seen as simply a source of errors through transfer. The mother tongue was strictly excluded from the language learning space, and the 'immersion classroom' became the norm. (See Lightbown / Spada 2006, Butzkamm 2002)

Long before the turn of the millennium, new findings in language acquisition theory and psycholinguistics shed a different light on what was formerly considered the 'harmful' influence of the mother language as simply a source of interference. A number of language educators and pedagogists raised the following concern: Is it wise to exclude a whole set of skills the language student has at her or his disposal just because it is coded in the L1? After all, as we learn our first language – at first, by observing and copying the language users around us, and later through structured mother tongue instruction in school – we also develop our individual learning strategies and become a specific type of language learner. For Butzkamm (2003: 31), L1 "opens the door, not only to its own grammar, but to all grammars", serving as "the master key to foreign languages".

Today, there seems to be "no doubt in the minds of most researchers and teachers that learners draw on their knowledge of other languages as they try to discover the complexities of the new language they are learning" (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 93-94). Thus, most learners find it almost impossible to exclude their mother tongue when they learn a new language. L1 plays a significant role as the language of thought and "becomes a key 'processing mechanism' for making sense of the foreign language" (Meiring / Norman 2002: 29) As a consequence, a number of established language pedagogists now espouse what is called 'enlightened monolingualism' in the language classroom, calling

for language teachers to draw on the conscious and sub-conscious systemic and lexical L1 knowledge of their foreign language learners (Butzkamm 1980, 2002).

1.4 Summary

As we have seen, the study of language acquisition over the past century has led to the development of various conflicting views with regard to the conditions in which it takes place and the role of both the individual learner and the environment in which learning takes place. The fundamental dichotomy whether language acquisition is a question of nature or nurture which initially led to the establishment of contending theories such as behaviourism and nativism has since been broken up by theories which make an attempt to combine the influence of the environment on language development with innate abilities which predispose humans to language learning. Among these are interactionist models which believe that certain cognitive and social abilities which are there from birth develop as the learner interacts with her or his environment.

Bilingual education – and CLIL in particular – draws on theoretical models which try to explain the complex process of language acquisition to provide a foundation for the didactical and methodological decisions that are made in the classroom. For example, very early on, Chomsky raised the issue of the role linguistic input plays in language development, which was picked up by subsequent SLA theorists, most famously Krashen who proposed that not just any input will benefit linguistic progression, but that it has to be comprehensible input which is just beyond a learner's present ability and has to be understood to become intake. Krashen, in turn, was criticized for not taking into account the important role that language production, or output, plays in the acquisition process.

Other SLA researchers, in turn, have focused less on the process of language learning but on the role the learner plays in it. Early pedagogical theories were mainly concerned with explaining how the teacher – as role model and provider of language input – shapes the process. After the rise of cognitivist and interactionist theories of language acquisition, however, the learner moved centre stage, and researchers investigated the impact of individual social-psychological factors such as motivation, attitude, cognitive style and personality, among others, on learner performance and achievement.

After this brief overview of general approaches to second language learning and teaching, we will now turn our attention to bilingual education by tracing its history, examining the various forms it has taken across time and space and the pedagogical, cultural and socio-political factors that influence their implementation. But first: What do we mean when we say someone is 'bilingual'? Is the concept of the 'mother tongue' still tenable in today's globalised, multicultural and multilingual society? And, even more crucially for the context

of the present study, is it still appropriate or desirable to measure SLA success by comparing the L2 learners' linguistic performance to that of L2 native speakers? These and other questions regarding key SLA terminology will be addressed in the following chapter before we turn our attention to the concept at the core of this project, bilingual education, and specifically its key European variant, Content and Language Integrated Learning.

Chapter 2: Bilingualism and bilingual education

“This ceremony is being broadcast in 57 languages - and that’s only in Los Angeles.”

(Billy Crystal, hosting the Academy Awards in 2004)

In many Western cultures, monolingualism is still very much the norm, despite the fact that, on a global scale, there are vastly more speakers of two or more languages than those who only speak one (e.g. Edwards 1994). All too often, bilingualism is seen either as exotic, marking the speaker as ‘other’, or it is – often negatively – associated with migration. Depending on the cultural context, speaking a second language can be a welcome advantage or a noticeable detriment.¹⁶

In the UK, like elsewhere, different languages attract varying status and prestige: The modern languages that have traditionally been part of the school curriculum (French, German, lately Spanish) are largely considered assets, whereas even in a multicultural nation like the United Kingdom, where, in the 2011 Census, more than 600 different languages were given in answer to the question “What is your main language?” (British Academy 2013: 1), this rich language landscape of heritage and community languages is unlikely to be considered an advantage when “bilingualism is perceived as a deficit if acquired in an immigrant/minority home, if it is a non-standard language, if it has limited or no ‘market’ value, if it will interfere with the learning of the majority language and by those who believe that it will lead to semi-lingualism” (ibid.: 3).

As part of the European Union’s commitment to multilingualism as a key element to promoting closer integration, new policies regarding language teaching and language learning have been drafted on both the national and international level to encourage the learning of European languages and to boost the value of community languages. The European Commission has prioritized innovative approaches to language teaching and language learning, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), since the 1990s. Following the European Union’s policy of MT+2, that is, mother tongue and two additional languages, for all European citizens, and in response to the European Commission’s language learning objectives, national policy makers in the UK have given increasing support to innovative educational initiatives to support multilingualism, among them a growing enthusiasm for bilingual and CLIL provision.

Before we turn to what we mean by bilingual education, and specifically, what Content and Language Integrated Learning, an inherently European form of bilingual instruction, entails, there are some terms and concepts that appear, on the surface, clear and straight-

¹⁶ Ginsburgh / Weber (2011) extensively discuss the benefits and costs of linguistic diversity from a predominantly economic perspective in a wide range of contexts, including the European Union. See also Mehisto / Marsh (2011).

forward, but which, on closer inspection, have undergone numerous mutations and recalibrations of meaning, some going out of fashion, others carrying problematic connotations which have led to their being replaced by more precise terminology.

Therefore: What do we mean when we say that someone is 'bilingual'? Is the concept of the 'mother tongue' still tenable in today's globalised, multicultural and multilingual society? And, crucially for the context of the present study, is it still appropriate or desirable to measure SLA success by comparing the L2 learners' linguistic performance to that of those in that L1 language community?

2.1 Terminology matters

First, a caveat: It would go beyond the scope of the present project to give a definitive, comprehensive and all-inclusive introduction to bilingualism and bilingual education; instead, the focus has been on providing a thorough overview to those concepts and terms which are essential to contextualising the case study at the core of this investigation. Broader issues, such as the political and socio-cultural dimensions of bilingualism in society, the myriad of regional, national and international contexts where language communities mingle, and the varied range of educational settings where two or more languages are spoken, taught and learned, have only been introduced where relevant to the topic.

2.1.1 Of native speakers and their mother tongue(s)

One problem arises with regard to a triad of seemingly innocuous terms which are often considered to be synonymous so that 'mother language/tongue', 'native language', and 'first language' or L1 are all taken to denote the first language learned in childhood. Lightbown and Spada, for example, use the three terms interchangeably to denote "the language first learned", although they concede that many children "learn more than one language from birth and may be said to have more than one 'first' language" (2006: 199).

What has long been par for the course in historically multilingual regions around the world, where whole communities function in more than one language, is becoming increasingly more common on the individual level, as globalisation, mass communication and social mobility create multicultural and multilingual family units in areas which had previously been predominantly monocultural and monolingual. In these settings, defining which of the languages spoken in these families and communities constitutes the first language can be difficult, given the complex relationship languages have with concepts such as culture, community and identity.

In addition, the 'mother tongue' or 'first language' as spoken by the 'native speaker' are often understood to imply that an individual's knowledge of that language is complete, which is, of course, an illusion. Much of this discourse is based on the "Chomskyan notion that the native speaker is the authority on the language and that he or she is the ideal informant" when in fact "Chomsky's native speaker of a homogeneous speech community is an idealized construction" (Canagarajah 1999: 78-9). Blommaert and Backus (2011: 23) call it "that mythical finished-state language spoken by the 'native speaker' of the language-learning literature".¹⁷ No-one will ever have access to all possible genres, varieties and semantic fields of their first language, but in comparison to languages learned later in addition to the L1, they will be able to function linguistically in the widest-possible range of different situations and settings and will be familiar with a wide range of linguistic and sociolinguistic norms.¹⁸

This is the ideal traditionally held up as the example for L2 learners of any language, so that, for example, the achievements of L2 learners of German will be judged against what is considered 'native' proficiency of L1 speakers of German. One question, of course, which immediately rises is which variety of German is taken to constitute the norm - the German of the Federal Republic, or that of an L1 speaker of the Austrian or Swiss standard variety. That is only one increasingly controversial aspect of how language proficiency is measured and tested. The Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR), to name just one of the numerous normative instruments used as a yardstick for learner achievement, "is applied as an 'objective' tool for measuring progress in language learning, the benchmarking and accreditation of language experts" (Blommaert / Backus 2011: 24). Such testing tools are coming under increasing criticism, as they tend to concentrate on certain genres, communicative situations and social interactions, "measure only part of language knowledge, a part that is privileged for socio-economic reasons, not for inherent linguistic ones" (ibid.) and are "predicated on linear and uniform 'levels' of knowledge and development" (ibid.: 4). Baker (2011: 22-24) is more kindly disposed to the CEFR. Rather than providing a purely norm-referenced basis for testing which allows for comparing one individual with others (and often compares bilinguals with monolinguals), he considers the CEFR to concern "language communication and use", making it a

¹⁷ For a passionate critique of the 'native speaker' and her/his role as ideal example and comparative yardstick for success, see Cook (1999), who defines native speaker as "a monolingual person who still speaks the language learnt in childhood" (ibid.: 187). He also distinguished between the L2 *user* "who uses the second language for real-life purposes" and the L2 *learner* who "is acquiring a second language rather than [sic] using it" (Cook 2001, quoted in Franceschini 2011).

¹⁸ This 'native speaker fallacy' can also be applied to the question whether L2 native speakers make for better L2 language teachers (see, for example, Arva / Medgyes 2000). In the English language context, this discussion is linked to, among others, political ideological debates (e.g. the US movement to make English the official language and its implication for the linguistic socialization of migrants) and standardization movements in the context of Centre and Periphery variants of English and English as a *lingua franca* (ELF). (Canagarajah 1999: 81-82; Seidlhofer 2005)

criterion-referenced test which “defines levels of proficiency that allow assessment of learners’ progress irrespective of age, language or region”, focusing on what the L2 learner can do rather than what is still missing.¹⁹

If the envisioned outcome of language acquisition is to reach the nearly unachievable goal of ‘native-like competence’, we set our L2 learners up for inevitable failure. After all, as Cook puts it, “L2 students cannot be turned into native speakers without altering the core meaning of *native speaker*” (Cook 1999: 187, his emphasis). In fact, if we hold with Piller (2001: 114), “native speaker status is about social identity and not about linguistic competence” and can only be conferred on the L2 learner by the respective community of L1 speakers. Therefore, it is “important to acknowledge that achieving native-like mastery of the L2 is neither a realistic nor necessarily a desired goal for L2 learners in many educational contexts” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 73). Consequently, we need to establish what it is we want students to accomplish, and to think about how to measure the linguistic-communicative competence they develop without using unrealistic benchmarks. This is a key question which must be considered when designing curricula, programme structures, module outlines and assessment criteria.

In the present study, we will predominantly use the term ‘first language’ or L1 to denote the language(s) learned from infancy and ‘second language’ or L2 to refer to any language learned in addition to the L1, unless specified differently. As we have seen, the concept of ‘native speaker’ is heavily contested, and in order to reflect this change in perception, we will avoid the term ‘native’ as a qualifier and use ‘L1 speaker of [language x]’ whenever possible.²⁰

2.1.2 Is every speaker of two languages bilingual?

In its most basic sense, the word bilingualism simply refers to a context where two languages are used. However, in order to take into account the wide range of possible meanings of the term *bilingualism*, qualifiers are added to denote specific connotations of the term. The first distinction to be drawn is that between the bilingual nature of an individual or that of a group, or *individual bilingualism* and *societal bilingualism*. Of course, one rarely exists without the other, and the links between the two concern, for example, attitudes towards certain languages which can, when individual and societal purposes

¹⁹ In a similar vein, Cook calls for the inclusion of L2 user models in teaching materials as a way to “show the students that successful L2 users exist in their own right and are not just pale shadows of native speakers” (1999: 200) in order to alleviate the pressure of always having to measure up to the native speaker ideal.

²⁰ When we refer to speakers who grew up with two or more languages which they consider to be their L1s, we will term them ‘bilingual’, as described in Chapter 2.1.2.

interact, influence wide-ranging issues such as language preference, language maintenance, or language shift and even language death. (Baker 2011: 2)

Lightbown and Spada talk about *simultaneous bilingualism* and *sequential bilingualism* to differentiate between individuals “who learn more than one language from earliest childhood” and those “who learn another language later” (2006: 25). Subsequently, they discuss the difference between *subtractive bilingualism*, where, as they learn a second language, children “are cut off from their family language when they are very young”²¹, and *additive bilingualism*, where the home language (often a minority, heritage, or community language) is maintained while the new language is acquired (ibid.: 26; Garcia / Baker 1985: xii). The deciding factors here are social needs and societal context, closely related to the inherent value placed on certain languages. (Edwards 1994: 59) Closely connected to the latter two concepts are the terms *elective bilingualism*, describing a circumstance where an individual, usually from a majority language group, chooses to learn an additional language (cf. additive bilingualism)²², and *circumstantial bilingualism*, where an individual needs to “learn another language to function effectively because of their circumstances”. Immigrants, for example, “must become bilingual to operate in the majority language society that surrounds them” and they are often at risk of replacing their first language with the new majority language (cf. subtractive bilingualism). (Baker 2011: 4)

Mitchell and Myles (2004), in their book on second language learning theories, make it clear that when they speak about second language learning, they refer to “the learning of an additional language, at least some years after [the learners] have started to acquire their first language” (2004: 23), rather than what they call *infant bilingualism*, where a child “is exposed to more than one language from birth and acquires them more or less simultaneously in the first few years of life” (ibid.). In Lightbown / Spada’s terms, then, the focus of Mitchell and Myles’ book is *sequential* rather than *simultaneous second language learning*.

Those individuals who are, at least in lay terms, called bilingual are generally expected to perform at near-native level in both their languages. The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, for example, claims that “[s]omeone who is bilingual is able to speak two languages **fluently**” (Collins Cobuild 1987, my emphasis), whereas someone who is multilingual is “able to speak more than two languages **very well**” (ibid., my emphasis). This expectation has long been refuted by those who contend that “speakers are bilingual

²¹ This notion is similar to what Cummins termed Separate Underlying Proficiency Model of Bilingualism which “conceives of the two languages operating separately without transfer and with a restricted amount of ‘room’ for languages”, implying that increasing proficiency in one language comes at the expense of the other. (Baker 2011: 165-6)

²² Also referred to as ‘Enrichment Bilingual Education’. (Baker 2011: 207)

when they have also acquired or learned to speak or understand – as a minimum – some phrases that show internal structural relations in a second language” (Myers-Scotton 2006: 3). Lightbown and Spada (2006: 196) define bilingualism as “[t]he ability to use more than one language. The word itself does not specify the degree of proficiency in either language.” If a bilingual speaker exhibits “[a]pproximately equal competence in both languages”, we speak of *balanced bilingualism* or an *equilingual* (Garcia / Baker 1995: xii-xiii; Edwards 1994: 57-58). Baker (2011: 8-9) states that this balanced bilingualism is “sometimes used as an idealized concept”, but concedes that it is problematic for various reasons: Most, if not all, speakers of two languages use their L1 and L2 at different times in different contexts for different purposes with different people (Piller 2001: 112-113). In addition, the term itself makes no claim to a certain level of competence in either language. In fact, the individual may speak both languages equally badly, even though the “implicit idea of balanced bilingualism has often been of ‘appropriate’ competence in both languages” (Baker 2011: 9). But who says what is appropriate?

The issue, therefore, is fluency, the degree of proficiency which is implied in the term ‘bilingual’. Most people who speak two languages, even from infancy, “develop dominance” in one of their languages, depending on the social context in which they are/were raised. They generally “divide up their language use, with one language used more with certain persons (and therefore certain situations)” (Myers-Scotton 2006: 36). Often, these different usage patterns become more pronounced once the child reaches school age, given the requirements of formalised learning, including the development of academic literacy. For example, “[f]ormal text types are usually only available or more fully developed in the language in which schooling takes place” (Piller 2001: 113). A more useful term to describe “an individual’s use of their bilingual ability” is *functional bilingualism*, which concerns itself with “when, where, and with whom people use their two languages” (Baker 2011: 5), as it makes no judgement with regard to traditional levels of proficiency, but only implies that an individual is able to function effectively in discourse with different communication partners in different language contexts (or domains).

One inherent problem in this regard is that there are two possible contrasting perspectives from which to describe individual bilingualism. The first sees the bilingual as “two monolinguals in one person” and a bilingual’s competence in, for example, English, “is often measured against that of a native monolingual English speaker”, i.e., in standardized tests of language proficiency which “fail to measure the varied conversation patterns that [speakers] from different cultures use with considerable competence” (Baker 2011: 9-10). If we take a more holistic view of bilingualism, we should see L2 speakers not as “deficient communicators. Rather they are embryonic or developing bilinguals.” (ibid.: 11) With regard to whether second (or foreign) language learners can or should be considered bilinguals, García (2009: 60) contends that they are in fact ‘emergent bilinguals’:

“Conceptualizing emergent bilinguals as sliding across a bilingual continuum enables us to move away from artificial categorizations such as second-language learner vs. fluent speakers - which are difficult to determine.”

This ties in well with the notion of functional bilingualism which, as established earlier, refers only to how effectively an individual is able to communicate in certain contexts, rather than prescribing specific normative levels of proficiency to be attained. In the present study, therefore, the term bilingualism (and its derivatives) will be understood to mean functional bilingualism in the sense that the aim of the degree programmes under investigation is to enable students to communicate effectively in a wide range of settings and contexts rather than to reach a fictional ‘native-like’ proficiency. We are mainly concerned with elective, additive bilingualism, and the types of bilingual education discussed later have largely been chosen to reflect that focus.²³

2.1.3 Language acquisition vs language learning

If the aim of university MFL degree programmes is to train functional (if still developing) bilinguals, how do we describe the process the students go through to achieve that goal? The average lay person will likely describe the students’ task as learning a language or acquiring language skills. In fact, learning and acquisition are often used interchangeably to refer to “an individual’s developing knowledge of the target language” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 202). Many researchers, however, use the terms ‘learn’ and ‘acquire’ to contrast two different approaches to the development of language skills, using ‘learning’ to describe “the conscious study of a second language” and ‘acquisition’ to refer to “picking up a second language through exposure (Ellis 1985: 6). Stephen Krashen, for example, understands language acquisition to be a subconscious process: “[L]anguage acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication.” In contrast, Krashen takes language learning to refer “to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them”, so that learning becomes “‘knowing about’ a language, known to most people as ‘grammar’, or ‘rules’”, synonymous with explicit learning. (Krashen 1982: 10)

Another way of understanding learning and acquisition is to see learning as “the broad range of tactics, technologies and mechanisms by means of which specific language resources become part of someone’s repertoire”, with the implication that things can also be ‘unlearned’ or ‘forgotten’. In contrast, acquisition in this view implies “an enduring outcome (resources have been ‘acquired once and for all’)” (Blommaert / Backus 2011:

²³ Bilingualism is also taken to incorporate multilingualism, unless stated differently.

9). The term 'repertoire' is here understood in the broader, usage-based²⁴ sense as referring to an individual's

'means of speaking', i.e. all those means that people *know how to use and why* while they communicate, and such means [...] range from linguistic ones (language varieties) over cultural ones (genres, styles) and social ones (norms for the production and understanding of language). (ibid.: 3, their emphasis)

It is closely linked to the concept of 'linguistic competence', which, again from a usage-based perspective, means "someone's inventory of linguistic resources", which is "not [limited] to the traditional linguistic elements of sounds, words and patterns, but [includes] anything that people use to communicate meaning", so that "linguistic competence should be conceptualised as communicative competence" and "someone's linguistic-communicative competence is a direct reflection of that person's linguistic-communicative experience" (ibid.: 7-8). A related concept is that of 'multicompetence', denoting "the compound state of a mind with two grammars", first coined by Cook (1992, quoted in Franceschini 2011: 348). It was put forward as an addition / alternative to Selinker's idea of 'interlanguage', and refers to "the total language knowledge of a person who knows more than one language, including both L1 competence and the L2 interlanguage [...] without evaluation against an outside standard" (Cook 1999: 190). Cook's initial concept has since been expanded so that "[a] multicompetent person is [...] an individual with knowledge of an extended and integrated linguistic repertoire who is able to use the appropriate linguistic variety for the appropriate occasion" (Franceschini 2011: 351). In that sense, "[m]ulticompetence means having developed a cultural sensitivity toward various different language situations" (ibid.).²⁵

As we will see in Chapter 3, CLIL, by its very nature, can be understood to provide a space for the "subtle overlap between language learning (intentional) and language acquisition (incidental)" (Ellis 1985: 6) in Krashen's sense, since it combines natural language use arising from the need to function in the vehicular language in tasks related to the non-linguistic subject matter of the CLIL lesson with phases where explicit reference is made

²⁴ See Tomasello (2000, 2005, 2009). His *interactionist* theory is based on the understanding that, as children are exposed to a flood of linguistic input and environmental stimuli, they learn how to scan said input for meaningful linguistic units which reflect and/or complement the intentional behaviour of the adults on whom they later model their own communicative behaviour (which makes his theory *usage-based*). These units are stored in their memory, compared to other such language chunks, and used to construct abstract schemata which later allow the child to produce linguistic utterances. Tomasello posits two abilities which are required for the process to work: the ability to recognise intention and the ability to recognise patterns (Tomasello 2009: 69-70).

²⁵ Multicompetence theory also envisions a clear role for the L1 in L2 teaching to "develop links between the languages [...] rather than viewing the languages as residing in two separate compartments" (Cook 1999: 201; see Butzkamm / Caldwell 2009 for an extensive discussion of different strategies and scenarios where the L1 can be used productively in L2 teaching). Cook sees this as a way of viewing the student as "an intercultural speaker [...], not an imitation L1 user" (ibid.: 203).

to specific grammatical forms or formal language features in order to provide explanation or allow space for structured language practice.²⁶

Therefore, in the present study, we will hold with Ellis in that we “wish to keep an open mind about whether this is a real distinction or not” (ibid.) and use the two terms interchangeably, unless specified otherwise. In a similar vein, second language acquisition/learning (SLA) is used synonymously with foreign language acquisition/learning and SLA will be used “as a general term that embraces both untutored (or ‘naturalistic’) acquisition and tutored (or ‘classroom’) acquisition” (ibid.: 5).

2.2 The many faces of bilingual education

The term ‘bilingual education’ is a coat of many colours. It has undergone innumerable shifts and mutations through history, contingent on changing political, social, economic and cultural circumstances. At its most basic, bilingual education uses an additional language as a medium of instruction, in contrast to traditional foreign or second language programmes where the language itself is the subject of study. (García 2011: 6) The actual shape bilingual education takes usually hinges on what it wants to achieve. These aims can be varied and include wishing to enable individuals or groups to participate in mainstream society, to unify a multilingual society, to allow people to participate in the labour market, to preserve cultural, ethnic and/or religious identity, to support colonialism, to either strengthen the privileged status of elite groups in society or to provide equal opportunities for minority groups (Ferguson et al. 1977).²⁷ In that sense, the biggest difference between bilingual education programmes and traditional second or foreign language programmes is the formers’ broader general goals and wider socio-cultural perspective; the aim is never *just* to provide an effective environment for language acquisition, but “to educate generally, meaningfully, equitably, and for tolerance and appreciation of diversity” (García 2011: 6). In fact, the two approaches to language education have moved much closer together in recent years, in that SL and FL programmes “increasingly integrate language and content, therefore coming to resemble bilingual education”, whereas explicit language instruction is playing a much bigger role in bilingual education in the 21st century (ibid.).

²⁶ At the same time, the repertoire is expanded to include “genres, registers and styles that are specific to formal educational environments” (Blommaert / Backus 2011: 10) and specific discursive fields related to certain subject matters and disciplines (e.g. history, linguistics, etc.).

²⁷ See Baker (2011: 208-250) for a typology of bilingual education, comprising 10 broad types of programmes ranging from submersion to mainstream bilingual on a sliding scale where the types at one end of the scale aim at monolingualism (e.g. submersion, segregationist) and those at the other end aim at full bilingualism and biliteracy (e.g. immersion, dual language). García (2009: 123-136) describes the types of bilingual education based on language ideology (monoglossic vs heteroglossic) and linguistic goal (monolingualism vs bilingualism).

Another problematic aspect shared between traditional SL / FL education and bilingual programmes is the role(s) and function(s) of the two languages involved (or not). The former often claims to only use the target language in instruction, when, in reality, “bilingual ways of using languages [...] are very often present”, for example in teaching materials and the actual language use in the classroom, especially among the students. Some bilingual approaches also put much value in a strict separation of the two languages, seeing bilingual education “as being the simple sum of discrete monolingual language practices” where the expectation is that students develop “separate and full competencies in each language”. Such *monoglossic* ideologies, where the two languages are treated as “separate and whole”, underlie, for example, bilingual programmes such as the Dual Language Schools and Canadian immersion programmes which will be discussed below. In contrast, a *heteroglossic* view of bilingualism “considers multiple language practices in interrelationship, and leads to other constructions of bilingual education”, where both languages are actively and purposefully used in the classroom to help students “become global and responsible citizens as they learn to function across cultures and worlds”. (García 2011: 6-8)

Regardless of the form it takes, bilingual education is often considered to be a recent phenomenon, mainly linked to the 20th century where sociocultural, political and economic developments in many western nations led to an explosion of both practice and research in this field. In the European context, for example, nationalist movements for self-government and language rights led to the introduction of bilingual education programmes where minority languages such as Welsh, Irish or Catalan were used as mediums of instruction to further political and socio-cultural change. Many of these were influenced by different forms of bilingual education established in the second half of the 20th century in North America which will be discussed in the following subchapters before the focus returns to typically European forms of bilingual education, specifically Content and Language Integrated Learning in Chapter 3.

2.2.1 Dual Language Bilingual Education

In North America, two distinct forms of bilingual education were developed for very different reasons: In the US, with its long tradition as a destination for different waves of immigration from varied national and linguistic backgrounds, the need to integrate large numbers of linguistically diverse immigrants in the majority culture found expression in the establishment of different forms of bilingual education, often through *Dual Language* (or *Two Way*) programmes.

The long history of the US as a destination for immigration since its inception, but especially in the 18th and 19th century, meant that, until the early 20th century, linguistic

diversity was largely accepted and even encouraged, and concepts such as 'bilingualism' and 'language minorities' were at the periphery of the national discourse about language. Various forms of bilingual education in public and private schools were common, for example in German communities in many Midwestern states such as Pennsylvania and Minnesota, and similar setups existed for many other immigrant communities. However, this rather laissez-faire attitude towards bilingual education changed in the early 20th century, when a dramatic increase in the number of immigrants precipitated growing unease about this influx of foreigners and led to calls for "the integration, harmonization and assimilation of immigrants", which, early on, was expressed in the Nationality Act of 1906 which made the ability to speak English a prerequisite for naturalization as a US citizen. Consequently, many states legislated for English to be the exclusive language of instruction in public and private schools, and following US involvement in World War I, anti-German sentiment in the US gave rise to the notion that schools should become "the tool for the socialization, assimilation and integration of diverse languages and cultures" (Baker 2011: 186) A number of studies carried out in the US in the early 20th century claimed that bilingualism had detrimental effects on intelligence, and immigrants were considered to be "handicapped by their languages" (Edwards 1994: 68). This declining interest in foreign language learning in general prevailed until the middle of the 20th century when several developments, such as the space race and the Civil Rights movement, helped changed national attitudes towards political isolationism and the US' role on the international economic and political stage on the one hand, and the need to establish equal opportunity in terms of political and social participation, as well as education, especially with regard to ethnic minorities, on the other. (García / Pujol-Ferran / Reddy 2012: 176) These developments had a significant impact on the interest in and availability of bilingual education.

A key variety of bilingual education in the US is the *Dual Language (DL)* or *Two Way* school, the first of which was established by the Cuban community in Florida in 1963. Its aim was to allow the children of Cuban exiles to participate in the majority culture while maintaining their L1 of Spanish, as they initially expected to only stay in the US for a limited time before returning to their country of origin.²⁸ (Baker 2011: 187) Unlike transitional bilingual education, Dual Language programmes do not separate students with different linguistic profiles. Instead, they establish an approximate balance between the number of language minority (e.g. Spanish) and language majority (English) students who work

²⁸ At the same time, a broad range of bilingual programmes and measures were established in a number of south-western states as a remedy for "the dire educational needs of Mexican-American students" (Baker 2011: 187) and were subsequently made available for other minority language groups across the country. In a curious backswing of the pendulum, the expansion of bilingual education led, in the 1980s, to the re-emergence of political pressure groups such as English First who "sought to establish English monolingualism and cultural assimilation" (ibid.: 188).

together in the classroom where both languages are used for learning at different times, so that, for example, English and Spanish are used to teach mathematics on alternate days of the week. The language used at a specific time is adjusted to the students' level, but is learned primarily through content. The two languages are given equal status and the Dual Language school will have a distinct bilingual identity, but there are clear boundaries between the languages both in terms of the content curriculum and the time share of the two languages within the school day and the individual lesson - "switching languages within a lesson is not considered helpful" (ibid.: 228). This is one point of entry for critics of Dual Language education. García (2009), for example, argues that bilinguals naturally move between languages to maximize cognitive and linguistic resources, making the strict boundaries and compartmentalization typical of Dual Language programmes unreasonable, maybe even detrimental to the effective development of linguistic, communicative and academic competence.

The aim of these programmes is full bilingualism and biliteracy for both language majority and minority students, rather than simply the assimilation of language minority students into the mainstream. In addition, such schools are thought "to enhance inter-group communicative competence and cultural awareness" by providing "authentic, meaningful communication between children from the two different language groups".²⁹ In the US and in many other countries (e.g. Wales, Spain), Two-Way programmes are available from kindergarten to secondary education, either in the whole school or as a Dual Language strand within a mainstream school. (Baker 2011: 222-228)

This and other forms of bilingual education are seen as a way of closing the 'achievement gap' of language minority children, also termed 'English Language Learners' (ELL) or 'Limited English Proficient' students (LEP), whose language profile is often perceived to be the primary cause of educational difficulties, especially for Latino students (cf. Gándara / Contreras 2009). These difficulties are either blamed on the children being bilingual in the first place, despite ample evidence that, if both languages are properly developed, bilingualism has been shown to result in cognitive advantages, or the blame is put on 'weak' bilingual education, while 'strong' bilingual programmes such as Dual Language schools have been found to show "promising outcomes for ELLs" (Baker 2011: 199). For example, a comprehensive review (Lindholm-Leary 2001) of Dual Language schools in comparison with 'weak' Transitional Bilingual Education and English-Only programmes showed that DL programmes promote "high levels of language proficiency, academic achievement and positive attitudes to learning in students", while ELLs in mainstream

²⁹ Dual Language education also wants to affect social, cultural and political change, empower the weak and work for peace. In Macedonia and Israel, for example, such schools are linked to current peace initiatives. (Baker 2011: 231)

classes “tend to lack the English academic language skills needed to access L2 content instruction”. (Baker 2011: 262)

The ‘weak’ forms of bilingual education are often aimed at “a fast conversion to the majority language”, culminating in a ‘sink or swim’ attitude³⁰ which disregards the importance of developing L1 skills and cognitive and academic competence and can lead to the children losing their identity and self-respect with regard to the first / home language. (ibid. 200-201) These ‘weak’ forms have also been subsumed under the label of *transitional bilingual education* (TBE)³¹ where the fast “[s]ocial and cultural assimilation into the language majority is the underlying aim” (Baker 2011: 207). In these programmes, language minority students are initially taught through their home language (and separated from the language majority students) until “they are thought to be proficient enough in the majority language to cope in mainstream education”. In early-exit TBE, the students’ L1 is used for no more than two years, whereas late-exit TBE extends L1 use to 40% of classroom teaching until 6th grade, provided by bilingual teachers. This type of bilingual education requires the student body to be relatively homogenous, which means that in settings where students with many different L1s need to be catered for³², this is often used as an argument against bilingual education. (ibid.: 215-217) Finally, even though these types of bilingual education may contribute to below-expectation achievement, it is more often due to a combination of socio-economic and cultural factors such as poverty, isolation, home literacy environment and respective language status, and putting the blame on bilingual education is too simplistic. (ibid.: 201-2)

We now turn to a second distinctly North-American form of bilingual education, developed in Canada³³ where the main focus of language education, due to its state as a bilingual nation of English and French speakers, has been on providing citizens from the two language groups with the means to function in both official languages. The initial drivers of these policies were English-speaking communities in the predominantly French-speaking East of the country through *French immersion* programmes.

³⁰ This way of throwing students into the deep end and expecting them to swim without support also comes in the form of different types of monolingual education for bilinguals, such as mainstreaming or submersion education. In some such programmes, minority language children are taught separately from majority language children, either all the time or temporarily; these include Structured Immersion and Sheltered English programmes which typically feature ESL provision, sometimes content-based, but without L1 development. In Sheltered Content Instruction, the goal is the development of curriculum content knowledge, understanding and skills rather than a clear focus on learning the language, as in ESL. (Baker 2011: 211-214)

³¹ In contrast, ‘strong’ forms are linked to *maintenance bilingual education* “attempts to foster the minority language in the child, and the associated culture and identity” (Baker 2011: 207).

³² For example, over 300 different languages are spoken in London schools. (BBC 2014)

³³ Also an immigration destination, if to a lesser degree than the US.

2.2.2 Immersion education in Canada

The Canadian bilingual / immersion³⁴ education movement has a distinct political flavour. The Official Languages Act of 1969, while not prescribing that every Canadian citizen be bilingual, effectively led to a form of *institutional bilingualism* since “government employees dispensing federal government services are required to be bilingual” (Genesee 1995: 118-9), necessitating the comprehensive provision of bilingual education to allow all Canadian citizens to participate in the social, political, economic and cultural life of the nation.

Even before this official sanctification of the bilingual nature of Canada, concerned English-speaking parents in the predominantly French-speaking East of the country were dissatisfied with what they considered inadequate French instruction in English schools and consulted experts in language development from McGill University before setting up experimental kindergarten immersion classes in 1965. (ibid.: 122) Their goals at the St. Lambert French immersion programme were two-fold: Academically, they wanted to enable the participating children to develop functional competence in written and spoken French while maintaining and promoting English-language development and ensuring achievement in academic subjects. In a broader socio-cultural sense, the aim was to “instill in the students an understanding and appreciation of French Canadians, their language and culture, without detracting in any ways from the students’ identity with and appreciation for English Canadian culture” (Genesee 1995: 123). In this example of *early total immersion*, the whole curriculum from kindergarten onward through the primary grades was taught exclusively through French, although children generally used English among themselves and with their teachers, especially in kindergarten and the lower primary grades.³⁵ English was introduced in stages, starting with English language arts and gradually increasing the share of English-taught subjects until, by the end of primary education, 60% of the curriculum was taught in English and 40% in French. What distinguished this immersion approach from other bilingual programmes was that teachers used the second language to teach academic subjects “much as they would if their pupils were native speakers of the language”, and formal instruction in French was confined to the French-language art classes (ibid.: 123-4).³⁶ In that sense, language learning was

³⁴ Immersion education is linked to additive bilingualism in that it usually operates in two prestigious, majority languages where the respective L1 is maintained. It is also selective, since “students choose (or their parents choose for them) to receive content-based instruction in a second language” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 156). In contrast, US forms of ‘structured immersion’ involve children from language minority backgrounds educated (generally by law) in a majority language, usually leading to subtractive bilingualism, which is why such settings should be more appropriately called ‘submersion’ education.

³⁵ St. Lambert is an example of early total immersion, but other forms of immersion education were created in other contexts and are differentiated either on the basis of when L2-medium instruction was introduced (early - delayed - late), how many years L2-mediated instruction takes place, or based on the degree of immersion (total - partial). For a detailed outline of these distinct forms of French immersion, see Genesee (1995).

³⁶ Ellis differentiates between the bilingual classroom, “where L2 learners receive instruction through both L1 and L2”, and the immersion classroom, “where a class of L2 learners are taught through [the] medium of [the] L2” (1985: 151).

“incidental to learning about mathematics, the sciences, the community, and one another” and relied heavily on the children’s “‘natural language learning’ or cognitive abilities as a means of learning the language” (ibid.: 125). Inherent in this immersion approach is the insistence on a strict separation between the two languages of instruction and ‘linguistic territories’ within the school. The French teachers presented themselves as monolingual, at least initially, and clear rules about exclusive L2 language use were established.

Since the first French immersion school was established in 1965, immersion bilingual education has experienced steady growth, and in 2009, 5.9% of English-speaking Canadian children were enrolled in just over 2000 French immersion schools. Immersion education plays a significant role in maintaining Canadian bilingualism: In the 2001 Census, 17.7% of the population reported speaking both official languages, although the percentage is highest in the predominantly French speaking region Québec (40.8%). (Baker 2011: 240)

Numerous studies into bilingual education in North America provide evidence of the success of immersion programmes “at the linguistic, subject content, cognitive, and attitudinal levels”: Children in French immersion programmes generally emerge with native-like receptive skills, even though oral and written production are somewhat less developed; overall they achieve higher levels of proficiency than non-immersion students; their performance in the subject matter taught through the second language is comparable to that of their non-lingual peer groups; and they develop a decidedly positive attitude towards the foreign language, or L2, and its native speakers. (Pérez-Cañado 2012: 317; see also Lightbown / Spada 2006: 156)

Contrary to popular belief, immersion education, regardless of what form it takes (early total, early partial or late), has no detrimental effects on students’ performance in their L1. Any deficits reported from early grades are temporary. In fact, some studies have even shown that early total immersion students tend to outperform their mainstream peers in first language achievement, which has not been reported for partial and late immersion. (Baker 2011: 266) Crucially, evidence from Canada and Australia suggests that children with lower ability generally fare better in immersion settings, partly due to the increased attention to language. In terms of motivation, attitude and study skills, results are most positive again for early total immersion settings. (ibid.: 267)

However, Lightbown and Spada point to concerns raised by some researchers regarding some aspects regarding French immersion.³⁷ For example, many studies found that students were unable to “achieve high levels of performance in some aspects of French grammar” (2006: 156). This is taken as an indication that, in these settings,

³⁷ For an extensive overview of French immersion research and its impact on SLA, see Swain (2000a).

comprehensible input was insufficient to guarantee the development of some grammatical features because these settings were largely teacher-centred, thus providing few opportunities for learners to engage in language production. Especially the productive skills were found to be lacking, as students were “observed to speak relatively little and were rarely required to give extended answers”.³⁸ Another reason for erroneous speech was thought to lie in the fact that the learners shared the same L1 and experienced limited contact with the immersion language outside the classroom, with detrimental consequences for their developing interlanguage (ibid.: 156-7). Lightbown and Spada (2006: 177) conclude that

[t]he results of research in French immersion [...] are strong indicators that learners develop higher levels of fluency through primarily meaning-based instruction than through rigidly grammar-based instruction. The problem is that certain aspects of linguistic knowledge and performance are not fully developed in such programmes.

One reason for these deficiencies is seen to lie in the “heavy emphasis on fluency at the expense of accuracy [which] produce[s] an error-laden interlanguage” (Butzkamm / Caldwell 2009: 41). Based on Cummins’ work, Baker links these performance issues to the different time frames for developing basic communicative competence (BICS) and the more complex linguistic and cognitive requirements of academic subjects (CALP), stating that

[u]ntil the second language (e.g. French) has developed well enough to cope with the curriculum material, a temporary delay may be expected. Once French is developed sufficiently to cope with the conceptual tasks of the classroom, Immersion Education is unlikely to have detrimental achievement consequences for children. (Baker 2011: 169)

Detrimental performance effects in other curriculum areas have not been recorded for early total immersion, while children in early partial and late immersion education initially tend to lag behind their mainstream peers when subjects such as mathematics and science are taught through an insufficiently developed L2. (ibid.: 266-267)

A shared limitation of most immersion education is that the L2 is mainly used in the school environment. Even though immersion students gain competence in the L2, they generally do not use the second language in the target community, even though many immersion contexts actually provide the opportunity to actively use the L2 ‘in the wild’. (ibid.: 265) One reason may be that their productive competence tends to be less developed than their receptive skills, another that the focus of immersion education is academic achievement rather than developing ‘street speech’, so that these students are possibly even less well-prepared for unscripted, spontaneous production than traditional L2

³⁸ Baetens Beardsmore (1995: 148) agrees: “Canadian research reveals how unrealistic it is to expect homogeneous English-speaking peers to interact in the L2 in self-initiated peer negotiation outside the formal classroom. This feature appears significant in determining the productive proficiency in oral communication in the target language, if the output hypothesis plays the important role which research leads us to believe.”

learners whose course books tend to prepare them for topics like 'In the shops' or 'At the train station', as uninspiring as these may be.

2.2.3 Content-Based Instruction

In the wake of the communicative turn in language teaching in the 1970s, with its focus on developing pragmatic language proficiency to prepare "students to use functional language in meaningful, relevant ways" (Echevarria et al. 2004: 8), a new approach to English as a Second Language (ESL) education in North America centred on content-based instruction (CBI). While the main goal remained the development of English language skills, CBI initially was intended to prepare English learners in separate ESL classes for their eventual inclusion in regular classrooms with L1 English speakers, making CBI a key ingredient in transitional bilingual education. The Sheltered Instruction Approach, for example, is seen as an extension of CBI, with more focussed attention being paid to the cognitive skills (make hypotheses, express analyses, draw conclusions) and the social and cultural skills (turn-taking, participation rules, expected routines) students require to function in the English-language content classroom (ibid.: 11). The aim is not only to give students more interesting, useful and relevant material to talk about in the language classroom, but also to give them the cognitive tools and socio-cultural awareness they need to work alongside their peers who are L1 speakers of English.

Comparing CBI to other forms of bilingual education, Lightbown and Spada (2006: 155) consider content-based instruction an approach to language teaching in which "learners acquire a second or foreign language as they study subject matter taught in that language" and which is "implemented in a great variety of instructional settings including bilingual education and immersion programmes and the 'content and language-integrated learning' (CLIL) programmes in Europe". CLIL, then, is a subform of CBI. Clegg, on the other hand, subsumes CBI under the umbrella term CLIL and defines what he calls content-based foreign language teaching (CBLT) as "taught by foreign language teachers, assessed as foreign language learning, uses mainly foreign language syllabuses and materials, aims to develop foreign language skills and occupies the foreign language hours in the curriculum". (Clegg 2007b: 21) For him, CBLT - in contrast to CLIL proper - is "language teaching, even if it doesn't look like it". For Baker, CLIL is simply the European twin of content-based instruction in North America (Baker 2011: 245). However, CLIL is usually much more clearly positioned towards the middle on the content-language continuum than CBI. (Cenoz et al. 2013)

Lightbown and Spada (2006: 110) describe content-based instruction as a form of bilingual education where "the focus of a lesson is usually on the subject matter, such as history or mathematics, which students are learning through the medium of the second language",

with an emphasis on using language rather than talking about it. Language material is generally chosen to allow students to interact in relevant contexts rather than based on formal notions of, for example, grammatical progression. Consequently, accuracy is not the main measure of success, rather, students are measured “in terms of their ability to ‘get things done’ in the second language”.

Lightbown / Spada consider CBI to have a number of advantages in that it “increases the amount of time for learners to be exposed to the new language” and can motivate students to acquire language to access cognitively challenging, creating a “genuine need to communicate”. On the other hand, they diagnose deficiencies with regard to linguistic accuracy and their results support Cummins’ hypothesis (1984, 2000b) that “students may need several years before their ability to use the language for cognitively challenging academic material has reached an age-appropriate level” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 159). One problem may be that the assumption in these programmes is that extended exposure to the L2 is enough for students to develop the necessary - to use Cummins’ term - cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) to process challenging subject content. In fact, “proponents of CBI have stressed the need to recall that content-based language teaching is still *language* teaching” (ibid.: 160). In that sense, research in content-based instruction has produced similar results to, for example, Canadian immersion programmes which has - as we will see in Chapter 3 - led to a greater focus on correctness and more attention to formal language instruction in CLIL programmes in Europe.

2.3 Summary

As we have seen in this brief overview, the different forms of bilingual education developed in North America share some common traits, but they also show some clear differences due to the different socio-political and socio-cultural contexts from which they emerged. Many of them focus exclusively on transitioning language minority students into language majority educational settings, propagating a monoglossic view of language where achievement is measured on the basis of how well L2 learners are able to integrate with L1 speakers of the language (submersion). Others can be considered bilingual in the heteroglossic sense of the term as they consider the development of proficiency in both languages a key component of the programme (immersion).

The makeup of the student body is another differentiating characteristic: For example, the main difference between immersion classrooms and Dual Language education lies in the linguistic background of the students. Immersion schools are typically populated by majority language students who learn parts of the curriculum through a second language (e.g. French-medium instruction for English speaking children in Canada), whereas Dual

Language classrooms are a balanced mix of children speaking two different first languages (e.g. Spanish and English in the US).

Finally, there are some underlying communalities shared by all immersion programmes, no matter their specific iterations, many of which also apply to other bilingual approaches, such as CLIL: Firstly, the L2 is used as medium of instruction in non-linguistic subjects and developed parallel to the L1, as immersion ultimately wants students to achieve proficiency in both L1 and L2 (i.e. additive bilingualism), but not at the cost of academic development. The language used in immersion classes should be new and unfamiliar to students, resembling the process of L1 acquisition, although exposure to the L2 is generally limited to the classroom. Immersion teachers are generally bilingual in order to guarantee success, and the teaching is communicative in nature. Finally, participation in immersion programmes is generally by parental (or student) choice because they are considered effective, rather than imposed by national political-educational objectives. (Cummins 1998, Lasagabaster / Sierra 2009)

Many of the North-American forms of bilingual education discussed above have been taken up in Europe, adapted to the specific political, social and cultural contexts. The many research findings detailing the advantages and disadvantages of these early forms of bilingual education have given European educators a solid basis on which to develop their own approaches, as we shall see in the following chapter which focuses on Content and Language Integrated Learning as an inherently European model of bilingual education.

Chapter 3: Content and Language Integrated Learning

As we saw in Chapter 2, bilingual education is far from a new phenomenon. We looked at different varieties of bilingual education programmes in North America which have exerted considerable influence on similar European endeavours. Familiar forms of bilingual education in Europe are, for example, immersion programmes in Wales, Ireland and the autonomous regions of Spain whose introduction has had strong political undertones and which are seen as a way to maintain a community (or heritage) language and establish a distinct identity separate from the respective nation state. In already bilingual (or multilingual) societies such as Belgium and Switzerland, such schools help bring the various language communities together.

Luxembourg, for example, has long had a trilingual education system (Coyle 2007b: 543), where children are initially schooled through their L1 (Luxembourgish, or Letzebuergesch, a variety of German) and receive second language instruction in German which is soon used as the medium of instruction (and still taught as a subject in parallel). Halfway through the primary grades, French is introduced as L3 and increasingly used as the main teaching medium in secondary school. (Baetens Beardsmore 1995: 140). Overall, the results have been very positive, and learning outcomes for L1 development, L2 literacy and discipline-knowledge acquisition are comparable to those of monolingual peer groups who receive L2 instruction in isolation, and European Schools have also been found to outperform Canadian early total immersion (Perez Cañado 2012: 318). By the end of secondary education, children become “trilingual and biliterate (French and German literacy)” (Baker 2011: 249).

This trilingual approach greatly influenced the development of the European School model which reflects the increasingly multilingual and multicultural nature of a united Europe, as we will see in the following section. Subsequently, the focus will turn to a form of bilingual education which has received a great deal of research interest in past decades and has established itself as a distinctly European approach to bilingual education, namely Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). After a brief look at the emergence of CLIL as the dominant form of bilingual education in Europe, this chapter will provide an overview of the main theoretical-pedagogical concepts underpinning this approach and how they are implemented in the classroom.

3.1 Bilingual education in Europe: European Schools

An early example of bilingual education with a decidedly European flavour is the European Schools movement which adapted the trilingual education system in Luxembourg (Baetens Beardsmore 1995: 141) to cater to the diverse linguistic background of the

children of European Community (EC) employees. There are now European Schools in seven countries. They have up to eleven different language sections to reflect the L1s of the students. In the lower grades, students learn through the medium of their L1 and receive language instruction in English, French or German. Older children receive part of their schooling through a vehicular language, usually the 'majority' L2 children have been - and continue to be - instructed in, and also pick up a third language through regular language lessons. (Baker 2011: 247-248) In so-called European Hours, taught through a vehicular majority language, mixed-L1 children "develop a sense of European multiculturalism and European identity" and "are encouraged to respect each person's native language" (ibid.: 248).

One of the key differences between European Schools and immersion programmes is that children receive formal instruction in the L2 from early on, before it is used as a medium of subject instruction, and even then, formal language classes are continued, leading to a high degree of grammatical accuracy (Baetens Beardsmore 1995: 148), a practice which continues in European CLIL settings partly inspired by the European School example. Another distinguishing characteristic of European Schools is that, while the L2 (and later L3) is used increasingly as the child moves through the grades, the L1 plays an explicit role during both teaching and assessment to guarantee that the child's individual cultural and linguistic identity is maintained. In fact, the whole programme is "designed to promote linguistic and cultural pluralism rather than assimilation" (ibid.: 142). And unlike most immersion contexts, students have a genuine need for a lingua franca within their peer group outside the classroom, given the varied linguistic backgrounds of the students. This means that they tend to use the shared L2 as their medium of communication in an environment which also includes L1 speakers of said language, leading to self-motivated use of the L2 among L2 learners and with L1 speakers of the L2 in a language-rich 'natural' setting.

These European Schools are an expression of the multilingual and multicultural nature of the European project and have served as inspiration for European language policy. At a conference in 1990, the Commission of European Communities and the Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe set out to "examine to what extent the experience gained in European School type education could be extended to general population by examining use of an L2 as a working language for non-language subjects" (Baetens Beardsmore 1995: 143), showing confidence in the possible benefits of such a bilingual approach in mainstream education. In a series of further meetings in the early 1990s, the European Commission and the Council of Europe intensified their commitment to promoting the learning of foreign languages by bringing together key players in bilingual education who surveyed existing models and practices of bilingual education and "made

recommendations for the coordination of developments in bilingual education across Europe” (Coyle 2007b: 544).

3.2 Content and Language Integrated Learning: A European label

It soon became clear that the field of bilingual education in Europe was incredibly diverse, with different models responding to specific national and regional conditions. It also emerged that in most cases, these different models “were described using terms ‘borrowed’ from other contexts with over 30 descriptors to choose from, but especially drawing on immersion and bilingual movements in the USA and Canada” (Coyle 2007b: 544). This complicated the European institutions’ intention to establish a coherent language(s) policy under one distinct designation which would still account for the multifarious approaches to bilingual education across the Union.

Firstly, some of the labels used to describe existing bilingual programmes were too closely associated with non-European models, ‘immersion’ being a case in point. For some European countries, these terms had negative connotations, or they felt that they did not express the unique nature of their bilingual policies (e.g. Luxembourg). Secondly, while existing European models gained prominence in the 1990s, the decade also experienced a great deal of methodological innovation, and practitioners “began to advocate alternative terminology to account for emerging models and pedagogies” (ibid.: 545).

The acronym CLIL stands for *Content and Language Integrated Learning*, a term that was coined in 1994 (Mehisto / Marsh / Frigols 2008: 9; Ruiz de Zarobe / Jiménez Catalán 2009: vii) by a team around David Marsh and is used to describe European models of bilingual education where “language is used as a medium for learning content, and the content is used in turn as a resource for learning languages” (European Commission 2005: 2). This description of CLIL is rather vague and leaves ample room for variations of the approach in a myriad of different educational settings. Indeed, the very fact that the practice of integrating content and language learning has become so wide-spread has added to the confusion about how to properly define it. For example, Greere and Räsänen note that “there are many other definitions and terms - over 40 terms in use in Europe alone” (2008: 4). Among them are immersion (*Språkbud*, Sweden), bilingual education (Hungary), multilingual education (Latvia), integrated curriculum (Spain), foreign languages across the curriculum (*Fremdsprache als Arbeitssprache*, Austria), language-enriched instruction (Finland), to name but a few. (Eurydice 2006: 64-67)

For Higher Education purposes, the LanQua³⁹ group defined CLIL as “an umbrella term for all those HE approaches in which some form of specific and academic language support is offered to students in order to facilitate their learning of the content through that language” (LanQua 2010). This definition is even more wide-ranging than the European Commission’s version quoted earlier, in that it talks about ‘language support’ to facilitate content learning without clarifying whether language objectives need to be formulated clearly alongside content outcomes in order to be considered CLIL proper. Coyle, Hood and Marsh, in their seminal book *CLIL - Content and Language Integrated Learning* (2010), offer a more expansive definition which specifically highlights the dual nature of the approach:

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a dual-focused educational approach in which an **additional language** is used for the learning and teaching of both content *and* language. That is, in the teaching and learning process, there is a focus not only on content, and not only on language. Each is interwoven, even if the emphasis is greater on one or the other at a given time. (Coyle et al. 2010: 1, their emphasis)

Since the term CLIL was coined in 1994, it has experienced exponential growth in many European countries. This rapid development is attributed to four major forces:

families wanting their children to have some competence in at least one foreign language;
governments wanting to improve languages education for socio-economic advantage;
at the supranational level, the European Commission wanting to lay the foundation for greater inclusion and economic strength;
and finally, at the educational level, language experts seeing the potential of further integrating languages education with that of other subjects. (Coyle et al. 2010: 8)

The flexible and adaptive nature of CLIL is often considered one of its strengths as it allows policy makers, school administrators and teachers across Europe to implement the version of CLIL which is the most appropriate for their specific context, rather than transplanting one successful model to a new institutional environment without taking into account local conditions. In fact, Baetens Beardsmore (1995: 140) warned early on that

far too often well documented success stories, like Canadian immersion, have been taken over as a blue-print in circumstances where they do not satisfy local needs, merely because the research background has proven their effectiveness in the context for which they were developed.

Given the many different local types of L2 subject teaching across Europe which are collected under the CLIL umbrella, policy makers, educational stake holders and practitioners in the field have clearly taken this warning to heart and found the variations which suit their context the best.

³⁹ The *LanQua - Language Network for Quality Assurance* is based at the LLAS Subject Centre at the University of Southampton in cooperation with the Lifelong Learning Erasmus Network and partly funded by the European Commission. The CLIL sub-project of LanQua involved an international team of researcher-practitioners conducting six case studies of CLIL projects implemented in tertiary education across Europe.

3.2.1 CLIL in the British education system

The UK has a somewhat chequered history with regard to promoting the study of modern languages. On the one hand, the government's decision, in 2004, to make languages optional after age 14, when they had long been a key element of upper secondary education, has had a detrimental impact on the number of students who continue their language studies until A-level (for more on the current UK language landscape, see Chapter 7). On the other hand, numerous reports commissioned by government, educational organisations and industry⁴⁰ have highlighted the fact that, given the UK's skills gap in MFL, "British businesses and British employees are at a disadvantage in the competitive global world in which we live and do business" (Baroness Coussins, in Tinsley / Han 2012: 3), leading to what Tinsley (2013: 9) calls "a vicious circle of monolingualism". The 2013 report 'Multilingual Britain' clearly states that "[f]oreign language aptitude represented the greatest concern for firms amongst all the employability skills of graduates (54% not satisfied), with 41% also not satisfied with graduates' international cultural awareness" (British Academy 2013: 2).

In light of this worrying development, the British government and various organisations and associations with a vested interest in the promotion of language learning and multilingualism have devised recommendations and national strategies to "create an appetite for learning and broaden and enrich the opportunities for language learning at school and beyond" (DfES 2002: 4), and the Scottish government has renewed its commitment to the European Union's model of mother tongue + 2 additional languages (Scottish Government 2012). A number of national programmes are invested in encouraging young people to take up modern languages and to support teachers and policy makers in spreading the message; government funding for *Routes into Languages*, a national programme to promote "the take-up of languages and student mobility"⁴¹, was renewed in 2013, and initiatives like *Speak to the Future*, a campaign "highlighting the importance of languages, language learning and professional language activities for the UK"⁴², are in the national spotlight.

It is surprising, then, that the UK is characterised by a noticeable dearth in CLIL research, given that "the nation whose language is by far the most widely adopted in CLIL programs - English - is lagging so far behind in its implementation" (Perez- Cañado 2012: 322-3). Still, in secondary education, at least, the 21st century "has brought a more positive climate in terms of CLIL in England" (Coyle 2007a: 173). Recent national curriculum reforms have

⁴⁰ Cf. Nuffield Languages Inquiry 2000; Footitt 2005; Worton 2009; British Academy 2011; Mulkerne / Graham 2011, British Council 2013, Chen / Breivik 2013, to list but a few.

⁴¹ Routes into Languages, <https://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/>

⁴² Speak to the Future, <http://www.speaktothefuture.org/about/>

encouraged schools to “make connections between and across subjects, focusing on deeper learning and functional skills to equip learners for life” (Coyle / Holmes / King 2009: 9), inspiring flexible curriculum models which leave room for innovative MFL pedagogies. As a consequence, more and more schools⁴³ are piloting CLIL projects to foster MFL across the curriculum, and some schools have integrated long-established CLIL strands into their curriculum, usually focussing on Humanities subjects such as Geography and History (Coyle 2007a: 175). One of the main obstacles to the wider implementation of CLIL in secondary education is the fact that there are no provisions for national examinations in the target language, so that when students study a subject through the medium of an L2, they then have to return to L1-medium instruction to prepare for the examinations, which means that schools are more likely to offer CLIL in smaller modules and early on in secondary education (ibid.: 176).

In recent years, there have been efforts to make CLIL a feature of MFL teacher training, most notably in a CLIL teacher-training unit at the University of Nottingham’s Faculty of Education (Coyle 2007a: 176-7), which also offered an MA in CLIL.⁴⁴ In addition, case studies on the impact of CLIL have been published by organisations such as the National Centre for Languages (CILT)⁴⁵ and the Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) (cf. Macías 2006; Tamponi 2005), and networks like *Routes into Languages* and *Network for Languages*⁴⁶ have provided support, training and funding for teachers to introduce more CLIL programmes in schools across the country.

Despite these encouraging developments, there appears to be a clear lack of explicit support for CLIL on the national level. In 2006, the Languages Review published by the Department for Education and Skills⁴⁷ briefly mentioned “supporting pilots to develop a more varied curriculum (Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Vocational)” (DfES 2006: 5) as part of the “agenda for the next decade” laid out in the National Languages Strategy (DfES 2002). In a section titled “Solutions in the schools”, the report

⁴³ In 2013, an article in *The Times* proclaimed that “Foreign language immersion is on the curriculum for pioneering schools” (Rumbelow 2013). These ‘pioneers’ are very often specialist language colleges rather than regular schools without an MFL focus.

⁴⁴ Unfortunately, many CLIL teacher training initiatives seem to have been short-lived; the MA in CLIL at Nottingham, for example, has been discontinued, as has the national CITT (CLIL Initial Teacher Training) programme launched around 2007 (Coyle 2007a: 177). There are, however, a number of European networks and regional centres which provide information about CLIL, pre- and in-service teacher training and CPD, such as the CLIL Cascade Network (<http://ccn-clil.eu/index.php?name=Content &nodeIDX=3488>) and EuroCLIC in the Netherlands (<http://www.europeesplatform.nl/>).

⁴⁵ These case studies, outlining CLIL implementation in secondary settings, are available online at http://www.cilt.org.uk/secondary/14-19/intensive_and_immersion/clil/case_studies.aspx.

⁴⁶ <http://networkforlanguages.org.uk/#>

⁴⁷ The government department responsible for education in England has changed its name and overall remit three times since the turn of the millennium: DfES - Department for Education and Skills (2001-2007), DCSF - Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007-2010), DfE - Department for Education (2010-present).

highlights an example of successful CLIL provision at Tile Hill Wood School, Coventry. Later on, the authors of the report state their belief that CLIL “materially helps progress in the language without detracting from learning in the principal subject” and suggest that “the existing experience in this area should be gathered and disseminated for schools wishing to develop such cross curricular work” (DfES 2006: 39).

In 2007, an ‘Advisory Group for CLIL’ was set up by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to “provide guidance and strategic advice on developments in Content and Language Integrated Learning in England, with reference to the National Strategy for Languages” (Coyle / Holmes / King 2009: 5). The results of the group’s deliberations were published in the report *Towards an integrated curriculum - CLIL National Statement and Guidelines* (Coyle / Holmes / King 2009), intended as “an authoritative source of support and guidance for teachers and schools who are interested in what is possible” (ibid.).

However, any efforts to embed CLIL in national language education policy seem to have remained unsuccessful. A reform of AS and A-level for Modern Languages is currently under way, and a draft version for AS and A-level subject content which “sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all AS and A level specifications in modern languages” (DfE 2014) was under consultation in July-September 2014. In addition to traditional MFL-related knowledge and skills such as “control of the language system”, the “ability to interact effectively with users of the language in speech and in writing” and “knowledge and understanding of society, culture and history of the country or countries where the language is spoken”, the specifications require students to “engage critically with intellectually stimulating [...] materials in the original language” and to develop transferable skills (such as autonomy, critical thinking and linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility) and independent research skills in the language of study. CLIL is not mentioned in any of the documentation available on the DfE website, despite the opportunities it affords students to develop exactly the knowledge and skills outlined above. In England, at least, CLIL’s future as a modern approach to bilingual education relies, as it always has, on grassroots efforts by parents, teachers and local decision makers and on networking initiatives by education researchers and practitioners.

We will now trace the origins of the approach to some of its antecedents and investigate how these earlier educational approaches have informed current CLIL theory and practice.

3.3 The road to CLIL

The antecedents of Content and Language Integrated Learning can be found in North American content-based instruction (CBI) and in Canadian immersion programmes. Like CBI (see Stryker / Leaver 1997: 3), CLIL methodology is characterised by its flexibility as

it can be adapted to a myriad of localised educational settings. But where CBI was initially set in the context of ESL mainly for immigrants in Canada and United States and has a strong focus on subject matter and on “meaning rather than analysis of language as an object” (Ellili-Cherif 2014: 213), CLIL has a distinctly European flavour and describes particularly “the majority group of any European country learning content through another European language with a more cross-cultural perspective” (Jaímez / López Morillas 2011: 87). In the European context, language and content are integrated flexibly along a continuum, without a stated preference for either, according to the needs of the respective educational setting (Coyle 2006a: 2; Marsh 2002: 58).

As we saw in Chapter 2, a number of varieties of bilingual education were developed in North America in the latter half of the 20th century which had considerable influence on similar efforts in Europe. The extensive research efforts invested in studying the design, implementation and outcomes of Canadian immersion, for example, had a palpable impact on early variants of CLIL (Dalton Puffer et al. 2014: 215). Their findings were encouraging with regard to the proven positive effects this type of bilingual education could have on the general language proficiency of the participating students (especially concerning the receptive skills, see Chapter 2), while L1 development proceeded as expected as well (Madrid / Hughes 2011). At the same time, studies showed that L2-medium teaching had no detrimental effect on subject-specific knowledge, and in some cases, CLIL students even outperformed their peers (Mehisto / Marsh / Frigols 2008: 20; Madrid / Hughes 2011). Finally, and most encouragingly in view of the promotion of harmony and multiculturalism envisioned by European language policy, students in immersion programmes exhibited a decidedly positive attitude towards the L2 and its culture(s) and speakers (Pérez-Cañado 2012).

However, studies in non-European bilingual programmes also brought to light some issues which could be attributed to a number of factors. Some of the negative outcomes reported by this research were connected to underlying assumptions about the SLA process. Immersion education ultimately employs a communicative approach to language teaching in that it represents a holistic view of teaching and learning languages, focused on meaning rather than form and interested in purposeful, authentic communication. While this approach proved beneficial for the development of sophisticated receptive skills by providing students with rich linguistic input in a motivating, thematically engaging context, immersion education also embodied the same methodological limitations that communicative language teaching was often criticized for, for example, its tendency to overestimate the importance of comprehensible input (following Krashen) and its almost exclusive focus on meaning at the expense of focus on form, that is, explicit instruction in formal aspects of the L2, with detrimental results for language production, or output. Of course, the ultimate aim is for students to use the language in purposeful and self-

motivated ways, but to do so, they also have to learn *how* to use their L2 accurately and authentically. As Coyle, Hood and Marsh put it, “ignoring progressive language learning in a CLIL setting is ignoring the fundamental role played by language in the learning process. It reduces the learning context to learning *in* another language.” (2010: 33, their emphasis)

Many studies have focused on the outcomes of CLIL and have come to similar conclusions: In general, language skills tend to be more highly developed in CLIL students than in their mainstream peer groups, although the results are less clear in some aspects (e.g. pronunciation, textual competence). The findings tend to be less favourable with regard to the complexity of subject-specific concepts in CLIL, but some studies have found cognitive advantages. (Hüttner et al. 2013: 271) The multifaceted role that language plays in CLIL is one which has received a great amount of attention, as we will see in the following chapter, which looks at some of the theoretical-pedagogical concepts which underpin CLIL.

3.4 Theoretical-pedagogical concepts of CLIL

As we have seen, CLIL is a relatively young approach, and like other young disciplines, its theoretical foundation is slowly being developed on the basis of practices and experiences in classrooms across Europe, despite a lack of “substantial management investments into CLIL implementation, teacher education and research” in many European countries (Hüttner et al. 2013: 271). Until now, “it has proven hard to find conceptual guidelines that link and integrate the different dimensions of CLIL in the curriculum” (Ruiz de Zarobe 2013: 234). One of the key questions to be answered by any theoretical-methodological framework for CLIL is how to incorporate elements from both language-learning theory and models of content learning which are often discipline-specific to some degree. After all, learners in CLIL settings are expected to “progress systematically in both their content learning and their language learning *and using*” (Coyle et al. 2010: 35, their emphasis), and a comprehensive theoretical-pedagogical concept should, therefore, account for all these learning outcomes.

While a unifying CLIL theory is yet to be developed⁴⁸, “CLIL as an educational approach makes underlying use of some of the theoretical models that have been pivotal in the last few decades” (Ruiz de Zarobe 2013: 234), among them Krashen’s Monitor Model and Cummins’ distinction between BICS and CALP. There are, however, two concepts which were developed by Do Coyle to provide a theoretical basis for what happens in CLIL classrooms, and after we explore these and other theoretical-methodological concepts in

⁴⁸ And is perhaps unlikely to be established at all, given the variability of CLIL in its local settings.

the following subchapters, we will take a closer look at their implication for CLIL planning and implementation in practice.

3.4.1 The role of language in CLIL: The Language Triptych

As we have seen, CLIL has developed out of communicative language teaching practices and shares with them a number of commonalities. The most basic one is the view that “language is a tool for communication” so that “the goal is language using as well as language learning” (Coyle et al. 2010: 32-33). Another common characteristic is its methodological freedom and lack of prescriptiveness.

In CLIL settings, the language used for academic and specific purposes puts different demands on linguistic processing and production than more general social language functions and thus needs instruction and training. Cummins was the first to point out that language use and performance change with the context, positing that learning requires specific Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)⁴⁹ which governs “the extent to which an individual has access to and command of the oral and written academic registers of schooling” (Cummins 2000a, quoted in Cummins 2008: 72). As students progress through the academic curriculum, “they are increasingly required to manipulate language in cognitively demanding and context-reduced situations that differ significantly from everyday conversational interactions” and “are only minimally supported by contextual or interpersonal cues” (Cummins 2000b: 59). In bilingual settings, a failure to acknowledge and develop these academic registers can create significant academic difficulties (Cummins 2008: 72). Here, Cummins holds with Vygotsky in emphasising the importance of social interaction for the development of both BICS and CALP. For example, reading achievement has been found to be critically linked with students having the opportunity to discuss what they have read with a teacher and with each other which “ensures that higher-order thinking processes such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis engage with academic language in deepening students’ comprehension of the text” (Cummins 2000b: 66). Communicative interaction, the negotiation of meaning, lies at the heart of CLIL pedagogy. Therefore, if implemented successfully, “CLIL offers a means by which learners can continue their academic or cognitive development while they are also acquiring academic language proficiency” (Naves 2011: 156).

Cummins (2000b: 80) explains that the development of CALP has three implications for bilingual/multilingual programmes:

cognitive: instruction should be cognitively challenging and require students to use higher-order thinking abilities [...]

⁴⁹ Cummins also developed the related concept of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), which refers to “conversational fluency in a language” (Cummins 2008: 71).

academic: academic content (science, maths, social studies, art) should be integrated with language instruction so that students acquire the specific language of these academic registers; and

language: the development of critical language awareness should be fostered throughout the programme by encouraging students to compare and contrast their languages (phonics conventions, grammar, cognates and so forth) and by providing them with extensive opportunities to carry out projects investigating their [...] language use, practices and assumptions [...].

For Cummins, “instruction within a strong bilingual / multilingual programme should provide a *focus on message*, a *focus on language* and a *focus on use* in both languages” (2000b: 80, his emphasis).

This ties in closely with a key CLIL concept, the Language Triptych which involves “the analysis of the CLIL vehicular language from three interrelated perspectives: language **of** learning, language **for** learning and language **through** learning” (Coyle et al. 2010: 36, their emphasis).

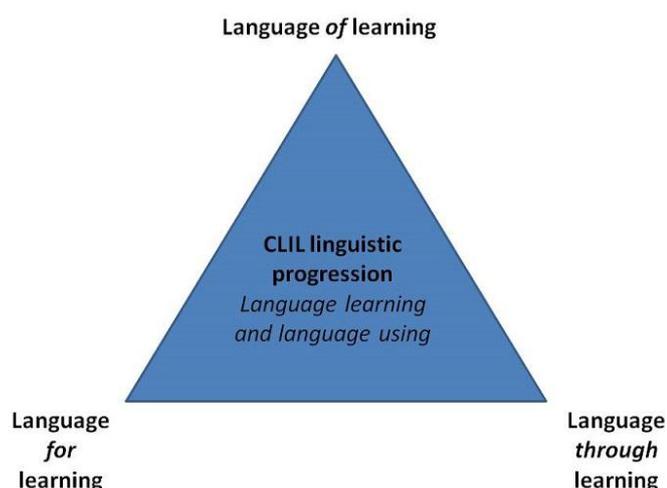


Figure 2: The Language Triptych (source: Coyle et al. 2010: 36)

According to this model, the language used in the classroom serves three purposes: Firstly, language *of* learning refers to language as a tool for learning, that is, for knowledge construction. It allows learners to access the concepts and skills related to the subject or content (Coyle et al. 2010: 37). This includes, for example, the discipline-specific vocabulary and typical grammatical and syntactical forms most commonly encountered in said discipline. Since the language required to access, process and reproduce “curricular knowledge” (Dalton-Puffer 2007: 65) generally doesn’t follow the grammatical progression underpinning most traditional foreign language curricula and textbooks (ibid.: 10), CLIL teachers are often required to address “functional and notional levels of difficulty demanded by the content”, which, in turn, requires “greater explicit awareness of the linguistic demands of the subject or content” (Coyle et al. 2010: 37).

Secondly, language *for* learning refers to “the kind of language needed to operate in a foreign language environment” (ibid.) which will allow the learner to participate actively

and use language effectively in the classroom. The focus here, therefore, is the development of strategies for engaging in collaborative work with other learners and interacting with peers and teachers. This aspect of language use in CLIL is strongly linked to linguistic scaffolding, that is, supporting learners to access, process and absorb the linguistic manifestations of subject-related content. This includes “developing a repertoire of speech acts which relate to the content, such as describing, evaluating and drawing conclusions [which are] essential for tasks to be carried out effectively” and for learners to “use the CLIL language independently” (Coyle et al. 2010: 37).

Finally, the third perspective on language in CLIL concerns language *through* learning. By encouraging learners to participate actively in the CLIL process by “articulating their understanding”, they achieve “a deeper level of learning” (ibid.). When exposed to new subject-related concepts and topics, their task is to acquire new knowledge and, with it, new ways of thinking as well as the linguistic packaging it comes in. As they communicate with the teacher and with each other, they use both familiar linguistic material and new language they were exposed to during the input process. Unlike the language *of* learning and the language *for* learning, this third type of language use is unplanned, spontaneous and emerges in situ. Despite its unpredictable nature, if it is captured and continuously recycled, it can contribute to further language development. (Coyle et al. 2010: 37-38)

Naturally, this tripartite perspective on language has consequences for CLIL lesson planning and materials design. However, designing CLIL units goes beyond the language of, for and through learning. Certainly, it requires a careful and thorough analysis of the types of language learners are exposed to and are expected to (re)produce as well as a detailed understanding of the discipline-specific language features and genres of their subject and the linguistic demands of individual and collaborative tasks they develop for their students.

At the same time, teachers involved in CLIL have to develop awareness of the cognitive load of thematic concepts and learner tasks learners are expected to deal with in the foreign language. And beyond that, CLIL also contains a social and cultural dimension “which makes it ideal for enhancing a broad view of the world, promoting linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom, and giving a European perspective to education” (Pérez-Vidal 2009: 12). In the following section, an often-referenced model is introduced which integrates these multiple dimensions of CLIL and serves as a planning tool for teachers (Meyer 2010: 11) as they develop materials and teaching plans for their CLIL classroom.

3.4.2 Multidimensional learning: The 4 Cs

We have seen that CLIL as an educational approach aims to further both linguistic development and curricular content knowledge and understanding. Both of these aspects can only be successfully developed if students are “cognitively engaged” and “intellectually challenged in order to transform information and ideas, to solve problems, to gain understanding and to discover new meaning” (Coyle et al. 2010: 29). In addition to these subject-related goals, CLIL has wider aspirations in that one declared aim of the approach is to further the learners’ knowledge and understanding of the culture(s) of their chosen L2 and to foster intercultural awareness and sensitivity, especially in the context of European integration.

One way of conceptualising these different dimensions of CLIL is captured in the 4Cs Framework developed by Coyle (1999) which “integrates four contextualized building blocks: **content** (subject matter), **communication** (language learning and using), **cognition** (learning and thinking processes) and **culture** (developing intercultural awareness and global citizenship)” (Coyle et al. 2010: 41, their emphasis).

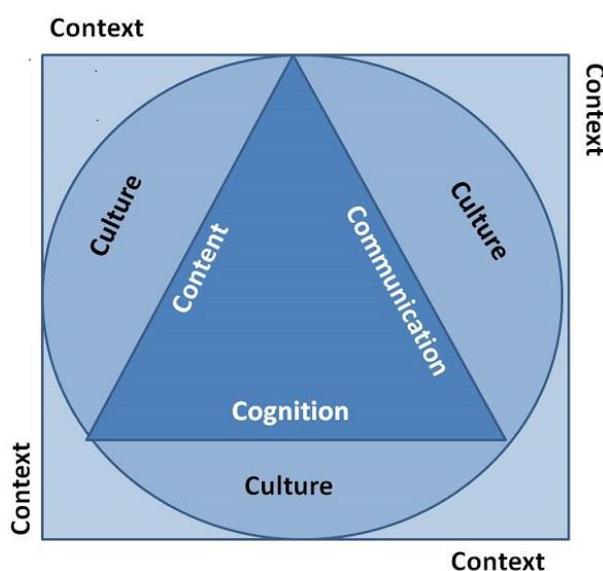


Figure 3: 4Cs Framework (source: Coyle et al. 2010: 41)

This framework contextualises learning in CLIL settings and draws together those dimensions which contribute to it. Coyle (1999: 53) explains further:

[I]t is through progression in the knowledge, skills and understanding of the content, by engagement in associated cognitive processing, interaction in the communicative context, and a deepening awareness and positioning of cultural self and otherness, that learning takes place.

As such, the model attempts to integrate the sometimes divergent purposes and expected outcomes of CLIL practice by highlighting that one (=content) cannot develop without the other (=communication), and that both are underpinned by a need for stimulating and authentic input, materials and tasks which both foster cognitive engagement (=cognition)

and encourage learners to develop awareness of and experience the 'other' while examining what they already know from a new perspective (=culture).

The four dimensions of the model serve as the four pillars on which any CLIL activity rests. The 4Cs model is both a conceptual framework for CLIL and a pedagogical tool for teachers when planning their teaching. This "planned pedagogic integration of contextualized content, cognition, communication and culture into teaching and learning practice" (Coyle et al. 2010: 6) differentiates CLIL from other bilingual approaches as it goes beyond their general focus on language and/or content development to include both (meta)cognition and pluriculturality (Wiesemes 2009) as integral aspects of the teaching and learning process, since "language, thinking and culture are inextricably linked" (Coyle 2006b: 13), and CLIL considers these 4 dimensions "not as separate, but as closely interrelated principles ensuring a strong basis for the planning and delivery of CLIL" (Wiesemes 2009: 51).

In a slight variation of Coyle's 4Cs, Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols (2008: 31) list the guiding principles of CLIL as cognition, content, communication and community, rather than culture. Community refers to the learners who consider being part of a learning community to be an enriching experience, but also to the local community with which they interact; teachers and learners are "partners in education", and "students can define their role within the classroom, the local and the global community". In that last respect, at least, their concept of community is similar to the 4Cs' cultural dimension.

Others have also proposed their own versions of and additions to the 4Cs model. Tanner (2011), for example, extends the list to 8 Cs, adding collaboration, choices, creativity and connections to the model. These four additional elements highlight some of the underlying principles of CLIL; for example, CLIL - developed from communicative language teaching - is essentially built around the collaborative production and use of new language and the creation of new knowledge, rather than "repackaging what is already known in alternative codes" (Coyle 2011: 56), the need to express oneself inspires both the manipulation of language and learners "creating their own knowledge and understanding and developing skills" (Coyle et al. 2010: 42).

3.5 From Theory to Practice: CLIL in the Classroom

In the previous sections, the focus has been on theoretical frameworks which provide the foundation for how content and language are interlinked in CLIL pedagogy and which, as a consequence, have fundamental implications for CLIL practice in the classroom. One critical aspect of this movement from theory to practice is the question of who is teaching what for which purpose, and the objectives and motivations of the stakeholders involved

in the design, planning and implementation of the approach. What follows are some of the key issues that need to be determined for CLIL to be implemented effectively.

3.5.1 Walking the tightrope: Balancing Content and Language in CLIL

As defined by Coyle et al., CLIL is a “dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (2010: 1), where both elements are integrated flexibly along a continuum, without a stated preference for either, and CLIL practice responds to the needs of the respective educational setting. While the authors quoted above assert that the full range of the continuum can be and is used, others contend that “European CLIL practices can clearly be found towards the content end” (Dalton-Puffer / Nikula / Smit 2010: 2). Clearly, the umbrella of CLIL can – and is meant to – encompass this wide range of practices, but such a complex undertaking raises a number of questions which need to be addressed when designing and planning CLIL.

For Coyle (2002: 27), CLIL “is a powerful pedagogic tool which aims to ‘safeguard’ the subject being taught whilst promoting language as a medium for learning as well as an objective of the learning process itself”. Such a multi-faceted endeavour brings with it a set of challenges, for example the decision whether CLIL is to be implemented by subject or language experts, as the “number of individuals who speak a given CLIL language and have subject-area qualifications is limited” (Mehisto / Marsh / Frigols 2008: 21). de Bot, for example, warns that

teaching a subject in a foreign language is not the same as an integration of language and content [...]. Language teachers and subject teachers need to work together [...], and together they should formulate the new didactics needed for a real integration of form and function in language teaching. (de Bot 2002: 31-32)

For example, even if subject teachers have the necessary language proficiency, they may be more inclined to focus on content-related outcomes than the concurrent language objectives and may lack the necessary language awareness to understand the linguistic demands of their subject and properly support and scaffold the linguistic development of their learners, so that, “at its worst, bilingual subject-matter teaching can be inhibitive to both content and language learning, particularly where the teacher lacks the ability to be a simultaneous teacher of language” (Butzkamm / Caldwell 2009: 41). In a study of upper secondary subject experts who were teaching their subject through their L2, Moate (2011: 337) found that they generally felt less spontaneous, moved to more lecturing to feel in control and relied heavily on preparation and visual and other teaching aids rather than on their subject knowledge alone.

Language experts whose priority remains achieving language goals have similar experiences. Even if they bring with them, or develop, the necessary subject-specific knowledge, they may be less familiar with the relevant discipline-specific pedagogies which would allow them to present the subject matter in such a way that learners are able to access, process and contextualize the new knowledge effectively.⁵⁰ In either case, tensions may rise which could impede the effective implementation of CLIL. However, Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols (2008: 27) assert that “[s]tepping outside one’s comfort zone into partly uncharted territory is an essential step in the CLIL journey”. It is up to individual departments to find a workable solution which ensures that neither content nor language is neglected, for example through close cooperation between subject and language experts in the planning stage and through team-teaching in the classroom.

3.5.2 Language in CLIL

CLIL classes have two goals: the students are to acquire both content knowledge and the linguistic structures and vocabulary to reproduce, discuss and critically process said content information. Therefore, they needed to be provided with what Krashen termed ‘comprehensible input’. In CLIL contexts, this will necessarily mean both content and linguistic input. For Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009: 40), the advantages are self-evident:

The most potent, true, and non-deceptive language is the spontaneous one which arises when we are completely involved in something other than language. This holds true for bilingual subject-matter teaching, when other school subjects are taught in the medium of a foreign language. This is a means of widening both the scope and quantity of language input and reflects the drive to break through the restrictive, often unstimulating boundaries of the language classroom.

However, Krashen’s ‘input hypothesis’ has repeatedly been criticized because for him, comprehensible input was enough to learn a language and thus made explicit instruction and active language production by the learner superfluous. In reply, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009: 51) ask: “But is understanding messages also sufficient for learning to take place? Is to expose learners to enough comprehended input really all we have to do (the ‘sunburn model of language teaching’)?” This is relevant in ‘traditional’ language learning settings, where the authors identified ‘Doppelverstehen’ (‘dual comprehension’) as a basic condition for language acquisition: “Learners must understand more than messages. For them it is not enough to understand just what is meant. [...] But if we want to really learn a language, we also have to understand not only what is meant, but how things are quite literally expressed.” (ibid.: 51-52) They go on to state that “[a] mere

⁵⁰ The same is true for CLIL research where “it seems that subject matter pedagogies and their integration with language pedagogies are being systematically overlooked” (Coyle 2007b: 549).

situational understanding does not help the language learner very much. He also needs to understand how the foreign language operates, i.e. identify words and recognise patterns [...]” To complicate matters, in CLIL contexts, this process of ‘Doppelverstehen’ will have to be extended to include a third level of comprehension, that of specialised subject content. By necessity, therefore, the focus of a particular lesson may shift from understanding and learning content to analysing the language we use to talk about that content; sometimes the focus will shift back and forth a number of times in the course of one session.

3.5.2.1 Language in CLIL: Scaffolding

In CLIL proper, finding the balance and defining appropriate outcomes for both subject and language development is a key factor in successful implementation. In the classroom, focus will inevitably shift between the academic subject matter and its linguistic manifestation at certain times, but to be truly integrated, neither content nor language should take primacy overall.

Naturally, adjustments have to be made to ensure that students are able to understand, process and analyse subject-specific information and concepts in the L2 which are often beyond the learners’ current capabilities. To enable learners to deal with the cognitive and linguistic demands of this task, teachers have to provide different types of scaffolding which has been defined as “a process in which an expert supports a learner in accomplishing a task beyond the learner’s individual capabilities” (Sharma / Haffanin 2005: 19). As the learner’s competence increases, this support is gradually reduced. In other words, scaffolding is a temporary structure used to help learners act more skilled than they really are. The concept of scaffolding is closely linked to Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where learners need a supportive interactive environment to advance to higher-level knowledge and performance in order to then achieve tasks beyond their ability when working alone.

The aim of scaffolding is to provide the learner with the tools to process and internalise the cognitive and linguistic input. Therefore, the teacher’s task in CLIL contexts is not to reduce or oversimplify the content, but to analyse the cognitive and linguistic demands of a specific learning task and to provide the necessary support students need to carry out that task (Clegg 2007a: 115). In the case of ‘linguistic scaffolding’, this includes specialized vocabulary, key L2 language structures and grammatical features, information on subject-specific text type conventions and structural features, possibly even writing frames. In addition, the “presence of cognates and borrowed words can be exploited for vocabulary development” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 99). This and other types of scaffolding can either

be provided by the instructor (expert) or prepared in cooperation with or by the students (novices) through collaborative work (Donato 1994: 41).

The type and degree of scaffolding required for a specific unit or task is closely linked to the materials chosen or produced by the teacher to present different topics or thematic concepts. Multi-modal forms of introducing subject-specific content, for example, are one way of scaffolding complex input: Visualising content through the use of maps or diagrams can “enable a deeper understanding of the specific subject content and serve to illustrate and clarify complex matters presented in a foreign language” (Meyer 2010: 14-15), thus lessening both the cognitive and the linguistic load of the subject-related input and boosting cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).

In addition to linguistic scaffolding, other types of scaffolding concern the provision of support focusing on cognitive strategies and metacognitive skills, for example through externalising metacognitive processes by asking learners to “reflect on and identify their reasoning processes and its [sic] effect on their learning and decisions” (Sharma / Hannafin 2005: 21). Cognitive scaffolding also involves analysing the amount and structure of the content and complexity of the task and supporting problem-solving and information processing by establishing clear goals at the beginning and refining them throughout an activity. In a similar vein, conceptual scaffolding seeks to reduce the cognitive load of a task, “help learners identify key conceptual knowledge” and to facilitate knowledge retrieval and involves providing, for example, “study guides or questions, definitions, graphical organizers, outlines, and hints” (Stavredes 2011: 95). Cultural scaffolding aims to support the understanding of and connections between different, “other” culture(s) and “to engage in culturally relevant and meaningful teaching” (Pawad 2008: 1452). Finally, affective scaffolding supports the emotional and psychological needs of the learner, which involves, on the one hand, providing a challenging and motivating environment for learning and, on the other hand, developing effective strategies to deal with issues such as anxiety, self-efficacy, and self-esteem (Porayska-Pomsta / Pain 2004: 78).

3.5.2.2 Language in CLIL: Focus on form

In the previous subchapter we have seen how linguistic scaffolding is one way of helping students deal with the complex linguistic input they are exposed to in CLIL classrooms and how careful selection and presentation of materials, the provision of support structures and help with developing coping strategies are part and parcel of effective CLIL teaching. In CLIL classrooms, the language used in and for teaching and learning plays a much more complex and focussed role than in earlier forms of bilingual education which were

often much more concerned with imparting content knowledge, while any gains in linguistic proficiency were thought to happen ‘naturally’ and almost incidentally.

In contrast, the role of focus on form (FoF) – that is, on linguistic features and structures used to talk about subject-specific content – is more clearly defined within CLIL instruction (Pérez-Vidal 2007, 2009; see also Swain 2000b) as a reaction to findings from Canadian immersion programmes which indicated that “subject matter instruction needed to be complemented by instruction that focused on language form, including pragmatic features” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 157; see also Swain 2000b). In particular, the productive skills, both spoken and written, were found to be less developed in these earlier iterations, and students exhibited deficiencies in grammatical and sociolinguistic competence. In this respect, the roots of Canadian immersion in communicative practices are evident, as such “modes of instruction are characterised by a focus on meaning and communication [and] a creative non-restrictive use of language” (Pérez-Vidal 2007: 44).⁵¹

Given these earlier experiences with communicative immersion education, CLIL engages more overtly with more formal aspects of language development. This focus on form plays out in a number of ways: Designing CLIL units always involves setting clear learning objectives for both content and language development. Engaging with the subject matter studied through the medium of the L2, students will acquire “discourse patterns in their second language to engage with contemporary issues of interest, which have direct relevance to their lives” (Coyle / Holmes / King 2009: 12). Beyond the more general language features, speech acts and text types which feature in traditional second language classes, CLIL students will expand their repertoire to include the more formalised genres, registers and styles which are specific to the respective discipline in which CLIL instruction takes place.

Another key element of this more form-focussed approach is the development of language awareness in the students; after all, “[f]orm-focussed instruction [...] does not always involve metalinguistic explanations, nor are learners expected to explain why something is right or wrong [but] learners need to notice how their language use differs from that of a more proficient speaker.” (Lightbown / Spada 2006: 166) The implication is that increased awareness of formal linguistic features will enable students to make maximum use of the language *input* by boosting their language *intake* (Pérez-Vidal 2007: 44) that is, the amount of linguistic material they process and integrate in their repertoire, thus making it available for productive *output*.

⁵¹ In fact, many proponents of the communicative approach criticized earlier behaviourist models of language acquisition because they thought that explicit grammar teaching and especially corrective feedback were counterproductive as the latter may “activate the ‘affective’ filter by raising the students’ level of anxiety” (Schulz 1996: 344), thus preventing the student from furthering their communicative ability.

Despite the clear emphasis on the importance of explicit language instruction in CLIL pedagogy, some studies of particular CLIL contexts have found that there is actually relatively little focus on form, if we take that to mean stepping out of communicative content engagement to focus on grammar instruction or corrective feedback which “might be essential for mastery of certain structures for adult and adolescent learners” (Schulz 1996: 344). Pérez-Vidal, for example, observed English-medium lessons in primary and secondary schools in Catalonia and found that the majority of strategies used by the teachers involved input comprehension and output encouragement linked to content, concluding that the lack of FoF strategies indicated that “language is seen as the means to communicate, not an end in itself” (2007: 49).

As we will see in Chapter 4, this preponderance of content-related interaction at the expense of explicit language work is especially prevalent at the tertiary level, perhaps even more so than in primary and secondary education where there is generally a much closer connection between traditional language arts classes and L2-medium subject instruction. In fact, in such settings it is common for language specialists to venture into the subject curriculum, bringing their tried and tested MFL methods to the subject classroom, whereas in higher education, it is generally the subject specialist who chooses (or is chosen) to teach through the medium of an L2 (mainly English in the European context) without much, if any, pedagogical background in language education.

3.5.2.3 Language in CLIL: Language production

It has been mentioned before that one of the shortcomings of earlier bilingual models was the relative lack of productive proficiency in writing and speaking. According to Dalton-Puffer (2007: 2), the same is true for traditional foreign language learning where outcomes “are frequently seen as unsatisfactory, especially in terms of active learner command of the oral registers”. The understanding that, in order for learners to develop such proficiency, they need a content-rich learning environment where they are encouraged to use the L2 for authentic communication to achieve content-driven outcomes “has been the argument in favor of CLIL education” (ibid.). In that sense, CLIL achieves what communicative language teaching, content-based instruction and task-based learning attempted: “[T]here is no need to design individual tasks in order to foster goal-directed linguistic activity with a focus on meaning above form, since CLIL itself is one huge task which ensures the use of the foreign language for ‘authentic communication’.” (ibid.: 3)

According to Coyle et al., CLIL has two clear aims, namely that learner should “progress systematically in both their content learning and their language learning *and using*” (2010: 35, their emphasis). It follows that clear learning outcomes need to be formulated for both content progression and language progression, and in the latter case, an improvement in

both receptive and productive proficiency is a desired outcome. Overall, research in CLIL contexts has yielded very similar findings to those reported from other bilingual settings.

As we have seen with regard to other forms of bilingual education, the flood of L2 input in target language-taught education usually facilitates the desired positive outcomes for the development of receptive skills. In reaction to the less encouraging findings with regard to the productive skills, an essential element of CLIL instruction is encouraging language production, language practice and the “creative use of spontaneous language by learners” (Coyle et al. 2010: 59). To do so, learners need to be provided with, firstly, content-related input which is cognitively and linguistically challenging enough to motivate the learners’ active engagement with the material without being too demanding to be accessible. After careful analysis of the linguistic demands of a specific thematic unit or task, teachers should employ support strategies such as scaffolding to ensure that students have the tools to function effectively. Secondly, learners need to be given ample opportunity to use the L2 in meaningful, creative ways, to practice newly acquired language material and integrate it with existing L2 elements, that is, to produce output, which is often considered more important than Krashen’s comprehensible input because “learners [develop] their language competence by being required to express their understanding” (ibid.: 91; see also Swain 1995, 2000b, 2005). Dalton-Puffer (2006), for example, discusses the value of using open questions to elicit output, asking for reasons and explanations (rather than simple facts, as is typical for closed questions) in order to generate more complex outcomes.

3.6 Differentiating CLIL from other bilingual models

Where, then, does CLIL sit in comparison with other forms of bilingual education, specifically immersion which is often considered to be its precursor? Cenoz et al. (2013: 2) make the point that “the term CLIL is not clearly defined when compared with other approaches that integrate content and language teaching for L2 learning” and, unlike many CLIL researchers, do not consider CLIL pedagogically unique, which makes it difficult to differentiate from similar approaches. While the authors are correct in their assessment about the rather fuzzy boundaries of CLIL that does not negate the term’s key position as a concept that is unmistakably identifiable as European, and to simply equate it to immersion would do it a disservice and ignore key characteristics which set it apart from other pedagogies (Dalton-Puffer et al. 2014).

Coyle (2007b: 545) claims that the label CLIL was adopted to “position CLIL alongside bilingual education, content-based instruction, immersion and so on”. Some propose that what differentiates CLIL is that students often cite pragmatic, utilitarian reasons for

enrolling in CLIL programmes; however, there is little evidence that, for example, Canadian immersion students are less instrumentally motivated (Cenoz et al. 2013: 6).

Unlike other bilingual approaches, CLIL is very specific about the dual goal of developing subject knowledge and linguistic proficiency simultaneously, even though it is “evident that language-learning goals are the defining feature of CLIL in EU policy papers” (Hüttner et al. 2013: 270) and classroom research has shown that the theoretical concept of (more or less) strict equality is difficult if not impossible to implement (Cenoz et al. 2013). On the other hand, allowing any proportion of content and language or any position it occupies in the curriculum to come under the umbrella term CLIL makes it diffuse and even more difficult to distinguish from similar pedagogies (ibid.: 3).

In contrast, traditional models of immersion contend that the “[f]ocus will be on meaning in L2 subject lessons” and that linguistic input is “likely to be simplified” (Ellis 1985: 151), implying that any linguistic gains are the incidental result of unfocussed language use solely geared towards the conveyance of meaning. This approach seems unlikely to be able to meet the aims of full immersion which, according to Baetens Beardsmore (2009: 209-10), is to achieve “native or near native competence”, even when limited to the “receptive skills of comprehension and reading”, through “intensive contact with the target language” alone. In contrast, CLIL variants “offer less intensive contact with the target language [and] aim at achieving a functional competence in both receptive and productive skills” (ibid.: 210), which is a more realistic goal altogether.

Overall, Ellis describes the principal characteristics of the bilingual classroom as “[m]ixed focus - sometimes on form, sometimes on meaning”, which would fit the CLIL model. However, he goes on to explain that there is “[n]o need for learners to attend to L2 if the same content is taught in L1 and L2” (Ellis 1985: 151), which very much goes against the fundamental tenets of CLIL.

According to Hüttner et al. (2013), one of the aspects that can differentiate CLIL from English for specific purposes (ESP) is the role of the teacher. In their study of teacher and learner beliefs in Austrian colleges of technology (HTL), both parties commented favourably on the “generally collaborative view of the language learning aspect in CLIL classes” - teachers who were subject experts teaching in their L2 without an English teacher qualification felt that they were as much language learners as their students, which put them on more equal footing with their students, while maintaining their position as subject experts.⁵² Equally, the students found the atmosphere in the CLIL classroom more relaxed. In ESP classrooms, on the other hand, “the ESP teacher is seen as the language expert and the students as content experts”, quite a reversal of the situation in the Austrian

⁵² See Chapter 4.2.2 for a similar example from a Finnish EMI context.

example. In the same context, there was also a clear focus on students learning specialized vocabulary in both English and German, which is also a feature typically associated with CLIL, whereas in ESP, there is no focus on parallel development in the L1.⁵³ In terms of their position in the curriculum, CLIL is seen as “complementary to EFL lessons” with “direct professional relevance” (Hüttner et al. 2012: 277), whereas ESP tends to be supplementary (e.g. Greere / Räsänen 2008).

Some scholars (Lasagabaster / Sierra 2009; Dalton-Puffer / Nikula / Smit 2010; Lyster / Ballinger 2011) establish a clear distinction between immersion and CLIL because, they claim, both occur in distinctive linguistic settings: The label CLIL applies to settings where a foreign language is used to teach content, whereas immersion programmes are characterised by the use of a regional or minority language (such as German in Northern Italy). As a consequence, CLIL learners will generally only be exposed to the L2 at school, and in many cases, CLIL teachers are themselves L2-speakers of the vehicular language (Dalton-Puffer et al. 2010, Moate 2011). But even here, other authors take a much more expansive view and include practices as varied as ‘language showers’, student exchanges, individual modules, any variety of immersion and even everyday activities outside school as long as they happen in an L2 environment, a stance which clearly contradicts the categorization outlined above. This inability to identify core features “makes it difficult for CLIL to evolve in Europe in a pedagogically coherent fashion” (Cenoz et al. 2013).

If the language used as medium of instruction is the key differentiator, then English can be said to be *the* CLIL language in most European contexts because it is generally used as the medium of instruction where it is not spoken as an L2 locally (Cenoz et al. 2013). In contrast, minority languages such as Catalan (in Spain), Welsh (in the UK) and French and German (in parts of Italy) are typical vehicular languages in immersion education. In fact, both bilingual approaches will be implemented simultaneously in many countries, but with very different objectives. However, both contradict the practice of languages other than English used as the vehicular language (e.g. German in the UK) and the Eurydice report (2006: 8) which clearly states that any second language can be used in CLIL.

In the end, in light of the incredibly rich tapestry of target-language content teaching methodologies and practices across Europe that are subsumed under the label CLIL, making the position and status of the language used in the content classroom the key distinguishing factor may in fact be the most helpful - and practical - approach in the academic attempt to position CLIL alongside other bilingual models such as immersion. After all, the fact that the vehicular language in CLIL is *not* spoken outside the classroom

⁵³ In a similar vein, the shift from EMI to ICLHE occurs when meaning-focussed instruction gives way to language-focussed explanation (Costa 2012).

makes what happens *in* the classroom all the more important. This key aspect, along with the conceptual frameworks and pedagogical underpinnings discussed earlier (language scaffolding, focus on meaning *and* form, tripartite model of classroom language, multidimensional nature of learning, distinct content and language outcomes), are therefore considered to be key prerequisites for the labelling of any pedagogical context as CLIL.

3.7 CLIL vs ICL: Two sides of the same coin?

As we saw earlier, the term CLIL was coined in the mid-1990s to describe specifically European models of bilingual education, initially in pre-tertiary contexts. However, growing efforts to promote internationalisation and student mobility have led to what may well be called an explosion of L2-medium instruction at university level, and initially the term CLIL was applied to these settings as well. However, it soon became clear that tertiary education involved more complex teaching and learning processes and placed different demands on both teachers and students, and it was felt that new terminology was needed to describe the specific vagaries of this new context.

One term which is widely used to describe tertiary CLIL-type settings in Europe (and beyond) is ICLHE (short ICL), or Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education. This label was originally coined for the first international conference in the field⁵⁴ to specifically differentiate tertiary L2-medium settings from what is generally referred to as CLIL in primary and secondary education. In addition, since the vast majority of research in this field concerns English as the vehicle of instruction, other terms used to describe similar settings are English-medium teaching (Coleman 2006), or English-medium instruction / EMI and are often used synonymously.

Given the relative infancy of the research field, it is not surprising that the definitions and use of the different labels are fluid and, at times, inconsistent. While ICL and CLIL differ slightly in their origin, geographical application, institutional implementation and didactic-theoretical framing (cf. Gustafsson et al. 2011), both are based on the idea that an L2 is used in the teaching of subjects other than the language itself. In fact, the two labels are often used interchangeably, although many experts favour a clear differentiation between primary/secondary CLIL and tertiary ICL (Perez-Vidal 2007; Gustafsson et al. 2011; Costa

⁵⁴ The ICLHE conference at Maastricht University in 2003 was the first academic event in Europe to bring together policy makers, administrators, academic teaching staff and educational researchers specifically involved in tertiary applications of content and language integrated learning. Since then, the (mostly) biennial conference has continued to provide a fertile meeting place for researchers and practitioners involved in L2-medium tertiary instruction in Europe and beyond, and the published proceedings (Wilkinson 2004; Wilkinson / Zegers 2007; Wilkinson / Zegers 2008; Wilkinson / Walsh 2015) are among the most widely referenced key texts in this young field.

2012). Some insist that, like CLIL, ICL describes programmes “where the integration between language and content is explicit” (Costa 2012: 31) rather than focussing on content learning only, in which case the label EMI would apply (Unterberger / Wilhelmer 2011: 95; quoted in Smit / Dafouz 2012: 4). Others approach this issue from a discursive perspective, where “integrating content and language (ICL) is understood as an integral part of the teaching and learning practices and can thus be seen as taking place irrespective of explicit teaching aims” (Smit / Dafouz 2012: 4), so that EMI is used in studies that focus on instruction, while ICL describes studies that “concentrate on the ongoing-teacher-student discourse” (ibid.). Hynninen (2012: 26) prefers to use the term ICL (which she appears to equate with EMI) rather than CLIL in her Finnish study because of “the specificities of EMI at tertiary level such as the diverse language backgrounds of the students and teachers”.

There are two aspects which differentiate the present project from the majority of similar investigations in continental Europe: Firstly, the case under investigation is a British institution and the focus of the study is on a language other than English (LOTE) as medium of instruction. Secondly, the present study focuses on a Modern Languages programme, whereas the research investigating tertiary CLIL/ICL/EMI in Europe invariably takes place in non-linguistic disciplines such as Physics (Airey / Linder 2006), Business (Unterberger / Wilhelmer 2011), Forestry (Hynninen 2012), to name but a few. According to Wächter / Maiworm (2008) and Coleman (2006), L2-medium instruction is much less common in the Humanities, despite the fact that Modern Language programmes seem predestined to serve as settings for CLIL/ICL⁵⁵.

It seems that the experts are unable to settle on a clear-cut delineation between CLIL and ICLHE. Simply using the term ICL to draw a line between primary and secondary contexts and tertiary education seems simplistic, despite the fact that, doubtlessly, the latter places different demands on both teachers and students. However, we would do HE a disservice by undervaluing the methodological and pedagogical lessons learned in ‘traditional’ CLIL settings which are equally valid in informing tertiary practice.

The present study investigates a Modern Languages programme and thus involves a LOTE as the foreign language medium rather than a regional or minority language (which is the case in Wales and various regions of Spain, for example), and as such fulfils one of the prerequisites for using the label CLIL as defined earlier. In addition, the main motivation for providing L2-content teaching at AU is based on the desire to provide

⁵⁵ This perception may be based on the fact that research across Europe has predominantly focused on such non-linguistic discipline settings. The author’s own experience with the Austrian university system has been that in degree programmes such as *Anglistik*, *Romanistik* or *Slawistik*, most content modules, be it history, literature or linguistics seminars, are taught in the foreign language as a matter of course, although even there, the use of the respective L2 is more wide-spread in American and British Studies than in Romance or Slavonic Studies. Why this is not reflected in the literature is unclear.

students with an environment that nurtures the development of sophisticated functional proficiency in the L2 alongside discipline-specific academic achievement, whereas we will see in Chapter 4 that in many non-English speaking countries, internationalization was the main driver behind the decision to introduce L2-medium curricula, with little consideration given to the pedagogical implications.

Finally, in the UK context, the term ICL is virtually unknown; instead, CLIL is used to describe educational scenarios across the spectrum, from primary to tertiary education, regardless of the specific context in which it takes place and of the status of the language used. Given this geographical preference and the obvious differences between AU and other European university settings, ICL and CLIL will be used interchangeably in this study.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, we have described and compared different types of bilingual education that are distinctly European and have contrasted them with their predecessors from across the Atlantic. We have seen how research evidence from early bilingual programmes such as Canadian immersion has led to structural and pedagogical/methodological adaptation in European contexts, and how early European experiences with multilingual education, such as the European Schools model have influenced the development of European language policy.

The term *Content and Language Integrated Learning* is inextricably linked with bilingual education in Europe. This label, which was coined in 1994, serves as an umbrella term for the wide variety of bilingual programmes across Europe which share at least one feature: they have a clear dual focus on language *and* content progression, where discrete learning objectives are formulated for both, and both are assessed. The term *immersion* is also used in certain European settings, but generally, it describes contexts where a minority or regional language is used as the medium of instruction, whereas CLIL tends to be applied to programmes where speakers of a majority language acquire a foreign language.

As we have seen, CLIL is a relatively young bilingual approach and owes much to earlier models which yielded significant research data with regard to the actual impact of bilingual teaching. Deficits which were uncovered in the many studies in North-American immersion contexts led to focal shifts in CLIL, for example its much greater focus on formal language instruction integrated in and directly linked to content units, and its greater emphasis on language use and productive language skills.

Since CLIL is a rather young field of study, it still lacks a comprehensive theoretical framework. Instead, it builds on theoretical models from SLA and relies on a number of

pedagogical-methodological models developed as theoretical models for classroom practice. The two most prominent are the Language Triptych and the 4Cs model, both developed by Do Coyle. The former ascribes three purposes to language used in the classroom: language of, language for and language through learning. This multipartite perspective on language must be taken into account when planning CLIL lessons and designing teaching materials in order to facilitate student participation in the construction of content and language knowledge and development of skills in the classroom. The second model visualises the CLIL classroom as the confluence of four distinct dimensions of CLIL, namely content, communication, cognition and culture. Only in the interplay of all four components does CLIL proper take shape, and therefore, this model is both a theoretical framework and a pedagogical tool for teachers planning their CLIL lessons.

Finally, this chapter has also collected evidence from European research to highlight some of the tensions inherent in the approach, for example, how to balance content and language at the initial programme planning stage, but also in practical terms in the classroom. We have seen how effective CLIL needs to develop students' language awareness and train them in both practical, 'everyday' language skills, but also in the specialised linguistic registers of the discipline in which CLIL teaching is situated. For this approach to succeed, students need to be provided with multifaceted support structures – also known as scaffolding - which enable them to function effectively and creatively in the classroom. In addition, successful CLIL also relies on a more overt focus on formal aspects of language development through form-focussed instruction and on providing students with ample opportunities to take in rich language input and transform it into productive output.

After this general introduction to bilingual education in Europe, we will now turn more specifically to the tertiary sector and investigate the specific circumstances, requirements and needs of students, instructors and institutions who are involved in L2-mediated subject teaching in Europe.

Chapter 4: Bilingual tertiary education in Europe

[W]e try to avoid speaking about English-language education; we always say foreign-language education and everybody knows that in practice it means English, only English.
(Lehikoinen 2004: 44)

Bilingual education is far from a modern phenomenon, and teaching content through a foreign language dates back millennia (Pérez-Cañado 2012: 315). In continental European higher education, foreign languages are used to teach a variety of specialized subjects. The vast majority of L2-medium university teaching features English as the vehicular language and happens in non-linguistic disciplines such as business, engineering or physics as part of an increasingly prominent drive towards internationalisation (see Vinke / Snippe / Jochems 1998; Wilkinson 2004; Wilkinson / Zegers 2007, 2008; Costa / Coleman 2010; Aguilar / Rodríguez 2012; Pérez-Cañado 2012; Wilkinson / Walsh 2015). The Netherlands, Finland, Germany and Spain are at the forefront of this movement, but generally speaking, most higher education systems in non-English-speaking European countries offer some degree of English-medium instruction. Consequently, the existing body of scholarship on CLIL in higher education mostly comes from non-Anglophone countries. With regard to the UK, there is growing research interest in CLIL in primary and secondary education (see Coyle et al. 2010), but it seems that CLIL in tertiary education is a topic which is currently slightly off the radar of UK researchers.

Before we take a closer look at the position of MFL at UK universities in Chapter 6, the following chapter will investigate the development of L2-medium tertiary teaching in continental Europe and report on some of the findings from diverse educational settings found from Spain to Finland which will provide evidence of some of the issues involved in implementing an L2-focussed approach in specialist instruction in Higher Education. In these countries, domestic and international students now participate in English-medium learning, and university policy-makers, administrators and - last, but certainly not least - teachers have to find ways of managing this new multicultural space. Why, how, and at what cost and/or benefit this process has transformed Higher Education will be the focus of the following chapter.

4.1 The internationalisation of HE: English as *lingua pedagogica*

When, within organisational theory, one speaks of the internationalisation of companies and institutions, one is often referring to the development of a greater, enhanced contact with other countries [...]. So here we are mainly dealing with breaking with a one-sided domestic orientation [...].
(Risager 2006: 28)

In the past two decades, European Higher Education has undergone fundamental changes which have their roots in a process of globalisation “characterised by the

compression of time and geographical distance, the reduction of diversity through intensified trade and communication, and new social relationships marked by reduced local power and influence” (Coleman 2006: 1). The world of academia has, by its very nature, always been international: researchers never work in a vacuum, and academic inquiry only becomes meaningful when contrasted with, contested by and contextualised within a wider, generally transnational dimension. Now, the global spread of goods, ideas and people has brought with it an ever-growing number of young people who look beyond national borders to seek out a university education. As Coleman (ibid.: 3) notes, “[s]tudents and academics are more mobile than ever before, and competition for both is becoming fiercer”.

In Europe, the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), formalised in the Bologna Declaration of 1999, has helped to standardise European tertiary education along the three ‘cycles’ of Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees. The initial aim of the EHEA was to strengthen “the competitiveness and attractiveness of the European higher education [sic] and to foster student mobility and employability through the introduction of a system based on undergraduate and postgraduate studies with easily readable programmes and degrees” (EHEA 2010). As the signatory countries adapted their higher education systems to the new format, many continental European countries created new degree programmes “taught either fully or partly in English in order to serve domestic demand for higher education in English and to attract international students” (Brenn-White / van Rest 2012: 6).

4.1.1 Motivation for English-medium Higher Education

With regard to Higher Education, internationalisation is difficult to define, in that it means different things for different contexts. For Knight (2006: 134), for example, “[i]nternationalization is a multifaceted process that is integrating an international dimension into the purpose, goals, functions and delivery of higher education”. This process is mainly focussed on “the teaching functions of universities and the move from local production to satisfy local consumers to distributed multinational production to satisfy a global consumer base” (Healey 2008: 334). Tange (2010: 138) defines internationalisation as “a process of organisational change motivated by an increase in the proportion of non-native students and staff” whose aim, in theory, is to “develop intercultural and linguistic competences inside a global learning environment”. In practice, however, such worthy ideals of fostering cross-cultural understanding can take second

place behind a pragmatic desire to attract overseas students for financial reasons, at least for western universities.⁵⁶

Education has become a commodity, following the rules of supply and demand: “The combination of higher individual [tuition] fees, greater student mobility, and excess of supply over demand [due to aging populations in the western world] has accentuated the market character of HE: the student has become the customer.” (Coleman 2006: 3) In this “process of commodification” (Tange 2010: 138), universities in the English-speaking world have long been the preferred host institutions for international students who value the double benefit of receiving an academic qualification and acquiring the global *lingua franca* English. (Cf. Coleman 2012)

For universities in non-English-speaking countries, internationalisation often starts at the opposite end: They want to provide their home students with a multicultural learning environment to prepare them for the global marketplace by introducing English-taught programmes in non-linguistic disciplines. It is a happy - and often calculated - coincidence that providing English-language education can give an institution a competitive advantage and make it more attractive to a wider, international student pool. In studies exploring the reasons for introducing English-medium programmes, “the initial impetus typically emerges as participation in higher education exchange programmes” (Coleman 2006: 5). If universities want to give their own students the opportunity to study abroad, they must have the means to attract international students in order to fulfil their part of the bilateral exchange agreement.⁵⁷ In those countries whose national language(s) are seldom taught abroad, “bilateral exchanges are only possible if courses are delivered through an international language, most frequently English” (ibid.). However, the benefits of this development go beyond simply facilitating student exchange: “[T]he recruitment of international students and international staff, which English facilitates, leads to enhanced institutional prestige, greater success in attracting research and development funding, and enhanced employability for domestic graduates.” (ibid.)

With regard to motivation for implementing English-medium instruction, a comprehensive study of English-taught programmes in European Higher Education (Wächter / Maiworm 2008) which provides a qualitative and quantitative analysis of English-language-taught⁵⁸

⁵⁶ In the UK, for example, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) set limits for the number of home and EU students until recently. There is no such government cap on the number of international students, which provides universities with a way to increase student numbers and, thus, institutional funding through tuition fees.

⁵⁷ At AU, for example, some Erasmus exchange agreements with German universities have been discontinued because of the imbalance between the large number of German students interested in coming to the UK versus the few AU students hoping to study in Germany.

⁵⁸ To qualify for inclusion in the study, these programmes had to be a) taught entirely in English, b) could not be programmes where English is (at least, in part) the object of study, e.g. in American Studies, and c) had to be a ‘recognised’ higher education institution, i.e., eligible to participate in the European Union’s Erasmus Programme (Wächter / Maiworm 2008: 9-10).

Bachelor and Master programmes in 27 European countries shows that the main reason for introducing English-taught education in general is “to attract foreign students”, followed by “to make domestic students ‘fit’ for the global/international labour market”; this reason actually came first in the case of Bachelor programmes, in which domestic students outnumber international students (53% as compared to 35% overall) (Wächter / Maiworm 2008: 13).

The data reported by Wächter and Maiworm (2008) confirms the increasing value of English as a medium of instruction. They found that the number of English-medium programmes had more than tripled from 700 in 2002 (when the first such study was conducted) to 2400 in 2007 (*ibid.*: 12). The authors posit that this sharp increase in English-language provision may be the result of the Bologna Process. After all, one of the aims of the degree structure reform was to make tertiary education structures more compatible to facilitate international cooperation, student mobility and academic exchange. The Netherlands, Finland⁵⁹ and Cyprus lead the field with regard to English-medium programme provision, followed by Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark. Hungary, Germany⁶⁰ and Turkey occupy the middle ground, while most of southern Europe makes up the lower end of the scale. Generally speaking, Wächter and Maiworm’s study identified a clear north-south divide, with English-taught programmes much more common north of the Alps⁶¹ (*ibid.*: 26). However, more recent studies have shown that Spain is rapidly gaining ground, with more than 30 universities offering bilingual degrees at undergraduate level. This trend appears to be driven mainly by the educational authorities who view teaching through English as an added value in any forward-looking university (Dafouz / Núñez 2009). In the Basque Country, English-medium programmes are a fairly recent innovation and were partly introduced to offer continuity to local students who had experienced CLIL in secondary education, in addition to before-mentioned reasons such as international expansion and increased employability (Ball / Lindsay 2012: 44). Costa (2012: 30) reports that Italy has also experienced a recent boom in English-medium instruction, as suggested by the inclusion of a section on internationalisation in a recently introduced Italian law for universities.

Coleman (2006) discusses the findings of another survey investigating the use of English in European university teaching (Ammon / McConnell 2002), which - like Wächter and

⁵⁹ According to Coleman (2006: 8), “Finland has the largest share of HE in English outside English-speaking countries [and] is spoken of as ‘Little England’ in CLIL circles”.

⁶⁰ However, Germany is among the leading destinations for international Doctoral students: After a well-funded advertising campaign, Germany is now the third largest global recruiter of international postgraduate students (Coleman 2006: 8). See also Fandrych / Sedlaczek (2012).

⁶¹ With the exception of Cyprus, mainly due to the large student cohorts enrolled in English-language education. Enrollment was one of the three factors used to calculate the overall ranking, along with the proportion of institutions providing English-taught programmes and the proportion of programmes provided in English. (Wächter / Maiworm 2008: 24-29)

Maiworm (2008) - found that “the first subjects to adopt English are typically Economics/Business Administration/Management on the one hand and Engineering and Science on the other, with [...] Humanities noticeably much less common” (Coleman 2006: 6). Dafouz and Núñez (2009) confirm the same trend for Spain, where Business Administration and Economics are the most common areas which feature bilingual programmes. In her study of English-medium degree programmes offered at Austrian business faculties, Unterberger (2012) found that these are exclusively found in the second and third cycle at master’s and doctoral level, which chimes with Maiworm and Wächter’s finding that English-medium bachelor’s programmes are rare across Europe (2008: 48).

4.1.2 Criticism of English-medium Higher Education

The large-scale introduction of English as a medium of instruction in European universities has not been without its critics. From the perspective of European integration, the “unmanaged expansion of English certainly threatens to undermine the policy of both the Council of Europe and the European Union” (Coleman 2006: 9), whose language policies are based on the principles of language diversity in the form of individual plurilingualism and societal multilingualism. Wächter and Maiworm (2008) remark that critics of English-medium instruction in non-English-speaking countries have often claimed that the dominance of a single language would devalue the domestic language(s) as the “idiom of scientific expression”⁶², or that this preference for English runs counter to the “national mission” of tertiary education systems to “educate their own citizens”. Airey, for example, reports that “the Swedish academic community runs the risk of submitting to *diglossia* [...] where English is the academic ‘high’ language and Swedish is the everyday ‘low’ language” (2004: 100, his emphasis). Finally, and more importantly for the present discussion, opponents of English-medium instruction “were convinced that teaching in a foreign language would, by necessity, lower the quality of education”. (Wächter / Maiworm 2008: 15-16)

⁶² The fear that the rapid proliferation of English as the language of academic publishing has devalued other languages as instruments of research dissemination is one often voiced by international academics. Those working in the UK, for example, experience exceeding pressure - due to research evaluation exercises such as the REF (Research Excellence Framework) - to publish in English, as very few highly ranked publication venues are published in other languages. The new motto, then, is: Publish *in English* or perish. In addition, academics from non-English-speaking countries have to find ways to draw international attention to their research output. For example, Behrent, Doff, Marx and Ziegler (2011) provide an overview of published PhD theses concerned with second language acquisition in Germany, including a section on research in the field of ‘bilingualer Sachfachunterricht’, or CLIL, in German mainstream education. They do so specifically to provide non-German-speaking researchers with a window into “an SLA research community which, despite having a strong research history and publishing in the most widely-spoken first language of Europe, might be overlooked internationally due to the fact that its primary language of publication - German - is not accessible to many researchers outside Germany, Austria and Switzerland” (ibid.: 237).

This last claim cannot be dismissed out of hand, no matter how hopeful the supporters of English-medium instruction. Leaving aside for the moment the question of the quality of the *language* to which students are exposed, there are other aspects to consider that concern more than just linguistic development. Coleman, for example, fears that the predominance of Anglo-American norms of academic discourse poses a threat to

the distinctive approaches to lecturing in Italian, Spanish or German universities [which] are currently part of the benefit of student exchanges [...] and a key element in developing their intercultural competence, their recognition that cultural norms are relative and not absolute, socially constructed and not given. (Coleman 2006: 10)

A similar concern is voiced by Smit and Dafouz (2012: 8) who state that “curricular harmonization across Europe could eventually lead to content harmonization and, ultimately, to a gradual loss of diversity across university teaching from a linguistic, methodological or disciplinary perspective”.

In addition, internationalisation involves more than a language shift: There is clear evidence that the implementation of large-scale English-language instruction on the programme level can - and does - in fact cause significant upheaval. Tange, for example, describes the effects of internationalisation in Danish higher education:

When they adopt English as a teaching medium, university managers impose a radical change on the lecturing staff, requesting that academics trained in the fields of natural science, business studies and engineering perform the very language-intensive task of teaching in a foreign language. (Tange 2010: 142)

In his study of the effects of internationalisation on “university lecturers’ ability to act and interact in the classroom” (ibid.: 137) in the Danish context, Tange discovered that instructors in English-taught programmes often find themselves in a precarious situation where they are expected to implement their institution’s policy of internationalisation without having a say in the decision-making process. His informants report that, with the exception of voluntary English language training, they received little to no training in “diversity management or intercultural communication” or “any formal instruction related to the practice of international teaching” (ibid.: 141-2).

This lack of preparation and training for those who are charged with implementing L2-medium instruction appears to be a general trend across Europe. To give just one example, Hellekjaer (2010: 233) reports that Norway, like many European countries, experienced a rapid expansion of English-medium university teaching provision since the Bologna Declaration, but that “implementation has suffered from a lack of awareness of the practical and pedagogical implications of using a foreign language, English, for instruction”. Hüttner et al. (2013: 271) identify a clear lack of managerial focus on the national level as one of the issues in this regard, citing Austria as an example where “the education authorities are favourably inclined towards CLIL initiatives and have sanctioned CLIL provision globally and rather unspecifically in the shape of a brief and very general

article about medium of instruction in the national school law”, but there are “no requirements in terms of quantity or quality of provision, including teacher qualification”. While this worrying diagnosis mainly concerns pre-tertiary education, the situation is likely even more muddled in HE, given that universities tend to have far more flexibility and freedom regarding curriculum design, teaching and learning practices and tend to face far less scrutiny from national agencies.

The following section will summarize some of the research from across Europe which has attempted to chart the recent explosion in L2-taught tertiary education and has shed some light on the implications of this new development for both instructors and students.

4.2 L2-medium tertiary teaching: Findings from Europe

The number of journal articles, edited volumes and monographs about CLIL in secondary (and, to a lesser degree, primary) education published in Europe has grown exponentially in the past decade. However, many authors have diagnosed a pronounced lack of empirical research into CLIL provision in general (Coyle / Hood / Marsh 2010), and specifically in higher education (Costa 2009, Aguilar / Rodríguez 2012, Pérez-Cañado 2012). Much of the research output investigating tertiary CLIL practice is concerned with describing newly implemented L2-medium academic programmes and individual teaching and learning settings which generally do not allow for generalisation. Still, there is a growing number of research output which takes a more empirical approach to analysing the processes and outcomes of target-language university teaching and points towards some commonly shared experiences, which will be the focus of the following sections.

4.2.1 Language outcomes in L2-medium HE

As was outlined above, universities have many reasons for introducing L2-medium instruction, among them becoming attractive to international students and thus sharing in the commercial value of education, raising the international profile of the institution, and - surprisingly low on the list for many institutions - providing their home students with an opportunity to improve their chances on the global labour market.

Overall, it is unclear how explicitly European English-medium programmes are aimed at increasing the English-language proficiency of the students enrolled in these programmes. In fact, Coleman claims that “[f]oreign language learning in itself is NOT the reason why institutions adopt English-medium teaching” (2006: 4, his emphasis). This is echoed by Saarinen and Nikula (2012, summarized in Hynninen 2012) who found that English-medium degree programmes in Finland “are not perceived as environments for language learning: the role of English remains marginal in the programme descriptions, and English

skills are stated as a prerequisite for studying in the programme, rather than something to be developed during one's studies". Similarly, Smit (2010) states that the choice of English as vehicular language is often motivated by pragmatic reasons - it is the only language that an increasingly international student cohort shares - rather than by language learning objectives, a development which is reflected in "the recent increase in publications on English as a lingua franca" (2010: 262).

Still, many institutions do pursue language objectives and support students with language problems by making language training an integral part of the curriculum, especially in Bachelor programmes, 75% of which offer English-language tuition, compared to 37% in Master programmes (Wächter / Maiworm 2008: 79). Still, it seems that at many European institutions which have introduced English-medium specialist programmes in recent years, the focus has been on developing students' expert knowledge in their chosen field, whereas the perceived benefits of L2-medium instruction have been left to chance to a certain degree.

4.2.2 The issue of language proficiency

All teaching is mediated through language, therefore, considerable attention should be given to the way language functions in any teaching setting and what is required from both instructors and students to make the teaching of content through the medium of an L2 effective and beneficial for the learners. We have already seen that in many European contexts, L2-taught modules or programmes are introduced which do not seem to include overtly stated language outcomes beyond general assurances that "it will improve your English", and that many institutions provide no language support for either staff who are expected to teach in their L2 or for students who are expected to be able to successfully navigate an L2-medium degree programme. One reason for this lack of commitment to the language dimension in CLIL at tertiary level may be that, as Hellekjaer reports from Norway, "it is taken for granted that lecturers will have few difficulties teaching in a foreign language" and that students "are also expected to be able to understand lectures, take part in discussions and seminars, and write papers and examinations in English on the basis of their skills from upper-secondary education" (Hellekjaer 2010: 233-4).

With regard to language problems experienced by instructors and students participating in English-medium programmes, Wächter and Maiworm's study of European English-medium BA and MA programmes produced surprising results, in that only a relatively small share of both international and domestic students were considered to have limited English-language proficiency, and the "perceived degree of English-language problems of

teachers is also low”⁶³ (2008: 14). On the other hand, some studies have found that, while there is a minimum level of proficiency required of students which is ascertained through different means (internationally accredited test scores or language tests in situ), the same is not always true for the teaching staff; Hynninen, for example, found that “teachers are not tested for their English skills, but rather it is left for the teachers themselves to evaluate whether they can teach in English or not” (2012: 15). Conversely, Ball and Lindsay (2012: 46-47) report that at Basque universities, candidates who expect to teach their subject through English are expected to have level C1 in the CEFR, and an accreditation test⁶⁴ was introduced for teachers who lack formal qualifications in English that are equal to a C1 or C2 level.

Sercu, in her investigation of lecturers’ and students’ language skills in the Flemish context, reports “a decrease in the quality of teaching and the students’ overall learning results and an increase in study/teaching load” (Sercu 2004: 547). A shift into a second language for teaching purposes is reported by many university lecturers to affect their “ability to communicate knowledge in an effective and student-friendly manner” (Tange 2010). Despite their familiarity with often complex and sophisticated specialised terminology in their subject field, some of Tange’s respondents feel uncomfortable when expressing themselves in everyday language. In the classroom setting, this means that they focus on formal and task-oriented communication at the expense of “jokes, anecdotes and everyday examples” because they feel that “story-telling does not work in a second language” (ibid.: 143; see also Moate (2011) for similar experiences in Finnish upper secondary education). This has implications for both the ease with which instructors make the subject content comprehensible to their students and how comfortable they feel about interacting with them in the classroom.

However, many researchers who have investigated the linguistic behaviour of both learners and instructors in their L2-medium encounters have found that, contrary to what was reported by Maiworm and Wächter (2008), the lower-than-expected language proficiency or lack of language awareness of both parties can have clear detrimental consequences for communication. Vinke, Snippe, and Jochems (1998), for example, found that the typical problems of lecturers were linguistic: they gave shorter, less

⁶³ Caveat: These findings are based on questionnaire surveys addressed at, in the first instance, the Erasmus Coordinators at the participating institutions and, secondly, at the Programme Directors of the English-medium programmes identified by the preceding institutional survey. The authors concede that the “answers to these language-related questions are linked to expectations, and it is by no means certain that the levels of expectation - and the standards applied - are the same across Europe” (Wächter / Maiworm 2008: 79). In addition, the question referred to *significant difficulties encountered in the implementation and running of the English-taught programme(s)*, without clarifying what exactly constitutes a ‘significant difficulty’. Still, the authors are cautiously optimistic that the perceived problems have diminished since the earlier 2002 survey, and will continue to do so, which, they speculate, may have to do with “institutions over time get[ting] more used to the imperfections of communication in an international classroom” (ibid.).

⁶⁴ *Test of Performance for Teaching at University Level through the Medium of English* (TOPTULTE)

elaborate and less clear presentations because they failed to give examples, elaborate key points, summarise, use signposting and appropriate pause/stress/intonation patterns (reported in Aguilar / Rodriguez 2012: 185). This is problematic when we consider that “[t]he levels of teacher and student target CLIL-language fluency determine the teacher's input and role in the classroom” (Coyle et al. 2010: 14). If teachers feel uncomfortably reminded of their shortcomings, this can have serious consequences for the quality of their teaching and for the willingness of students to engage in meaningful communication with someone they perceive to be less capable than expected. There are, in fact, indications that the quality of the content is diminished because of lecturers’ low L2 proficiency (Airey 2004).

On the other hand, Hynninen (2011: 25), in her study of L2 speakers as language experts in a Finnish EMI context, reports that students accepted the linguistic expertise of discipline experts who are L2 speakers of the vehicular language more readily than fellow students who are L1 speakers of said language, indicating that “subject-matter expertise and taking on the role of language expert were often found to go together” which “suggests the importance of disciplinary literacy over NS [native speaker] status”. There is evidence (albeit from language learning rather than CLIL contexts) that students actually prefer instructors who are L2 speakers of the vehicular language⁶⁵ for some aspects of language instruction. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002), for example, found that Basque university students generally expressed a preference for NSTs, especially in areas such as pronunciation, speaking and culture and civilisation, whereas they preferred NNSTs for learning strategies and grammar. Fields and Markoc (2004) report nearly identical findings for the Turkish context, where students regarded NSTs as better equipped to teach speaking, whereas NNSTs were preferred for reading, writing and grammar and were thought to better understand student needs. Overall, however, students prefer to be taught by NSTs, which puts the CLIL instructors at many European universities at a disadvantage unless, like Hynninen’s findings indicate, their position as subject experts means that their language expertise in their chosen field is accepted as equal (or even superior) to L1 speakers.

4.2.3 The issue of comprehension

It cannot be denied that some examinations of European higher education settings point a spotlight at problematic aspects of L2 content teaching, such as problems with lecture comprehension in English-medium instruction found in recent studies in Sweden and Norway (Pérez-Cañado: 322). A number of studies (Airey / Linder 2006; Hellekjaer 2010)

⁶⁵ These are often referred to as non-native speaker teachers, or NSST, as opposed to native speaker teachers, or NST.

investigating lecture comprehension have found that students experienced particular difficulties when asking or answering questions and with note-taking, and had to invest more time pre and post lectures (preparatory reading, follow-up reading and peer discussions) to facilitate comprehension in general.

These problems are more keenly experienced by undergraduate students than postgraduate students. Hellekjaer (2004) explains that one reason for this discrepancy is that the latter are more advanced both linguistically and in academic terms, and are usually taught in much smaller groups, which alleviates the comprehension problems typically experienced by undergraduate students.

Comprehension is not simply a question of language, of course, but by using clear linguistic devices to guide the learner, comprehension can be enhanced and ensured. For example, a key genre⁶⁶ in education is the lecture which typically features a certain amount of metadiscourse for the purpose of structuring communication, summarising the main points covered and evaluating the information presented. During these metadiscoursal phases, certain characteristic linguistic devices “have proved to be decisive in the successful delivery of lectures as well as in their accurate comprehension”. These metadiscourse markers have been found to be especially helpful for learners with lower language skills, “since explicit use of organisational markers helps lighten the cognitive load”. (Dafouz Milne / Núñez Perucha 2010: 216-7) In their analysis of university lectures delivered by Spanish instructors in their L1 (Spanish) and the L2 (English), Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010) found that the lecturers tended to use fewer discursive markers in the L2 - either to outline the structure of the coming lecture at the beginning or to summarize at the end what was covered in class - despite the fact that while these are important for understanding in the L1, they are essential in the L2 to provide learners with a clear structure and aid language and content comprehension.

4.2.4 The issue of participation

If we understand learning to be a social process, “mediated partly through learners’ developing use and control of mental tools” (of which language is one, perhaps the most important), and also socially mediated, “dependent on face-to-face interaction and shared processes” (Mitchell / Myles 2004: 195), and the acquisition and creation of knowledge to be a collaborative process, learning is dependent on bidirectional communication and interaction between instructors and students, and among students. Therefore, for learning

⁶⁶ Genre is a key concept of Systematic Functional Linguistics which is interested in the “instrumentality of language in terms of what speakers/writers do with it in different social situations” (Dafouz Milne / Núñez Perucha 2010: 215-6). The term genre describes the “‘cultural purpose’ of texts” which is expressed through “structural and realizational patterns” (Eggins 2004: 54).

to occur, learners must be given the opportunity to interact, collaborate and co-construct knowledge in a non-threatening, encouraging and inspirational environment.

As we have seen, the lecture is a typical genre in university education and generally involves large groups of students and fewer opportunities for student participation or intervention than in smaller seminars or tutorials. How, then, is student participation to be stimulated in such a traditionally non-participative teaching environment?

One key aspect of L2-medium teaching which has been reported on by a number of studies is the degree and quality of student participation during class time. Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010: 225-6), for example, analysed discursive strategies used by instructors in Spanish university lectures, comparing lectures given in the instructors' L1 (Spanish) with those they gave in their L2 (English). Their data shows that, overall, the L2 lecturers used fewer metadiscursive markers during the interaction phase of their lectures, in the form of either questions or comments, to engage their listeners, activate their thinking skills or check comprehension.

This might explain evidence from research which investigated the problems university students experience in L2-medium instruction. A number of studies have drawn attention to losses such as "frequent use of avoidance strategies [due to language deficits], inability to exhibit best performance, decrease in the quality of teaching, decrease in students' overall learning results or increase in study load" (Aguilar / Rodríguez 2012: 184-5; see also Hellekjaer 2004; Airey 2004; Airey / Linder 2006). In particular, the issue of students using avoidance strategies is likely linked to the L2 teacher's inability to engage the learners actively in the classroom, which is bound to have a negative effect on overall learning results and to lead to an increase in study load if understanding cannot be ensured and confirmed in class and students have to prepare for or make up for such losses through pre- or post-lecture self-study.

On the other hand, there are indications that shared L2 use can put "teachers and learners more on an equal footing" which would explain why some studies have found that learners' anxiety about speaking the L2 is reduced in CLIL learners. (Hüttner et al. 2013: 272) In fact, the authors found that one of the clear positive outcomes in the Austrian college context was that CLIL was closely linked to increased confidence in using English - CLIL was "constructed as a success story" which had positive effects on affective factors (ibid.: 278).

4.2.5 Content and language in the CLIL classroom

If higher education is largely interested in "imparting, developing or constructing knowledge" (Smit 2010: 259), then making this - often very specific and complex - knowledge accessible to students and giving them the tools to process and contextualise input and use it as a springboard for the construction of new knowledge is the teacher's

key task. It involves expertise in both core thematic knowledge and skills linked to the discipline and the linguistic forms (e.g. genres) in which the discipline is manifested. As a consequence, subject instructors need to be aware of and familiar with the specific linguistic features of their discipline, and they have to impart this discipline-specific language to their students in order to enable them to function effectively and professionally in their field of study. After all, “language and content are inextricably linked in the context of any discipline” (Wright 2004: 537).

Naturally, this principle holds whether teaching takes place in the learners’ (and teachers’) L1 or L2. However, there is clearly greater effort required to enable L2 learners to participate actively in the subject learning process, and the language support students need is more extensive and has to be planned carefully, especially if students are not only taught but also assessed on the content in the L2 and are expected to evidence progress in their language proficiency as well as their discipline knowledge.

Unfortunately, as we saw earlier, it is unclear to what degree increasing the English-language proficiency of students is a primary aim of European English-medium programmes. Judging by the evidence, such programmes are often singularly focused on developing discipline-specific knowledge, and any improvement in language proficiency is a happy side-effect.

In addition, it has been found that, in university settings, CLIL is most commonly implemented by subject experts (Dafouz Milne 2011; Costa 2012; Aguilar / Rodriguez 2012). This could potentially have detrimental consequences if more attention and care is given to the content at the expense of the language. In many cases, this may be the result of the subject expert’s lack of awareness of the integral role language plays as the “vehicle of the expression” of the content they wish to convey. In that case, “content specialists sometimes perceive language as ‘transparent’, because it appears invisible beneath the meaning it conveys” (Wright 2004: 538).

On the other hand, there is some evidence “that improvement in the communicative competence of the vehicular language is not detrimental to the learning of the content subject or of the mother tongue” (Aguilar / Rodriguez 2012). The question whether learners who learn through an additional language end up not understanding key terms in their L1 is a concern voiced by some teachers (Sercu 2004: 551). In response, Coyle et al. (2010: 16) state that “[t]ranslanguaging⁶⁷ may be used to overcome this concern; for example, by

⁶⁷ Baker, who first translated the term ‘translanguaging’ from the Welsh, defines it as “the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, understandings and knowledge through the use of two languages. Both languages are used in an integrated and coherent way to organize and mediate mental processes in learning.” (Baker 2011: 288). According to García and Wei (2014: 20), translanguaging “refers to both the complex language practices of plurilingual individuals and communities, as well as the pedagogical approaches that use those complex practices”.

using first-language materials (vocabulary and concept checklists and so on) to support teaching in the CLIL vehicular language” (Coyle et al. 2010: 16) while still ensuring parallel L1 development.

Finally, in her study on the role of Focus on Form in Italian university lectures, Costa (2012) states that instances where subject specialists moved from meaning-focussed instruction to language-focussed explanation (e.g. by expanding on lexical or grammatical features or through the use of code-switching) allow these lectures to move gradually from EMI to ICLHE, which in her view is characterised by a distinctive attention paid to language. In fact, she sees those points where technical terms are highlighted and attention is drawn to the linguistic form they take as embodiments of “the concept or integration or, more precisely, that of fusion [...] of the dichotomy between form and content”, so that technical words become “the meeting point between content and language” (Costa 2012: 42-3).

4.2.6 Teacher training

In the European context, most university tutors who teach in an L2 (generally English) are not-native speakers, and many are subject experts who have little or no linguistic training. Research from Italy (Costa 2012) and Spain (Dafouz Milne 2011) has shown that subject specialists who agreed to teach in English put far more emphasis on content and felt that teaching language was not part of their job. In fact, many tutors who agree to teach their subject-specific seminar in English do so because they want to improve their own language skills (Aguilar / Rodriguez 2012: 188; Moate 2011).

Research has also found that students react very negatively when tutors with insufficient language skills teach CLIL (Aguilar / Rodriguez 2012) They feel that the subject content suffers because a) their own language skills are insufficient to understand the tutor, or b) the tutor’s language skills are insufficient to teach efficiently, and feel they cannot improve their own language skills because the language material provided by the tutor is too easy, not varied enough or faulty.

This question of instructor language proficiency is one aspect of a wider issue, that of CLIL qualifications and pedagogical training for university CLIL providers. In higher education, content modules are generally taught by research-active subject specialists whose own research informs their teaching. More likely than not, these experts have little language or discipline-related pedagogical background. Coyle et al. (2010: 24), for example, raise the concern that

[i]n some countries, higher education teaching and research staff have not been explicitly trained in educational methodologies. In these cases, higher education has been viewed as characterized by transactional modes of educational delivery (largely imparting information), rather than the interactional modes (largely process-oriented) characteristic of CLIL.

This raises the question of what kind of pedagogical support in general and language methodological support in particular these subject specialists require to provide successful and effective CLIL instruction. It has been commonly noted that, while subject specialists are generally happy to teach in a foreign language, they are often reluctant to receive training in CLIL methodology. Costa and Coleman, for example, with regard to CLIL in Italian Higher Education, found that “CLIL at the tertiary level is often performed in a rather casual manner because university professors are not inclined to receive training on how to teach in a foreign language” (2010: 26). In a later study, Costa shows that subject experts who teach in a foreign language “in some way or another paid some attention to the linguistic form and to its teaching, despite being subject-matter lecturers and declaring they were interested in teaching only content” (Costa 2012: 43). She sees this as an indication that current teaching could be improved by raising instructors’ awareness of the relevant role Focus on Form plays in language learning and highlights the importance of ICLHE methodology training for university lecturers. However, she also mentions that Italian university lecturers, who enjoy a high social status, are unlikely to “adapt to following ICLHE methodological training or accept English language training” (ibid.).

Aguilar and Rodriguez, in their study of ‘Lecturer and student perceptions of CLIL at a Spanish university’, found a similar reluctance among academics to receiving any CLIL methodological training. They argue that “CLIL training specially adapted to university teachers is necessary so that lecturers can overcome their reluctance to a methodological training and thereby the potential of CLIL is realised” (Aguilar / Rodriguez 2012: 183). And even when such teacher training courses are provided by the university, as is the case in some Spanish institutions (Dafouz Milne 2011: 201), they are usually voluntary and uptake is slow and insufficient. Also in the Spanish context, Dafouz Milne and Núñez Perucha (2010: 213-4) report that many L2-taught degree programmes should be considered pre-CLIL because, while teachers are positively inclined towards teaching content in a MFL, “the focus lies almost exclusively on content matter, rather than on the integration of content and language”, and there is “little or no specific training in the linguistic (and methodological) characteristics of this new scenario”. One reason for this may be that language teaching is not considered as prestigious as teaching in other disciplines. According to Coyle et al. (2010: 24), for example,

[t]he introduction of CLIL in [the tertiary] sector has been influenced by discussion over whether the ability to know and use a specific language is a basic competence, or an additional competence. This, in turn, has opened discussion on whether language teaching is a part of the core of academic life, or a secondary auxiliary science. If language teaching and language specialists have been viewed as 'auxiliaries' in some countries, then teachers may have a lower position within hierarchies.

It is understandable, then, that in a climate where language teaching is considered to be a secondary competence and occupation, subject specialists might be reluctant to receive language pedagogical training.

Ball and Lindsay (2012) report on the Basque context where the first L2-taught programmes were introduced in 2005-06. Contrary to some of the examples mentioned above, the Basque institutions appear rather more aware of the necessity to provide teachers who will be teaching in English with opportunities for language and pedagogical training. There are, for example, language courses offered to candidates who have not yet reached the required level of C1 in the CEFR which “explicitly [adds] an important element of methodology [...] and goes on to exemplify the variety of issues that confront a teacher both inside and outside the classroom”, such as L2 emails, administrative letters and academic text types such as abstracts. Those who have achieved C1 proficiency are offered “a short, three-day intensive support course [...] which focuses on prioritised language needs related to oral presentation skills and pronunciation”, including the use of visual aids, discourse markers and pronunciation on the suprasegmental (intonation, stress) and segmental (frequently used academic lexis) level. In addition, a course on ‘Classroom Practice and English-Medium Pedagogy’ with “a far more explicit focus on pedagogical and methodological issues” was introduced more recently to provide in-service training for EMI instructors. (Ball / Lindsay 2012: 47-49)⁶⁸

Despite such examples of good practice, methodological/pedagogical CLIL training seems to be one area where experts from across Europe agree on a general lack of awareness or interest on the part of both institutions and teaching staff. The situation is similar in the UK: Although the vehicular language used in content teaching is not English⁶⁹, the case study investigating one British university’s CLIL approach shows a similar reluctance towards methodological training, as we will see in Chapter 8.2.9.

4.3 Summary

As we have seen, evidence from European tertiary CLIL settings is a mixed bag of positive voices that praise L2 content teaching as a valuable instrument to foster internationalisation and mobility and critical evidence that this approach can have detrimental effects on both teacher and student performance. Many studies from different European contexts report similar issues, for example with lecture comprehension, which presents problems for both instructors and students.

Many instructors, for example, feel qualified to talk about the discipline-related content, using the often complex specialised vocabulary and genres of their specific field, but lack confidence when it comes to more conversational English which they would use for

⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the authors do not explain whether these courses are voluntary or prescribed by the university (aside from the C1 language requirement which presumably makes the language courses obligatory for new staff), therefore it is impossible to say how many instructors involved in EMI actually partake in the training opportunities offered by their universities.

⁶⁹ At least not in the case at the heart of this investigation, where the vehicular language is a language other than English (LOTE), namely German.

spontaneous personal interaction with students or to joke with the students. They also tend towards slower delivery, less detailed presentations, and often fail to use discursive markers and appropriate pause/stress/intonation patterns to give their lectures a clear structure and make them more accessible. The vast majority of instructors - like their students - are L2 speakers of the vehicular language; they often lack the linguistic proficiency - or confidence - to effectively communicate subject matter in the L2, despite being experts in the field and/or lack the necessary language awareness to understand the type and degree of language support (scaffolding) students need to cope in the L2 subject classroom.

In comparison, the students experience problems with comprehension, especially in lectures, which are the most common academic genre they experience in HE. A number of studies have found that students whose language proficiency is less developed tend to develop strategies to avoid asking and answering questions which is problematic on a number of levels. On the one hand, teachers ask questions to check understanding, and if students avoid answering questions, neither party can be sure that the content has been understood. On the other hand, collaboration and interaction are an integral part of knowledge development, therefore, students who avoid active engagement with the learning process will experience difficulties in absorbing and processing the thematic concepts, knowledge and skills related to the subject. In addition, students in many European contexts also report that they experience problems with note-taking and that the amount of pre- and post-lecture reading and preparation increases with L2 content teaching.

On the institutional side, most universities either provide no pedagogical/methodological training opportunities for staff who undertake L2 subject teaching, or mainly offer optional language training of which university staff tend not to avail themselves. In fact, a clear thread through much of the research published on the topic of CLIL/ICL across Europe appears to be a common call for more awareness regarding the linguistic, pedagogical and methodological demands of CLIL and the subsequent need for training opportunities that are carefully tailored to the needs of those who are expected to implement these L2-taught programmes. If these are made available to L2 content instructors, many of the problems reported by both teachers and students are likely to be alleviated.

This and the previous chapters form the background for the core of the present project which is a case study that investigates one British university's approach to CLIL, focussing on the German section in the School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University. This case study is embedded in the wider macro context of German undergraduate education across Britain. Before we turn to CLIL in British Higher Education, however, the following two chapters outline some methodological considerations regarding the study of teacher cognition and beliefs (Chapter 5) which are

at the centre of the case study presented in Chapter 8 and outline the study design and methodological framework chosen for this investigation and describes the process of data collection and analysis (Chapter 6).

Chapter 5: Cognition, perception and beliefs in CLIL research

One of the objectives of the present study is to investigate how students and staff perceive CLIL instruction in a particular institutional context and their personal beliefs regarding L2-medium instruction. The aim is to understand how this practice is perceived by the two main parties involved, that is, students and teachers, rather than to simply describe its implementation, assess its effectiveness or evaluate its outcomes.

According to Pajares (1992: 307), teachers' (and, by extension, students') beliefs exert considerable influence on their "perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect their behavior in the classroom", and understanding this connection is "essential to improving their professional preparation and teaching practice". After all, "to understand what teaching is, from the teachers' perspective, we have to understand the beliefs with which they define the tasks of teaching" (Nespor 1985: 23). As such, researching teacher and student beliefs has become an increasingly prominent field in pedagogical research, along with similar constructs such as teacher cognition and perception. However, in order to research a concept, it must first be named, defined, categorised and differentiated from similar terms.

5.1 Key concepts of teacher cognition

Borg defines 'teacher cognition' as "an inclusive term to embrace the complexity of teachers' mental lives" and studies concerned with teacher cognition "examine, in language education contexts, what teachers at any stage of their careers think, know or believe in relation to any aspect of their work" (Borg 2006: 50). Cognition, then, covers a wide range of mental processes as it refers to the beliefs that teachers (and, incidentally, learners) develop, the knowledge they acquire, and the complex, often contradictory connection between those mental processes and how they are exhibited in actual behaviour and practice, including whether and how teachers (and learners) perceive these realisations of their own beliefs. Since the focus of the present study is mainly on one aspect of this complex construct, namely on beliefs and perceptions, the following overview will mainly concentrate on these sub-sets of the overall concept of cognition.

Defining the construct of beliefs is particularly difficult because they "travel in disguise and often under alias - attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions [...]", to name but a few as listed by Pajares (1992: 309). For him, the key problem is less the term we choose, but how to distinguish between beliefs and knowledge (ibid.). Borg (2003: 83-86) agrees that due to the multidimensional nature of teacher cognition, "untangling closely related notions such as belief and knowledge is problematic", but he confirms that "[r]ationalization in this respect is one way in which the

study of language teacher cognition overall can achieve a greater sense of unity and coherence” (ibid.: 272). Nespor is less concerned with isolating the term ‘belief’ from similar concepts such as ‘ideology’ or ‘opinion systems’ and makes no “assertion of a claim of priority in the use of the term”. Indeed, he seems quite happy to leave it up to the reader to “explicitly differentiate the use of the term” from its use in other academic studies. (Nespor 1985: 10)

Nespor, like Pajares, is interested in distinguishing the defining characteristics of beliefs, not least to differentiate them from knowledge in order to investigate their role in teacher training and practice. In his two-year study of eight teachers, he makes the connection between teachers’ beliefs, teachers’ own experiences in the classroom as students and their own professional practice. For him, “teachers’ ‘beliefs’ about teaching play a crucial role in the way they formulate goals and define the task of teaching” (Nespor 1985: 3). Drawing on Abelson (1979), Nespor (1985: 11) identifies four characteristics that distinguish beliefs, e.g. from knowledge: existential presumption, alternativity, affective and evaluative loading, and episodic structure. In this view, beliefs presume the “existence or non-existence” of certain entities, qualities or inherent characteristics, they help the believer shape “alternative [ideal] realities” for which to strive, they carry an emotional load which affects the believer’s conceptions, judgments⁷⁰ and behaviour,⁷¹ and they derive much of their “power, authority and legitimacy from particular episodes or events” that form a critical part of the believer’s personal history and experience. In addition, beliefs and belief systems also tend to be subjective, static and difficult to change, whereas knowledge is “fluid and evolves as new experiences are interpreted and integrated in existing schemata” (Pajares 1992: 312). Unlike more ‘objective’ knowledge systems, beliefs “do not require general or group consensus regarding [their] validity and appropriateness” (ibid.: 311). Finally, they are relatively unbounded, that is, they can be applied in very different domains. (Nespor 1985: 11-18)

How, then, do these beliefs find expression in the believer’s cognition and, subsequently, actions and behaviour? Nespor describes three core functions in everyday cognition: Firstly, beliefs determine the setting of tasks and defining of problems, that is, they help with ‘framing’ a problem space and defining a resulting task.⁷² Secondly, the affective nature of beliefs makes them a key component in memory processes so that beliefs ‘colour’ how specific experiences are constructed, stored, indexed and recalled from

⁷⁰ This evaluative aspect of beliefs explains why the term is often used synonymously with values; alternatively, an individual’s values could be taken to be an aspect of their belief system. (Pajares 1992: 314).

⁷¹ Knowledge systems, however, rely much less on feelings and moods, although personal attitudes and beliefs can influence whether knowledge is acquired in the first place. (Nespor 1985: 13-14)

⁷² In contrast, knowledge systems are “shaped and determined by the nature of the problem or task confronted” (Nespor 1985: 13).

memory.⁷³ Thirdly, beliefs and belief systems - because they are episodic and unbounded - are useful when dealing with ill-structured problems and loosely defined domains as the critical episodes stored in the believer's memory can provide solutions to unusual problems and influence how individuals - for example, teachers - make decisions (Pajares 1992: 311). These solutions can be applied to a large variety of experiences because they are not bound to a specific domain, thus making these episodic and unbounded beliefs especially useful for educational settings. (Nespor 1985: 18-27) Beliefs, therefore, guide behaviour, but a change in beliefs does not necessarily precede a change in behaviour; sometimes, the successful outcome of a change in behaviour prompted by an external source (e.g. CPD) will be followed by a shift in beliefs. (Pajares 1992: 321)

Nespor defines belief as "an individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition, a judgment that can only be inferred from a collective understanding of what human beings say, intend, and do" (1992: 316), but points out that in the context of educational research, the term 'teacher beliefs' must always be understood to mean 'educational beliefs' unless specified differently. After all, teachers' educational beliefs are only a part of "the teachers' broader, general belief system". In addition, it is important to specify a context for these beliefs, so that we talk about educational beliefs about, for example, their ability to

affect students' performance (teacher efficacy), about the nature of knowledge (epistemological beliefs), about causes of teachers' or students' performance (attributions, locus of control, motivation, writing apprehension, math anxiety), about perceptions of self and feelings of self-worth (self-concept, self-esteem), about confidence to perform specific tasks (self-efficacy), [...] about specific subjects or disciplines (reading instruction, the nature of reading, whole language). (Pajares 1992: 316)

As we will see in Chapter 8, the present study investigates, if not all, then many of these different beliefs in a specific educational setting and brings together the beliefs about and perceptions of CLIL of both teachers and learners.

Despite the above-mentioned lack of agreement on terminological matters, it is universally acknowledged that "beliefs are created through a process of enculturation and social construction" whereby a person undergoes a life-long "incidental learning process" and, through observation, assimilates, participates in and imitates "all the cultural elements present in their personal world" and, through formal education, incorporates others' ideas and mores until "beliefs are created and created and generally endure, unaltered". (Pajares 1992: 316).

As we have seen above, beliefs are understood to be static and unlikely to change unless challenged externally, whether deliberately or incidentally. The earlier a belief is established, the more robust it is and the more resistant it is to change, even when confronted with scientifically correct evidence to the contrary. Not only do beliefs affect

⁷³ Conversely, "information in knowledge systems is stored primarily in associative networks of abstract semantic knowledge" (Nespor 1985: 15)

how memories are stored and indexed, they also colour how they are reconstructed and retrieved, “if necessary completely distorting the event recalled in order to sustain the belief” (ibid.: 317). How resistant to change a belief is, is connected to its relative position in the belief system which, according to Rokeach (1968; summarized in Pajares 1992), contains within itself all of a person’s beliefs which “differ in intensity and power [and] vary along a central-peripheral dimension”. Beliefs at the centre of the system are “more important and resistant to change” because they are “functionally connected or in communication with other beliefs” and have “more implications and consequences [...] for other beliefs” (Pajares 1992: 318). When beliefs cluster around a specific object, situation or experience, they become attitudes which, in turn, determine actions. Attitudes are entangled within connections to other such clusters or singular beliefs, and these “connections create the values that guide one’s life, develop and maintain other attitudes, interpret information, and determine behaviour” (ibid.: 319). This interconnected and context-specific nature of beliefs makes them “difficult to infer and measure” and can lead to them being perceived as inconsistent (ibid.).

In the 21st century, new avenues of SLA investigation have led to reconceptualisations of the nature of beliefs. Kajala and Barcelos, for example, broadly defined beliefs as “opinions and ideas that learners (and teachers) have about the task of learning a second/foreign language” (2003: 1, quoted in Negueruela-Azarola 2011), and in contemporary investigations of beliefs, they are understood to be either “opinions or generally inaccurate myths regarding L2 learning and teaching”, “metacognitive idiosyncratic knowledge or representations characterized by some personal commitment”, or “ideas which are interrelated with contexts and experiences of participants” (ibid.: 360), which echoes Pajares’ view of beliefs as sitting within complex networks of clusters and connections.

In that sense, beliefs are also increasingly seen as “complex, fluctuating, appropriated and related to affordances” (Barcelos / Kalaja 2011: 282), especially if seen through a sociocultural lense which highlights the context-bound, interactive nature of beliefs. Negueruela-Azarola, for example, takes Vygotsky’s dialectical view of the mind and understands “beliefs as conceptualizing activity [which] emerge in sense-making tasks” so that “contradictions and connections between theoretical ideas, personal understandings, and practical applications emerge in the L2 classroom”. His study illustrates that when L2 students and teachers are able to transform their beliefs into “functional conceptualizing”, they develop and gain expertise. (2011: 359-360). In this view, beliefs are seen as both a social and dynamic phenomenon, rather than the individualistic and static view of beliefs espoused earlier.

Mercer’s (2011) study focuses on learner self-beliefs, specifically self-concept, a subset of such beliefs connected to self-description, the evaluation of competence and the notion

of self-worth. She considers self-concepts to have both “stable and dynamic elements”, and that “the relative dynamism of the beliefs depended on their ‘centrality’, with central, core self-beliefs remaining more stable and peripheral beliefs being more dynamic” (ibid.: 337; cf. Pajares 1992). Her investigation leads her to view self-concept “as a complex network composed of an interrelated web of multiple layers of self-beliefs across different domains at various levels of specificity and differently related to context” (Mercer 2011: 343).

These examples support and confirm Barcelos and Kalaja’s (2011: 285) summary of the nature of beliefs as “context-dependent, [...] variable [yet] constant, complex, discursively constructed through negotiation, dynamic and contradictory”; they have also been found to be fluctuating across time and context, dialectical and transformative (Mercer 2011); they are the product of socially historical and political processes (Negueruela-Azarola 2011) and closely linked to similarly affective constructs such as self-concepts (Mercer 2011) and emotions (Aragão 2011). As mentioned earlier, beliefs are also intricately linked to action. And as we will see later in Chapter 8, this manifestation of beliefs in practice is not directly an object of the present study, but by comparing and contrasting teacher and learner comments on how they perceive what happens in practice, we can infer how certain beliefs are actualised in the classroom.

5.2 Why research teacher beliefs?

If we want to understand what happens in the language classroom, it is essential to investigate the cognitive processes that influence the behaviour and actions of the key stakeholders involved. These ‘mental lives’ of teachers and learners “shape and are shaped by the activity of language teaching in diverse sociocultural contexts” and research in this area of language teacher cognition has emerged as a subdiscipline of applied linguistics (Kubanyiova / Feryok 2015: 435). Key assumptions about teacher cognition, says Borg (2003: 81), are “now largely uncontested: teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalised, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs”.

Holding with this view, it is indeed indispensable to understand the mental processes that underlie these activities. However, for a long time, the focus of language teaching research was firmly on classroom methodology and learner behaviour, while the role of the teacher remained peripheral. Only with the emergence of innovative methods in the 1980s which focused on communication rather than behaviour did cognition, particularly on the part of the teacher and in the context of teaching as decision making, begin to garner research attention. (Burns / Edwards / Freeman 2015: 586-9) These studies consistently found that teachers’ cognitions exert “a powerful influence on their practices, though [...] these do not

ultimately always reflect teachers' stated beliefs, personal theories, and pedagogical principles" (Borg 2003: 91).

In the present study, we are especially interested in those cognitive processes that concern what teachers think and believe about CLIL, how they perceive their role in the CLIL classroom and "how such cognitions relate to students' language learning experience in these teachers' classrooms" (Kubanyiova / Feryok 2015: 436). Like his fellow theorists, Pajares (1992: 314) contends that all teachers hold beliefs "about their work, their students, their subject matter, and their roles and responsibilities". In educational research, these beliefs have been labelled as, among others, preconceptions, implicit theories, teacher perspectives, teacher ideology (ibid.: 314-5). Whatever the label, like many aspects subsumed in the term teacher cognition, perceptions and beliefs are by nature personal, individual and subjective, unobservable and can be difficult to articulate (Canh / Maley 2012). After all, teacher cognition "lies with the unobservable dimension of teaching - teachers' mental lives" (Borg 2009: 163).

The first research efforts regarding teacher cognition were influenced by developments in cognitive psychology. Early topics under study were lesson planning, teacher judgement, decisions made during teaching and teachers' personal theories regarding their practice. These early findings quickly showed that what had been assumed to happen and was in fact 'trained into' teachers did not necessarily bear out in the classroom. As a result, "new theories of teaching were grounded in an understanding of teachers' actual thinking and practice" (Borg 2006: 9) and consequently informed teacher education. It also became increasingly clear that the relationship between teacher cognition and classroom practice is interactive: As much as the cognitive processes of a teacher influence their decisions about and during their classroom practice, how these decisions and behaviours play out in the classroom in turn informs teachers' thinking, and so forth. The same is true for learners whose beliefs have been found to be closely linked to motivation and are prone to change when they participate and interact in different contexts such as study abroad (Yang / Kim 2011).

Other areas which gained prominence in teacher cognition research concerned the subject-matter and practical knowledge of teachers (including knowledge about learners, the educational context, the curriculum and pedagogy), teacher theories, teacher beliefs and teacher judgements. In education, these judgements can concern such varied concepts as teacher efficacy, causes for teacher and student performance, perceptions of self and beliefs about specific subjects and disciplines (Borg 2006: 9) and are founded in personal preconceptions, convictions and (often implicit) theories about teaching in the wider sense. These lead to the formation of what Grotjahn calls "subjective theories" which "can be characterized as complex cognitive structures that are highly individual, relatively stable, and relatively enduring, and that fulfil the task of explaining and predicting such

human phenomena as action, reaction, thinking, emotion, and perception” (Grotjahn 1991: 188).

Overall, these findings led from understanding teaching to be a linear, rational activity to perceiving it as a more constructivist, reflective and individual practice. In addition, it was recognized that, rather than being complex, yet clearly bounded environments, classrooms and the teaching processes and practices enacted therein are set in, influenced by and in turn influence a much wider context determined by any number of “social, psychological, physical, political, and metaphysical” factors (Borg 2006: 15). According to Borg (2009: 167), “context is a fundamental variable in understanding teaching” and must be taken into account when investigating teachers’ cognition and practice, along with, for example, teacher biographies. The aim is to create a holistic view of teaching which goes beyond the purely cognitive to include the personal narratives, experiential knowledge and reflective practice of teachers (Borg 2006: 20-21) who are seen as “active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalised, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs” (Borg 2003: 81).

5.3 Teacher beliefs in CLIL contexts

As we have seen earlier, CLIL is a rapidly growing pedagogical trend in foreign language teaching across Europe which, in many countries, is the result of top-down language policies that must then be implemented ‘on the ground’, often without clear objectives, only a vague understanding of the resources and infrastructure required and little consultation with the grassroots stakeholders, i.e. teachers and students. However, we have just heard that what teachers (and students) think about teaching, their beliefs and preconceptions, are key ingredients in successful teaching. Therefore, studies which investigate these beliefs and perceptions, mainly shaped by personal experiences, must be of significant interest in the field of CLIL research.

In view of the terminological jungle surrounding the complex construct of teacher cognition and to position the current study within this field, it is helpful to take a step back and gain an overall perspective of what can and should be involved in the study of language teacher cognition. Borg provides a useful “framework [...] for researching language teacher cognition (and, by extension, teacher cognition in any subject) which can bring some order to the field and work against this profusion of terminology and concepts” (Morton 2012: 98). The diagram illustrates that cognition serves as the ‘connective tissue’ between aspects as varied as the teacher’s own experiences as a learner, professional development, and teaching practice.

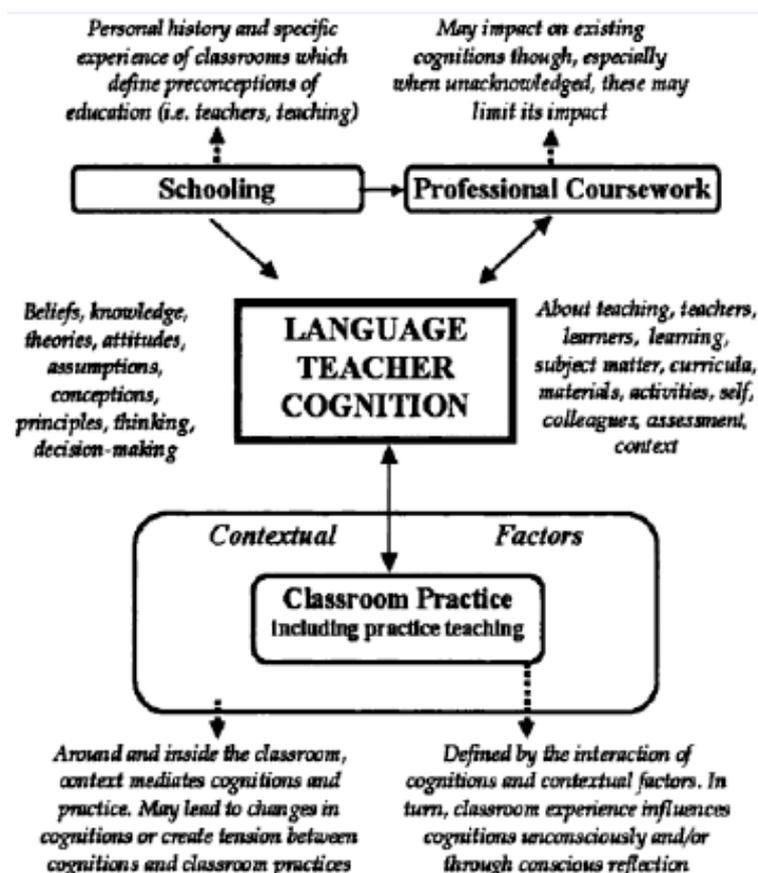


Figure 4: Framework for researching language teacher cognition (source: Borg 2006: 283)

The framework visualizes the many possible avenues for investigating teacher cognition, either as a whole or with a focus on (a) specific aspect(s). The present study, for example, is centred around the teachers' beliefs about the opportunities for CLIL practice afforded them within their particular institutional setting, about the advantages and challenges of CLIL as a educational approach, and about their personal practice in the L2-medium classroom. In order to infer where some of these beliefs stem from, we will also take into consideration aspects of their personal history as learners, professional development and previous teaching practice (see Chapter 8).

Before we briefly survey previous studies on teacher cognition in CLIL contexts, it is worthwhile to look to similar investigations in other bilingual settings, some of which have identified gaps in the existing research efforts in this field. Walker and Tedick (2000: 5-6), for example, note that these "have tended to focus on those issues of most concern to parents and educators", such as the extent of content instruction, L1, L2 and literacy development. Where the teacher was in focus, attention was paid to issues such as the integration of content and language or the role of error correction in immersion contexts without noticeable efforts to "enlist practitioners in the identification and elaboration of issues, problems, and outcomes related to immersion language education" (ibid: 6). In a similar vein, Tung, Lam, and Tsang (1997) stress that there are very few studies of teachers' attitudes to the medium of instruction in schools, apart from those that

investigate whether teachers favoured teaching through L2 or L1 rather than focusing on the issues they face while teaching through L2.

Morton's (2012) study focuses on a specific dimension of teacher cognition, that of language awareness in CLIL teachers in secondary contexts. He explains that the mental lives of teachers have received relatively little research attention within the increasingly crowded field of CLIL research and that even the much more thoroughly investigated field of Canadian immersion is lacking in understanding the knowledge, thinking and practices of teachers. This gap in the research has serious implications "for the future development of CLIL as a practice, for, without greater knowledge of what experienced CLIL teachers think and do, it will be difficult to start to build a knowledge base for a principled approach to CLIL teacher education" (Morton 2012: 11). His findings suggest that CLIL teachers' target language awareness differs from that of 'regular' second language pedagogy and that it is "inextricably intertwined with all the other elements of practical knowledge involved in content teaching" (ibid.: 281). He also concludes that "[c]lassroom L2 interactional competence for both teachers and learners should be a central concern of CLIL, and [...] has only begun to be focused on in CLIL and immersion research" (ibid.: 284).

The study by Hüttner et al. (2013) draws on Spolsky (2004) whose tripartite model of language policy integrates language beliefs, language practices and language management and can be used, for example, to explain a community's linguistic behaviour. Hüttner et al. champion this expanded model of language policy as a workable approach to investigating the implementation of CLIL by focussing on the lay theories of teachers and learners in upper secondary education in Austria. In their view, beliefs are "lay theories of teachers and learners and constitute the complex cluster of intuitive, subjective knowledge about the nature of language, language use and language learning" (Hüttner et al. 2013: 269). Hüttner et al. "consider the beliefs held by all stakeholders in education to be of value" and thus "focus equally on CLIL learners and teachers" (ibid.: 270), a principle which also informs the present study.

A lack of top-down managerial focus beyond sweeping, yet vague ministerial directives regarding L2-medium instruction means that it is often left to individual schools to implement CLIL without clear curricular guidelines, methodological concepts or access to materials, and "the practice of CLIL is thus exclusively guided by experiential criteria and beliefs of the individuals involved" (ibid.: 271). Unless these beliefs are grounded in concrete research findings, there is a clear danger that unfounded beliefs and assumptions cause those in charge of implementing CLIL to either re-invent the wheel, get stuck in the mud of trial-and-error, or find out to their detriment that their preconceptions were wrong. In the Austrian example, positive beliefs about CLIL practice clearly contribute to it being seen as effective without a perceived need to actually test its

efficacy, which “seems to be a reason why there is remarkable [sic] little call for research evidence in this area” (Hüttner et al. 2013: 280). Regardless of whether that is a legitimate perspective, it clearly shows the power of beliefs and the potential for conflict if these grassroots beliefs should clash with policy statements ‘from above’ (Cenoz et al. 2013: 14). According to Dalton-Puffer et al. (2010: 3), certain beliefs about CLIL, that it is “innovative, modern, effective, efficient and forward-looking”, are likely to have contributed to its swift proliferation. Investigating teacher beliefs also picks up on calls for a stronger focus on teacher agency (process) rather than learner proficiency (product) (Moate 2011: 335). The same holds true, for example, for the role of students’ emotions in language learning, which has received far less attention in SLA than more product-oriented cognitive factors (Aragão 2011).

The connection between teacher knowledge and beliefs is an important one in the sense that, for example, being informed about pedagogical and theoretical concepts regarding CLIL is likely to shape a teacher’s beliefs regarding what should and/or does happen in the classroom and their position therein which will, in turn, influence classroom practice. However, any incongruities between stated teacher beliefs and in-class practices “should not be seen as a flaw in teachers”, given that “the social, institutional, instructional, and physical settings in which teachers work often constrain what they can do” (Borg 2009: 167). We will see in Chapter 8 how this plays out in the context at the heart of the AU case study.

5.4 Methodological considerations when researching teacher cognition

The objective of the present study is, among others, to investigate how students and staff perceive CLIL instruction in a particular institutional context and their personal beliefs regarding L2-medium instruction. This brings up a number of issues related to research design because the various aspects subsumed under the term teacher cognition such as perceptions and beliefs are by nature personal, individual and subjective, unobservable and can be difficult to articulate (Canh / Maley 2012). Understanding an individual’s beliefs can be difficult “because [they] are often unable or unwilling, for many reasons, to accurately represent their beliefs” (Pajares 1992: 314). The fact that teacher cognition “lies with the unobservable dimension of teaching - teachers’ mental lives” (Borg 2009: 163) and therefore “cannot be directly observed or measured but must be inferred from what people say, intend, and do” (Pajares 1992: 314) means that the methods used to collect data need to be chosen carefully to help informants articulate what they believe and how they experience their practice. Among the most common methods used to make explicit teacher (and student) beliefs are self-report instruments such as questionnaires and verbal commentaries including interviews (ibid.: 167-8), which are the two methods chosen in the present case study. Both of these measures are used to investigate how

students and teachers experience CLIL at AU, their perceptions of the approach and their beliefs about its impact and efficacy. This data tells us much about what students and teachers think, but “cannot be used as measures of actual practice” (Borg 2006: 184) unless supplemented by, for example, classroom observation, which, Borg contends, can “additionally but not necessarily” be part of teacher cognition research (ibid.: 50).

Our concern at present is how teacher beliefs shape their perceptions of what goes on in the classroom and how these, by their nature subjective, beliefs bear out when compared to those of the students present in the same classroom setting. Therefore, the present study is interested in ascertaining beliefs and perceptions pertaining to a specific educational context rather than actual classroom practice. The intention is to make a link between what language teachers think, feel and believe about their teaching and what students think, feel and believe about their learning (Kubanyiova / Feryok 2015: 442) and, based on these findings, to make recommendations regarding possible avenues for positive change.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has provided a concise summary of the research field of teacher (and learner) cognition, by which we mean the mental lives of teachers and learners, what they know, think and believe about the teaching and learning of languages. We have seen that the construct of teacher beliefs has enjoyed considerable attention from pedagogical researchers in the past, but that consensus about how to delineate the concept of beliefs from similar constructs such as theories of practice, ideology, etc. has not been reached. Still, there is agreement about some key characteristics of beliefs, including the fact that they are often based on significant personal experiences, are of a somewhat contradictory nature, and that they are more or less mutable, depending on where they sit in the complex networks of cognitive connections that make up a teacher’s understanding of their profession and practice.

The present study is principally concerned with those cognitive processes that underlie what teachers think and believe about CLIL, how they perceive their role in the CLIL classroom and the learners’ language learning experience as reflections of their teachers’ cognitions as realised in teaching practice. For such investigations of teacher beliefs, Pajares (1992: 327) notes that qualitative research methodology is “relevant, appropriate, and promising”. Such methods include, among others, open-ended interviews, responses to dilemmas and vignettes, case studies, and biography. In order to ensure the validity and value of this particular study, qualitative and quantitative data was collected from all parties directly involved in classroom practice, triangulated across informant groups and supplemented with a document-based investigation of the setting to do justice to the context-specific nature of beliefs, as will be explained in detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Research methodology

The present study aims to investigate two separate, but connected issues: Firstly, the current proliferation of CLIL in German undergraduate programmes in the UK, that is, the extent to which the target language German is used to teach subject-specific content modules in Modern Language degrees. Secondly, the specific practice of CLIL-type provision at one British university. The former was investigated by collecting information from Heads of German at 28 British universities with the help of an online survey, whereas the latter is presented as a case study and rests on qualitative and quantitative data collected from two sources, the teaching staff and the students enrolled in undergraduate German programmes at AU. This chapter discusses the methodological considerations which informed the choice of research instruments used to gather and interpret data from three different groups of informants and outlines the benefits and limitations of the research approach chosen for this particular purpose.

6.1 Macro-context: L2 content teaching in UK German departments

A case study is always interested in a particular context which is clearly defined and in some way unique, which is why it is of interest to the researcher in the first place. In the present case, the object of the study is one particular German department at one particular university in the United Kingdom. The case study was designed, and the research approaches selected, to allow us to draw a detailed picture of the chosen context without making any claims to generalisation. Still, the German department at the heart of the case study does not exist in a vacuum and is subject to outside forces - be they political, economic, socio-cultural - whose effects will manifest in more or less obvious ways. Therefore, the case study itself was preceded by a survey of German departments across the United Kingdom to investigate the current proliferation of CLIL in British Higher Education. Data were collected by means of an online survey⁷⁴ which was administered to Heads of German staff at British universities to elicit information about institutional parameters which may influence the implementation of target-language content teaching. The survey was created using the free online software SurveyMonkey and deliberately kept rather short to increase the likelihood of being completed by busy Heads of German and thus increase the response rate.

This first group of informants – Heads of German – was selected in order to provide information regarding the first of the two core research questions of this study, namely to determine the extent of L2-taught content provision in German undergraduate

⁷⁴ See Appendix 1.

programmes in the UK and to investigate how certain institutional parameters influence the introduction of such CLIL-type provision in undergraduate modern language programmes in UK Higher Education. This data collection method was chosen because an initial investigation of the respective university websites failed to provide the relevant information and because it allowed for the use of open questions and voluntary additional comments. As the analysis shows, these additional comments yielded some significant information regarding, for example, the reasons behind the introduction or abandonment of CLIL-type provision at some universities (see Chapter 7.3.3).

It was decided early on that the survey would only be sent to universities which offer German as a Single Honours degree or as part of a Joint or Combined Honours degree, as they were more likely to feature modules which were content-based rather than purely language-oriented. These universities were determined by consulting UCAS⁷⁵, the Association for German Studies website⁷⁶ which lists all German departments in Great Britain and Ireland, and the Heads of German forum which holds annual meetings of representatives from British German departments, organised by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The final list comprised 51 universities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The online survey was designed to determine the *status quo* of CLIL in Higher Education, that is, how widespread integrating content and language is in German undergraduate programmes, and some of the institutional parameters underlying German UG provision. A set of initial questions about the factors which may influence a German department's decision to integrate content and language teaching informed the design of the survey which was kept as short as possible in order to increase the likelihood of its completion by busy academics. Some of these questions arose from personal experience in the UK higher education sector, others from conversations with colleagues in numerous German departments across the country, or from academic literature on MFL teaching and learning in British tertiary education:

- Are 'younger' universities more likely to employ a teaching approach such as CLIL than more traditional institutions?
- Are German sections positioned within a MFL department more or less likely to offer target-language content teaching than separate German departments?

⁷⁵ UCAS is the national organisation responsible for managing applications to higher education courses in the UK. Students search for, receive information about and apply to their chosen degree subjects through the UCAS website.

⁷⁶ <http://www.ags.ac.uk/depts.htm>

- Does a compulsory Year Abroad increase the likelihood of target-language content teaching as a way to prepare students for an extended stay abroad?
- Are content modules in later stages of the degree programme more likely to be taught in German than those in the early stages of the curriculum?
- Are certain subjects more likely to be taught in German than others?
- Are teaching fellows and DAAD / OeAD lecturers more likely to teach content in German than readers and professors?
- Are those teaching content modules in the target language more likely to be L1 speakers of German?

Question Q2 ('How would you describe your university?') asks respondents to select which type of university their institution represents. In our case, 'type' is used as a purely descriptive term and is mostly determined by the age of the university, i.e. when it was founded or chartered. British universities also arrange themselves in groups according to parameters such as research focus (Russell Group) or business focus (University Alliance)⁷⁷. However, since these groups do not comprise all UK universities, using the descriptive category 'type' related to age was deemed more appropriate for the present purpose. Asking for a type assignment will allow us to answer the question whether 'younger' universities, that is, those institutions founded or chartered since the 1960s, are more likely to teach through the medium of German than more traditional institutions.

The decision which categories to use was difficult because different sources offer varying descriptions for types of universities and assign different universities to these categories. However, most sources⁷⁸ agree on four types: Ancient university describes institutions founded before 1800, Red Brick university means chartered in the 19th and early 20th century, Plate Glass universities were chartered between the 1960s and 1992, and New university describes post-1992 institutions⁷⁹. The website serving as a source here, The Student Room (TSR)⁸⁰, adds a fifth group, Recently created universities, which have been granted university status since 2005. This source was chosen because it provides the most comprehensive list of universities and the groups they fall into, and information about those that do not easily fit into these categories.

⁷⁷ A list of university groups can be found at <http://www.ucas.ac.uk/students/wheretostart/heexplained/universitygroups>.

⁷⁸ Most of these sources are education websites aimed at providing information for prospective students, both domestic and international, e.g. StudyLink (<http://studylink.co.uk/universities/>) or BrightWorld (http://www.brightworld.co.uk/info/detail.asp?newsStory=study_in_the_uk_13).

⁷⁹ http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/wiki/Types_of_University

⁸⁰ www.thestudentroom.co.uk is an online student community with over 250,000 members. It provides information about higher education in the UK as well as a discussion forum for past, present and future students in the UK.

A link to the survey was distributed to department / section Heads by email, along with a short message explaining the PhD project and guaranteeing the voluntary and confidential nature of their participation. The initial email was sent out in mid-August 2012, followed by monthly reminders in September, October and November 2012 to those universities who had yet to complete the survey. In the end, the overall response rate reached 55%, with 28 of the 51 universities completing the 10-question survey.

6.1.1 Issues with survey design

When the first responses started to come in, it became clear that some respondents had problems with the questionnaire, which resulted in missing information or contradictory answers. As a result, some responses were amended by the author after the initial data collection; wherever possible, missing responses were supplied after consulting the respective university websites for information. These amendments included both data cleaning - that is, correcting impossible or contradicting data or data which was entered incorrectly - and, to some degree, data manipulation in cases where data was missing and had to be added by the researchers in order to complete the data set. (Dörnyei 2003: 104-106) In the following, we will describe instances where data cleaning or data manipulation was necessary and explain how the data was amended.

In Q2, for example, some of the respondents were unsure where to place their university in the five types of universities provided in the survey. This meant that some of them ticked a type and then added a qualifying comment in the 'other' category, while others added a description in the 'other' category without choosing one of the five types given, and in two cases, the wrong type was assigned by the respondent. In these cases, the most appropriate of the five categories was assigned during data analysis, based on the classification in TSR, in order to provide as complete a picture as possible. This adjustment was made in seven responses.

There were other cases where information was not provided by the respondents: In one case, for example, Q3 ('Where is German positioned within the university?') was left blank; after consulting the respective university's website⁸¹, it was established that German sits within the MFL department, and the survey response was amended accordingly to complete the data set.

There were also issues with question Q5 ('Are any of the content modules in your German programmes taught in German?'); in three cases, respondents answered 'No', but still answered later questions (Q7-10) referring to target-language-taught modules.

⁸¹ <http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/modernlanguages/> [accessed 16 February, 2013]

In one case, the explanation may be that, according to an optional text comment added in Q6, the respondent university is planning to introduce target-language taught modules in the academic year 2013-14, and the answers regarding target-language content teaching may refer to such future additions to the curriculum. Unfortunately, the university website⁸² offers no information to explain these responses; therefore the slightly contradictory answers could not, in good consciousness, be amended.

In the second case, the respondent answered 'No' to Q5, yet still went on to answer subsequent content-related questions. Given the programme description⁸³ on the university website, one possible explanation is that the respondent may have been referring to language-oriented modules when answering Q7 ('Please indicate at which programme level target-language content instruction takes place'), Q9 ('Who teaches content modules in the target language (German)?') and Q10, which elicits information about the native language of tutors teaching content modules in the target language (German). Therefore, the answers to these later questions were removed to provide a more accurate overall picture.

In the third case, the respondent indicated in Q5 that no content modules are taught in German, but then, in Q6 ('Are there any plans to introduce content modules taught in the target language (German)?') confirmed that there are such plans, adding in the comment box: 'We keep reviewing this, and occasionally individual modules are taught in the target language.' The answers to Q7-10 may refer to these content modules occasionally taught in the target-language. To determine whether the negative answer in Q5 may have been given in error, the respondent university's website was consulted, and indeed, the description of their German programmes⁸⁴ contains the statement: 'One distinctive feature of the way that these modules are taught from level 2 onwards is the use of German in lectures and some assessments.' In light of this information, and given the responses to Q7-10 provided by the respondent, the response to Q5 was changed from 'No' to 'Yes'.

One respondent ticked 'Yes' in Q5, but instead of proceeding to Q7 as requested, they also answered Q6, which could be seen as contradicting the earlier positive answer. The response was therefore amended by removing the answer to Q6.

Despite these shortcomings, the data harvested in this survey provides interesting information about current CLIL practices in German programmes across the UK, which is presented in Chapter 7.

⁸² <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/languages.htm> [accessed 15 February, 2013]

⁸³ <http://www.gla.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/german/> [accessed 15 February, 2013]

⁸⁴ Found at <http://www.swan.ac.uk/german/> [accessed 15 February, 2013]

6.2 The micro-context: The case study

The online survey described above provides useful information about the general extent of CLIL in German undergraduate programmes in the UK, and about some of the factors which influence its implementation in certain types of institutions. However, these findings - due to the nature of the online survey tool - can only tell part of the story. Therefore, a case study approach was used to investigate in greater detail how one university implements target-language content teaching in its Modern Languages degrees.

6.2.1 The case study in educational research

Case study research is a research design which is commonly used in social science research and is usually employed to “explain some present circumstance (e.g., ‘how’ or ‘why’ some social phenomenon works)” and is relevant for research questions “which require an extensive and ‘in-depth’ description of some social phenomenon” (Yin 2009: 4). Educational settings are usually very complex constructs, influenced by a multitude of factors, including the makeup of the student body, underlying personal or institutional teaching practices, etc. The case study approach is appropriate for this context because it allows the researcher to take into account the particular social, cultural and political context of a case. In general terms, a case study can be said to be “defined by interest in an individual case, not by the methods of inquiry used” (Stake 2005: 443). Language education and classroom research lends itself naturally to a case study approach, as case studies “focus on one particular instance of educational experience and attempt to gain theoretical and professional insights from a full documentation of that instance” (Freebody 2002: 81).

Stake differentiates between three different types of case study: intrinsic, instrumental and collective case study (Stake 2005: 445-446). At present, we are dealing with a intrinsic case study which is undertaken with the aim of understanding one particular case and not “because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem” (ibid.: 445). This is similar to what Yin (2003, 2009) calls descriptive case studies which provide a “contextualized and detailed description of the entity under investigation” (Nunan / Bailey 2009: 166). Therefore, the aim is not to extrapolate general conclusions to be applied to other contexts or for theory-building. Rather, the study seeks to understand the unique and complex conditions in which L2-content teaching takes place and the beliefs and attitudes of teachers and students in that context. These findings are not generalized, but embedded within a wider context, taking account of instances where macro-contextual conditions affect the case under consideration and contrasting the particularities of the case and the experiences of informants with other cases in similar contexts in order to draw parallels or identify differences.

Traditionally, case study research has often been associated with qualitative methods as they give the researcher the opportunity for “experiential knowledge of the case and close attention to the influence of its social, political and other contexts” (Stake 2005: 444). In our case, we are dealing with an embedded, as opposed to a holistic, case study. What distinguishes embedded from holistic case studies is that the former “involve more than one unit, or object, of analysis and usually are not limited to qualitative analysis alone” (Scholz 2002: 9).

The present case study employs a mixed-method approach, which means that it combines qualitative and quantitative methods in order to include a varied range of data that can reflect anything from educational policy to the parameters of a specific classroom constellation. After all, what most classroom research is interested in is the process of learning and teaching which is influenced by a wide range of factors and concerns different groups of players who bring their own expectations, experiences and agenda to the table. The focus in the present case study is on how students and instructors experience subject-specific content teaching in the target language at one particular institution. In addition, documentary information was collected from different sources, such as newspaper articles, government reports, websites, internal documents, reports and module descriptions, to provide a broader context for and supplement the primary data collected from staff and students.

A key feature of case study research is that it is based on data from different sources about the same context. Possible sources of evidence are 1) documentation (e.g. reports, internal records, evaluations, news items, etc.), 2) archival records (e.g. statistical data, personnel records, survey data, etc.), 3) interviews and surveys, 4) direct observation, for example, or meetings or classrooms, where the researcher stands outside the context under observation, 5) participant-observation, where the researcher is no longer a passive observer but participates in the events under observation, and 6) physical and cultural artifact. (Yin 2009: 101-113) In our case, data was collected mainly through 3) interviews and surveys, supplemented with information from 1) written documentation.

Using different data sources allows for “a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning” (Stake 2005: 454). In the current case study, qualitative and quantitative methods are integrated in what Mayring (2001) calls the ‘triangulation model’ where a question is approached from various perspectives with different methods. This process of triangulation is one of the three principles of data collection. In fact, “a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence” (Yin 2009: 115-116) to corroborate findings and render them more convincing and accurate, to “minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding” (Stake 1995: 109). The second principle of data collection is validity, more specifically *construct validity* which

means that the findings of the study actually represent the initial intention of the project (Merriam 1998), *internal validity* which means that “the claims made by the researcher can be confidently upheld”, and *external validity* which means that the findings can be generalized beyond the bounded context of the case study (Nunan / Bailey 2009: 64-65). Finally, a case study must also adhere to the principle of reliability which is achieved by maintaining a clear chain of evidence and making it possible for the reader of the case study “to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions” (Yin 2009: 122). Reliability also means that the research findings must be reproducible, that is, a study is reliable if it is repeated and achieves the same results.

Both reliability and validity are closely connected to triangulation, as “multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon” (ibid.: 116-117). In fact, both reliability and validity are issues of quality control as they concern whether a case study’s results are a realistic interpretation of the data and can be generalized “beyond the subjects under investigation to a wider population” (Nunan 1992: 17). This is difficult to achieve in educational research as the context in which it takes place is bound to change constantly. However, a certain degree of reliability is possible in educational case studies when data sources and methods of data collection are carefully documented (Yin 2009).

Case studies allow for a phenomenon to be studied in context and are “centered on description, inference and interpretation” (Nunan / Bailey 2009: 162). Especially in a mixed-method approach, they rely on rich data from multiple sources to “explore and describe the context as an essential part of understanding the phenomenon under investigation” (ibid.). Another advantage of case studies is that the insights gained from them can be useful for immediate action, e.g. for staff development, institutional evaluation or policy making.

6.2.2 Data collection

The case at the heart of this study may be broadly defined as the German department at AU. The study is based on primary data collected from two different groups of participants: Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the German instructors involved in implementing CLIL, and student questionnaires produced quantitative data relating to the undergraduates’ experience of L2-taught content instruction. The decision to choose these two groups of informants is directly linked with Research Question 2 which asks how the two main stakeholders in the CLIL classroom,

that is, students and instructors, experience L2-medium content instruction as implemented at AU and whether their experiences chime with those of students and instructors involved in CLIL in similar settings across European HE. As we will see in Chapters 7 and 8, there are ample studies of CLIL across different countries and disciplines in European HE, but hardly any research has been conducted in this educational setting in the UK. The present study aims to fill that gap by giving a voice to British students and teaching staff engaged in shared CLIL practice.

6.2.2.1 Qualitative data: Instructor interviews

As outlined above, one key group of informants for the present case study were the students who experience target-language content teaching at Aston. However, case study research is interested in “discovering and portraying the multiple view of the case” (Stake 1995: 64), which is why the pool of informants also included the instructors in the German group who implement CLIL and can provide an alternative perspective regarding what actually happens in the classroom. Since we are mainly interested in the informants’ “practical” or “personal knowledge”, that is, beliefs and implicit theories (Borg 2006: 23), the form of data collection chosen for this small group of participants was the interview since interviews are a commonly used means of data collection in studies on teacher beliefs (Canh / Maley 2012). As Seidman (1998: 4) states, “[i]nterviewing provides access to the context of people’s behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior”.

All members of the German staff who are involved in teaching content modules that are offered as part of the German undergraduate programmes at AU were interviewed individually in semi-structured interviews centred around a predetermined interview guide⁸⁵, i.e., a list of questions the researcher intends to ask (Merriam 1998: 81). In this interview situation, the interviewer “asks questions, prompts answers, and elicits reformulations of responses” to encourage participants to talk about specific themes, while also “allow[ing] the agenda to be constructed by the respondent”, expressing themselves freely (Scott / Usher 1999: 109). Consequently, the order of themes was random and changed according to the direction interviewees took as they narrated their experience⁸⁶. In turn, this flexible and reflexive approach allowed new themes to emerge (see Table 1). Five of the six interviews were carried out in the instructors’ L1, German, and on campus; the sixth instructor was interviewed in her L1, English, at a different location because she

⁸⁵ See Appendix 3.

⁸⁶ See Appendix 4 for a sample transcript of an instructor interview. This interview was chosen for inclusion here because it the only one carried out in English as the interviewee was the only L1 speaker of English among the six members of staff interviewed for the project.

had left the university at the time the interview took place⁸⁷. Giving the participants the choice regarding the interview language is one way of ensuring that they feel comfortable and are able to convey their thoughts as precisely as possible.

During the interview, the participants were directed to two written supplements⁸⁸: Firstly, a list of reasons why a) students and b) the instructor themselves used English in German-taught content classes. The list of options is identical to the options given to students in questions D9 and D10 in the first round of questionnaires (see Appendix 5) to allow for comparison between student and instructor perceptions. Secondly, participants were asked to comment on three excerpts from the final report of a periodic review of the Languages and Translation Studies academic subject group in December 2010, carried out by the university's Learning and Teaching Committee every five years, which explicitly mention practices of content and language integration in LTS programmes.

The interviews were complemented by a short questionnaire (see Appendix 2) which asked instructors to answer general questions about their educational background, experience of teaching language and of teaching in higher education and other educational settings. Collecting this information beforehand ensured that the interviews could focus on specific issues regarding CLIL implementation and provided information about their teacher biographies.

After the interviews had been subscribed, the data had to be analysed in a coherent way by coding reoccurring themes and judging their relevance for the case study. This coding process happened in two stages: In the first instance, the interview questions had been informed by similar research in comparable institutional settings or reflected similar topics included in the questionnaires administered to the students. In this top-down approach, the interview transcripts were browsed in order to find relevant passages where these themes based on research and the student survey occurred and grouping them topically. In addition, the interviews also yielded ideas which were not explicitly initiated by the researcher. Some emerged in several interviews and thus emerged as important themes that informed the discussion, others were only mentioned by one researcher but fit in either with the themes of the student questionnaire or with findings from similar research which hadn't been explicitly included in the interview guide. These emergent themes were coded in a similar way to the pre-established keywords.

⁸⁷ See Appendix 4 for a transcript of that interview.

⁸⁸ See Appendix 3.

Top-down themes	Emergent themes
Student motivation for studying German Makeup of student groups CLIL's role in university choice Advertising CLIL at AU Benefits of CLIL Challenges of CLIL Learning objectives / outcomes Explicit language instruction Language of communication / use of L1 (Language of) assessment L1 of instructors Identity as subject or language specialist CLIL-related teacher training Theoretical knowledge of CLIL	CLIL / use of L2 in pre-tertiary contexts L2 language proficiency Teaching materials Harmonisation efforts across languages Curriculum design Cooperation between subject and language experts Language of feedback

Table 1: Top-down and emergent themes in instructor interviews

Since most of the top-down themes were informed by previous research or already collected data from student questionnaires and were explicitly included in the pre-established interview guide, it is understandable that the themes in the left-hand column occurred more frequently and in more interviews than those on the right-hand side, some of which were based on only one interviewee's comments. In addition, as is the case with semi-structured interviews, some instructors focussed on some themes more than on others so that the interview didn't cover all questions in the interview guide. The following grid shows in which interviews the themes from Table 1 occurred:

Coding theme	A	B	C	D	E	F
Student motivation for studying German						
Heterogeneous student groups						
CLIL's role in university choice						
Advertising CLIL at AU						
Benefits of CLIL						
Challenges of CLIL						
Learning objectives / outcomes						
Explicit language instruction						
Language of communication / use of L1						
(Language of) assessment						
L1 of instructors						
Identity as subject or language specialist						
CLIL-related teacher training						
Theoretical knowledge of CLIL						
CLIL / use of L2 in pre-tertiary contexts						
L2 language proficiency						
Teaching materials						
Harmonisation efforts across languages						
Curriculum design						
Cooperation between subject and language experts						
Language of feedback						

Table 2: Coding themes as they occurred in instructor (A-F) interviews

Once repeating ideas were established, they were organised in thematic categories and later arranged in sub-chapters. In the final write-up phase, these were supplemented with

other relevant data mined from the student questionnaires and other information sources such as external documentation.

6.2.2.2 Quantitative data: Student questionnaires

The second source of primary data were the undergraduate students enrolled in a range of modules spanning the 3 years of the undergraduate German programmes spent on campus⁸⁹. Student data was collected by way of written, self-completed questionnaires⁹⁰. There are clear advantages to choosing questionnaires as the instrument for data collection. Large amounts of data can be collected from groups of people in a short amount of time, which requires relatively little investment of time and money on part of the researcher when compared to other methods of data collection, for example focus groups or interviews. Questionnaires are versatile and can be used “with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics” (Dörnyei 2003: 9-10), and they are easy to analyze because, at least in the case of closed questions, the answers are predetermined. In addition, questionnaires are usually anonymous which is more likely to lead to honest answers. Especially in educational settings where participants are often asked to evaluate, for example, a language course or an individual teacher, guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality is likely to yield “honest information and possibly [...] critical statements” (ibid.: 88).

However, questionnaires need to be designed carefully in order to avoid common problems that can arise if they are ill-constructed. Firstly, they are self-report instruments which means that the questions have to be simple and straightforward to be understood by everybody without the need for additional information or explanations by the researcher. The researcher is dependent on the participants’ willingness to invest time and effort in something which usually does not really benefit them directly, therefore the questionnaire should be kept as short and direct as possible to avoid the fatigue effect (Dörnyei 2003: 14) which can lead to participants getting bored, leaving out questions or abandoning the survey mid-way. In this respect, another important aspect of questionnaire design is the layout which, if professional and attractive, can play an important part in convincing participants to spend time and effort on completing it. Because the questionnaire is completed independently without direct involvement of the researcher, s/he will have no opportunity to double-check the validity of the information gathered and is therefore reliant on the goodwill of the participants. Then there is the potential for bias in any self-report measure because the answers may “represent what the respondents

⁸⁹ All students spend all or part of Year 3 abroad in one of the German-speaking countries.

⁹⁰ See Appendices 5 and 6.

report to feel or believe, rather than what they *actually* feel or believe”, given the “normal human tendency” to present oneself in a positive light (ibid.: 12, his emphasis). Finally, questionnaires are also vulnerable to the so-called halo effect which refers to the “tendency to overgeneralize”, so that personal impressions may lead to sweeping and exaggerated judgements (ibid.: 13).

The questionnaires used in this case study were designed to collect information via three types of questions: factual questions, behavioural questions and attitudinal questions (Dörnyei 2003: 8). The first half of the questionnaire (Sections A-C, Appendix 5) mainly collected factual information about the participants, including demographic characteristics such as age and gender, information about the informants’ language background and reasons for studying German and for choosing AU to do so. The second half of the questionnaire (Section D, Appendix 5) consists of behavioural questions which concern when and for what purpose students use the L1 in the L2 classroom, and attitudinal questions about the students’ attitude towards, opinions of and beliefs about their experience of L2-medium content teaching at Aston. The questionnaire was piloted with a control group of Year 1 and Year 2 undergraduate students at a local university in order to ensure that the questions were clear and easy to answer.

The questionnaires were administered at different times during the teaching term or academic year to allow a comparison between student opinions at the beginning of their exposure to L2-medium instruction early in the teaching term (Week 3 or 4 of TP1 2009-10) and again towards the end of the teaching term (Week 9 or 10 of TP1 2009-10) or academic year (Week 22 or 23 of TP2 2009-10) where the module stretched over both teaching terms, once they had experienced L2-content teaching over a longer period of time.

Two content modules for Years 1 and F were chosen for inclusion in the study in order to provide as wide a range of modules as possible with regard to content and student cohort, and one core content module for Year 2 which all students share so as to ensure that the largest possible number of Year 2 students could be queried. Due to the timetable of modules offered at any given time in the academic year, the following modules were selected: LG1011 (Sociolinguistics) and LG3201 (German Cultural History) as well as LG3041 (Business Debates) in TP1 2009-10, LG1043 (German Economic History) in TP2 2009-10, and LG2050 (Contemporary Germany) in TPs 1 and 2 of 2009-10.

In order to achieve as high a response rate as possible, the questionnaires were handed out in class following the lectures under investigation. Overall, 85 students were enrolled in the modules under investigation (see Figure 4). Since these modules were core modules which are mandatory for all German undergraduate students in the different

programmes, they make up the total student population on campus in 2009/10, not including those students on their placement year abroad.

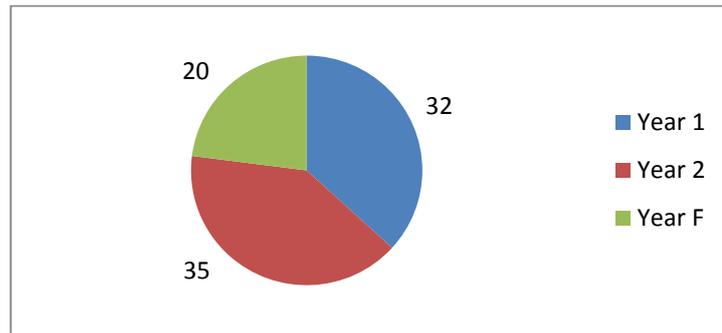


Figure 5: Students enrolled in modules under study by year group

In total, 60 completed the questionnaire in round 1 (response rate of 71%) and 58 students in round 2 (response rate of 68%). (see Figure 5)



Figure 6: Student responses in Round 1 (6a) and Round 2 (6b)

The varying response rates are due to the fact that not all students were present in class on the day the questionnaires were handed out. Still, by collecting questionnaires in person, the likelihood of receiving completed data sets from as many students as possible was increased.

The student questionnaires were subdivided into 4 sections: A for General Background, including age, gender and year of study, and B for Language Background, asking about the language(s) spoken at home, languages learned at school, contact with German native speakers and visits to German speaking countries. Section C elicits information about the students' University Background, including the reasons for studying German, the reasons for choosing to study at AU, and general questions about attitudes towards and motivation for learning German. The more extensive section D asks about the amount and purpose of L1 (English) used in the L2 (German) classroom and looks at language use between student and instructor, instructor and student, and among students, as well as the students' attitude towards the use of the target language in the content classroom in general and what they perceived to be the benefits and challenges of such an approach.

The questionnaires were designed to include both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Open questions were used to elicit short, usually one-word or numerical

answers, especially in sections A and B (e.g., age, languages spoken at home) to allow for easy analysis. Open-ended questions which require longer answers were mostly avoided because they take up respondent time and can contribute to respondent fatigue.

The bulk of the questions were closed-ended questions which, if formulated clearly and precisely, elicit exactly the information the researcher needs to obtain and are relatively easy to analyse since the possible responses are already categorised. (Kumar 1999: 118-119) In the case of closed questions, “the data [can] be treated quantitatively and thus compared in a standardized way” (Scott / Usher 1999: 69). Most of these closed-ended questions were constructed as summated rating scales, or Likert scales, which are “simply, versatile, and reliable” (Dönyei 2003: 36). They consist of a series of statements which are given the same ‘attitudinal value’. They measure the intensity of a participant’s attitude towards a certain issue rather than the attitude itself and are classified into four categories. For some questions, these categories were two-dimensional, with two positive and two negative answers to choose from. Other questions were one-dimensional, with the possible answers ranging from “very often” to “hardly ever”. (Kumar 1999: 129-130)

In round 1, the basic questionnaire consisting of 39 items was the same for all three year levels. However, year groups 2 and F⁹¹ have already completed one or more years of instruction in German at AU. Therefore, the questionnaires for Year 2 and Year F students contained an extra set of questions in section D, referring to their experiences in the previous year(s) (questions 24-28), as well as their expectations regarding their Year Abroad (Year 2, questions 29-31) or an assessment of their Year Abroad (Year F, questions 29-32). In round 2, the basic questionnaire administered to all students consisted of 29 items, with a further eight questions added for Year 2 students, and an extra set of six questions given to students in the final year.

6.2.3 Exclusion of data

Both the questionnaires and the interview guide were designed before the focus of the study shifted from purely looking at L1 use in L2 content teaching to a broader analysis of CLIL practices in general. However, the data collected still provides powerful information about the attitudes of students towards the use of the target language as a medium for content teaching, as the questions included queries about their attitude towards L2 teaching, about the culture and quality of language use in the classroom and about the amount of L2 spoken in the classroom (although the question concerned the use of L1, the results provided a mirror image of L2 use). In addition, the question of L1 use is itself a central topic in CLIL. While the instructors in any CLIL setting (be it primary, secondary

⁹¹ Final Year

or tertiary education) strive to use L2 to the largest possible degree, the question of what role the learners' L1 can and should play is always at centre stage, both in everyday classroom communication and when it comes to designing appropriate assessment methods for a specific module or subject. Still, given the shift in overall focus, not all data harvested was included in the present analysis; some questions are not discussed in Chapter 8, but the responses collected but not considered here may provide interesting material for subsequent research.

As outlined above, two versions of the questionnaire were administered allow a comparison between student opinions at the beginning of their exposure to L2-medium instruction early in the teaching term and again towards the end of the teaching term / academic year in order to compare results across time. This mainly concerned the more extensive section D which elicits information about the amount and purpose of L1 (English) used in the L2 (German) classroom, looks at the language use of students and instructors and at students' attitude towards the use of the target language in the content classroom in general and what they perceived to be the benefits and challenges of such an approach. The hypothesis was that what the students reported at the beginning of the term might be subject to change after having experienced CLIL in the classroom.

However, the analysis of the student data showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the results of rounds 1 and 2 in their answers to section D. Therefore, it was decided to disregard those questions of section D of round 1 which were repeated more or less verbatim in round 2 and to focus on analysing the results of round 2 since by the time the students completed the second questionnaire, all year groups, including Year 1, had experienced L2-mediated content teaching for at least one academic term, therefore yielding more informed answers. If a question in round 1, section D, did not feature in round 2 in the same way, it was retained for analysis (e.g. question D30 in Chapter 8.2.4).

6.3 Research ethics

By nature, case studies which rely on data collected from individuals rather than written documentation, artefacts or any other data source "share an intense interest in personal views and circumstances" (Stake 2005: 459). It could be said that the researcher and the researched enter a contract which stipulates that the researcher is ethically obliged to protect the integrity, safety and anonymity of their informants.

In order to comply with the university's requirements for ethical research, every effort was made to gain informed consent from all participants and comply with the Data Protection

Act. Before any questionnaires were administered to students or interviews carried out with instructors, all prospective participants (i.e. all six instructors and all students enrolled in the modules selected for distribution of the questionnaires) signed a consent form (see Appendix 7 for student consent form) which outlined the purpose of the study and assured them that their participation in this study would be entirely voluntary and that, if they decided to participate, they would be able to withdraw at any time and any data they had provided up to that point would be removed from the study. In addition, the student questionnaire consisted of a cover page explaining the project, assuring the students that they were free to refuse participation or to refrain from answering certain questions, and that their responses would be treated with strict confidentiality and the results not be used for any purpose other than scientific research (see Appendix 5).

To guarantee anonymity to the instructors who were interviewed, each instructor was assigned an anonymous label to protect their identity and only referred to them by that label. Since the German department employs a small number of teaching staff whose names could be easily determined, the broadest possible terms were used when describing them and their work in all write-ups of the research findings to prevent identification. To ensure complete privacy, all completed questionnaires, audio recordings of interviews and interview transcripts were kept confidential and stored in a secure place with restricted access. All electronic research data was password protected.

A final ethical consideration is the role of the researcher within the case study. In this case, the author started her project in the second year of a four-year contract as Austrian Lektorin. This position provided easy access to the research site and to the informants who would provide data for analysis. In addition, being an 'insider' likely increased the willingness of both students and staff to participate in the case study and to give up their time for interviews and questionnaires.

Researchers generally fall on a continuum of involvement, ranging from participant where the researcher participates in the activities of the people under study to complete or nonparticipant observer who observes without actively engaging with the context under study (Merriam 1998, Nunan / Bailey 2009). In the present case, the author was a nonparticipant observer in that none of her own modules were included in the case study and it was made very clear from the start to all participants what her role in the process would be and that all data was collected overtly (ibid.: 196).

Still, there are clearly established relationships between researcher and informants which cannot be ignored. All the teaching staff interviewed had been colleagues and, in some cases, personal friends of the researcher for a number of years, and all student informants had, at some point, attended modules taught by the author. In that sense, the researcher had a 'privileged' position as "an organic part of the institutional environment" (McDonough

/ McDonough 1997: 116). By being a part of the context, the researcher risks getting too close to the subject(s) of their study which could undermine their objectivity and critical distance. (Merriam 1998) A deeper degree of involvement with the context under investigation can pose a certain threat to objectivity which the researcher must be aware of at all times. However, according to Nunan and Bailey (2009: 173), this danger of subjectivity is mitigated because “this familiarity and involvement enables the author to convincingly portray the individual or site under investigation”.

To limit any negative repercussions, explicit information about the project was included in the consent forms and was shared in the student questionnaires and at the beginning of the staff interviews. Finally, the author has strived throughout to remain conscious of the danger of losing either objectivity or critical distance.

6.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined the choice of approach and research methodology underlying the study. After a brief discussion of teacher cognition research, it provided information about the context of the case study and the reasons for and implications of the chosen methods of data collection. Triangulation, validity and reliability were taken into account to ground the case study. To secure the chain of evidence, all data collected through interviews, questionnaires or from written documentation was collected, stored securely in hard copy and/or electronic form and is available on request. Issues of research ethics were taken into account throughout the research process, and all possible steps were taken to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality to the research participants.

Chapter 7: CLIL in Tertiary Education in the United Kingdom

Chapter 4 provided evidence for the increasing proliferation of the integration of content and language (ICL)⁹² in non-Anglophone European higher education, where the number of English-taught BA, MA and PhD programmes has increased exponentially and where such English-medium settings have become the subject of numerous academic investigations. In these cases, English is generally used as the medium of instruction in non-linguistic disciplines for a number of reasons: to support internationalisation, to increase student mobility and foster employability for domestic students, to attract international students and staff, etc.

In UK higher education, CLIL-type teaching and learning settings have received far less research interest, at least with regard to languages other than English (LOTE). There are many studies investigating English-language provision⁹³ for international students embarking on undergraduate or postgraduate study in Britain (cf. Melles et al. 2005, Sansome / Davies 2008, Coffin / Donohue 2012, Wingate / Tribble 2012). In these scenarios, the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) is often 'remedial', i.e. means to make up for a gap between the students' linguistic proficiency and university language requirements (expressed in IELTS or TOEFL scores). In other contexts, there is more focus on preparing students for the demands of Anglophone academic practice by going beyond the ESL staples of grammar, lexis and syntax to the level of academic discourse in the broader sense in the form of English for Academic Purposes (EAP)⁹⁴.

In comparison with the wealth of research literature in the field of ESL / EAP and, more recently, ICL and English-medium instruction (EMI) in HE, there is little research evidence that LOTE play a significant role as an L2 medium of instruction. This despite the fact that there is at least one subject which seems predestined to serve as a setting for CLIL implementation, namely Modern Languages. According to the *Subject Benchmark Statement for Languages and related studies* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in 2007, "[t]he study of languages at university level is a multidisciplinary learning process, allowing access to a broad range of enquiries, including linguistic, literary, cultural, social, political and historical studies" (QAA 2007: 6). The close relationship between the target language and the culture and community of its speakers

⁹² For a discussion of the acronym ICL and its use in Higher Education, see Chapter 3.

⁹³ In this context, English language provision can become a confusing minefield of different labels: English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as lingua franca (ELF), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Melles et al. (2005) discuss the tensions between and within these fields, specifically EAP in the post-secondary context.

⁹⁴ In the UK, the dominant research paradigm is known as the Academic Literacies approach (Coffin / Donohue 2012).

would seem to make Modern Language Studies a natural fit for CLIL instruction; after all, “culture in its broadest sense is inseparable from language” (Coleman 1996a: 17).

However, the pronounced lack of research interest in L2-medium instruction would indicate that the integration of language and content is far less common than expected. There are some case studies which describe CLIL-type setups at individual university departments, published online as part of the *Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) Guide to Good Practice*. Tamponi (2005), for example, describes the task-based approach taken in the Italian Department at UCL. Macías (2006) reports on a first-year Spanish Cultural Studies lecture taught in the target language at the University of Bath. Among the more general research output investigating MFL in UK Higher Education, there are some studies which look at the relationship between language and content, although they do not explicitly refer to CLIL or ICL. In the early 2000s, for example, McBride (2003) conducted two surveys in UK MFL departments investigating the language(s) primarily used for the teaching and assessment of cultural modules. More recently, Gieve and Cunico (2012) investigated the relationship between language and content as experienced by undergraduate students.

The following chapter⁹⁵ will give a short overview of the current situation in the UK modern languages landscape, including recent developments in A-level⁹⁶ entries for German and in application numbers to German undergraduate programmes. After a brief introduction to German Studies in the UK, the main part of this section will report on the findings of an online survey conducted among German departments in England, Wales and Scotland to ascertain how widespread L2-medium instruction is in content modules⁹⁷. This analysis will provide the backdrop to the results of a case study investigating one UK university’s implementation of CLIL in its German undergraduate degrees which will be presented in Chapter 8.

7.1 The UK modern foreign languages landscape today

It is widely known that student numbers in Modern Language degree programmes have been declining for a number of years. Grix and Jaworska posit that “[a] lack of qualified teachers and low motivation among those teaching are [...] contributing factors to the state of language learning in UK schools”, along with “limited contact with the language and

⁹⁵ A condensed version of this chapter (Wielander 2015) was published in Wilkinson / Walsh (2015).

⁹⁶ A-level is the more commonly used term for the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level, the academic qualification which concludes secondary education.

⁹⁷ The term ‘content module’ describes those elements of the German undergraduate curriculum which are not dedicated specifically to language acquisition, but to topics such as German politics and society, history, literature, film, etc.

culture” (2002:4-5). Student motivation for learning foreign languages seems to have been at an alarming low for quite some time: At the turn of the millennium, the Nuffield Language Inquiry found that nine out of ten children stopped learning languages at 16. In its recommendations, the Nuffield Inquiry called for a “national strategy for developing capability in languages in the UK” (Nuffield Languages Inquiry 2000: 8), going so far as to propose that a language should be made a requirement for university entry⁹⁸.

The opposite was the case: In 2004, foreign languages became optional after age 14 in secondary state schools. These schools are highly dependent on their position in the annual league tables and favourable assessments by Ofsted⁹⁹ inspectors. Given that German is viewed as the most difficult language in the MFL curriculum, schools often encourage less able students to opt out of German post-KS3¹⁰⁰. (Reershemius 2010: 1675) Since modern languages are no longer mandatory in KS4, GCSE entries in German declined by 51.7% between 2003 and 2011¹⁰¹ (Tinsley / Han 2012: 12). These conditions have meant that even fewer students have pursued MFL studies to A-level since 2004. As a result, the total number of A-level entries for languages across England has fallen by 25% since 1996, while German, along with French, has experienced a staggering 46% drop (CILT 2011). Consequently, many university language departments struggle to draw a significant number of qualified students to their language degrees.¹⁰²

This development has only been exacerbated by the recent trebling of university fees. In the first application cycle under the new fees regime (January 2012), the number of applications for European languages and related subjects was down by 11.2%¹⁰³; the numbers for German Studies specifically decreased by 23% (UCAS 2012). Figures for the subsequent round of applications in January 2013 showed that, overall, applications for

⁹⁸ University College London (UCL) indeed changed their admissions policy to mandate that, from 2012, all applicants should have a GCSE or equivalent qualification in a MFL or take up a MFL once enrolled in their chosen programme of study (Worton 2009: 35).

⁹⁹ The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills is an independent body which carries out regular inspections of schools in England. Its task is to “work with providers [...] to promote their improvement, monitoring their progress and sharing with them the best practice” and to report its findings directly to Parliament. (<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/about-us>)

¹⁰⁰ Compulsory education in Britain is divided into four blocks of years called Key Stages (KS): Key Stage 1 for years 5-7, Key Stage 2 for years 7-11 (KS1 and KS2 make up primary education), Key Stage 3 for years 11-14, and Key Stage 4 for years 14-16. At the end of KS4, pupils take the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). In order to be admitted to higher education, pupils must then complete the final Key Stage 5 for years 16-18 (A-level).

¹⁰¹ Between 2003 and 2007, during their steepest decline, GCSE entries in Modern Languages overall fell by 27.6%, as the marked decrease in German (-35.6%) and French (-34.7%) was “partly offset by a rise in the number of pupils taking other languages” such as Spanish, Chinese, Polish and Russian (Canning 2008: 7).

¹⁰² Incidentally, a similar development is reported from Spain, where “university supply exceeds student demand”, and where some universities have implemented CLIL as a way to achieve differentiation (Dafouz / Núñez 2009: 102).

¹⁰³ Applications for non-European languages and related subjects in 2012 were even lower at -21.5% compared to the previous year (January 2011), according to UCAS statistics. In the following application cycle in January 2013, they were somewhat recovered, but still showed 6.7% fewer applications (UCAS 2013), and in January 2014, applications were down a further 6% (UCAS 2014).

European Languages again decreased by 6.1% compared to 2012. While the figures for German had recovered slightly from the previous year's drop, they were still down by 7.6% (UCAS 2013: 5). In 2014, applications for European languages and related studies were again down by 5% (UCAS 2014).

These admission trends put increasing financial pressure on university departments, as a decrease in students means reductions to university funding. In order to still make teaching provision financially viable, departments are looking for ways to increase efficiency, which helps explain the current trend of providing content lectures for students in all MFL offered in a department, or making them accessible to students without the requisite language skills, e.g. from politics or history departments, by teaching in English. Indeed, Klapper (2006: 3) observed that "traditional language department divisions have disappeared and colleagues have found themselves working more closely with other modern linguists and non-linguists in developing cross-departmental and interdisciplinary courses". However successful a strategy, making course content available to non-linguists, e.g., by teaching texts in translation, to bolster student numbers was found to have both academic and affective consequences: According to the *Review of modern foreign language provision in higher education in England*, it was "generally perceived as a form of 'dumbing down' or even a betrayal of the nature and aims of a Modern Foreign Languages curriculum" (Worton 2009: 25).

The - mostly financial - pressures exerted on MFL departments in the current climate and the consequent growing share of the curriculum being taught in English are only one side of the story. Over the last decades, experts have observed a national trend away from single honours degrees (Footitt 2005: 9), and even dual language degrees are losing ground (Klapper 2006: 2). Integrated degrees which combine a language and another non-linguistic discipline are still popular¹⁰⁴, but increasingly, universities "are offering programmes in which a language is an optional rather than compulsory component" (Kelly / Jones 2003: 24). In her 2003 inquiry into the 'Decline in the Take-Up of Modern Languages at Degree Level', Watts found that many students thought "that *not* studying a modern language degree, but instead combining modern language study as an option with a different non-language degree subject, would afford them greater advantages in the employment market upon graduating" (Watts 2003: 6, her emphasis). As a consequence, less time in the students' schedule is available for language study, which raises the question of how this time can be most effectively used to ensure that the students acquire

¹⁰⁴ This trend was observed for German by Kolinsky (1994: 28), who reports that even in the late 1980s, when German numbers were actually on the rise, undergraduate programmes which combined German with Social Studies were vastly more popular than Single Honours, Combined Language and Combined Arts degrees.

a sophisticated practical command of the target language as well as specialist subject knowledge.

Another trend in tertiary MFL instruction is the increasing share of non-specialist or supplementary provision, either as a credit-bearing element in another discipline or as a non-accredited additional qualification. This has led to a steady growth of institution-wide language programmes (IWLP; see Coleman 2012 for a history of IWLP), “to the extent that they are being delivered increasingly by language departments starved of specialist students” (Kelly / Jones 2003: 22). Coleman also describes a scenario where “[i]n a major power shift, language centres are increasingly supplying *all* the language classes for the institution – even where there are specialist degrees in Modern Languages” (2004: 150).¹⁰⁵ This is confirmed by Worton (2009: 31) whose survey of university language centres found that “over half (56%) [...] provide some degree-level courses to students”. In such settings, language teaching is more or less divorced from discipline-specific content in the fields of area studies, literature or linguistics taught in English. The language centres provide language classes from *ab initio* to advanced level, often delivered by tutors with a strong background in language teaching practice (Worton 2009: 29) whose responsibilities do not include research in a related discipline. This leads to what may be called a ‘class divide’ between those who teach *about* a language or culture and those who teach the language itself.¹⁰⁶ In fact, there have been calls for universities to “challenge the ‘false dichotomy’ which exists between Language Centres (perceived as merely teaching language skills) and academic Departments (who define themselves as teaching language through content and culture)” (Worton 2009: 31).

Ultimately, fluctuating admissions numbers have led to a wave of MFL Department closures. In October 2013, the Guardian reported that, since 2007, 11 universities have completely shut down all specialist language degrees (i.e., single honours and joint honours with another MFL), and a further 13 have closed specialist language programmes, but still offer languages in combination with other subjects. (Bawden 2013) This trend shows no sign of slowing down. To give but one recent example, in a widely reported - and heavily contested - move, the University of Salford is phasing out its highly reputable MFL programme, no longer recruiting from 2014-15. (Morgan 2013)

MFL departments are also increasingly located at certain universities. Footitt found that the “English Russell Group universities had 46% of the total national complement of

¹⁰⁵ At worst, this has led to the dissolution of MFL departments, “their academics absorbed into Cultural Studies, European Studies or Politics while the language centre delivers foreign language skills to the whole institution” (Coleman 2004: 150).

¹⁰⁶ This is echoed in Kolinsky’s (1994: 28) warning that, as German Studies students move from mainly SH to Combined Studies degrees, it could become a secondary subject, and that the study of Modern Languages may be reduced to the acquisition of language skills rather than the development of discipline-specific knowledge.

undergraduate language students in 2001/2” (Footitt 2005: 12). Pre-1992 institutions not affiliated with the Russell Group experienced student losses, some of them well over 20%, while post-1992 universities experienced an even steeper decline in student numbers, meaning that they accounted for less than one fourth of language students across England (ibid.: 12-13). The high cost of delivering MFL programmes, combined with falling student numbers, means that many language departments are in deficit and require cross-subsidy by other parts of the university. In such cases, the decision to maintain MFL programmes often depends on high-level strategic considerations, for example the prioritising of MFL as part of an institution’s international policy and its mission to train global citizens and enhance employability: “In all the universities, the attitudes of senior staff were seen to be of vital importance to the maintenance of languages.” (Footitt 2005: 27)

The reasons behind this general decline of MFL Studies are difficult to understand, especially in light of the many voices from both academia and the private sector decrying the distinct lack of qualified MFL experts. To give but one example, a report on the British labour market’s demand for modern language graduates published in 2011 highlighted the urgent need for linguistically proficient, well-rounded language specialists in the UK. The report found that the European ‘Big4’ French, German, Spanish and Italian remain most in demand by employers specifying a language for recruitment, and that higher education played a significant role in closing the skills gap caused by a decrease in German uptake post-GCSE. (Mulkerne / Graham 2011)¹⁰⁷ This important contribution of HE, not only in the UK but across Europe, is confirmed by Greere and Räsänen (2008: 3) who state that “[s]uccessful employability of today’s higher education (HE) graduates in Europe is more and more dependent on how well they are prepared linguistically and interculturally to enter the internationalised labour market.” One of the recommendations of the Worton report addresses this issue, calling on government bodies, universities and professional associations to “work together to formulate and disseminate clear messages about the strategic importance of Modern Foreign Languages” (Worton 2009: 38).

In summary, this section has given a brief overview of developments in MFL teaching at secondary and tertiary level in the UK. We have seen that falling A-level numbers and changing conditions in secondary education have had a drastic knock-on effect on university admissions, forcing MFL departments to find new ways of delivering undergraduate programmes in this time of growing financial pressures and shifting student expectations. The following section will discuss how German Studies have developed under these conditions and where the discipline stands today, before the focus returns to the integration of content and language in HE.

¹⁰⁷ In fact, recruitment agencies reported that in the previous 12 months, German was the most requested language, with more than 1,500 jobs requiring German, about 25% of the total. (Mulkerne / Graham 2011: 38)

7.2 German Studies in the United Kingdom

Beginning in the 19th Century, German was the most widely taught modern foreign language in Great Britain¹⁰⁸, after French, until very recently, when it was overtaken by Spanish (Reershemius 2010: 1674). After a decline in the interwar years, German again gained strength after World War 2, despite a general decrease in MFL numbers overall. Following a brief boom in German uptake in secondary and tertiary education in the wake of German re-unification in the early 1990s, numbers have declined steadily since then.

MFL in higher education are inextricably linked with developments in the school sector, not only with regard to raw student numbers, but also regarding pedagogical paradigms and teaching methodology. This becomes evident when we look at teaching practices in secondary settings, where an initial focus on written language, grammar and accuracy gave way to more emphasis on communicative competence and comprehensibility in the later decades of the 20th century. This re-orientation towards oral communication, however, “hat zumindest in den Fällen, in denen diese in stärkerem Maße zu Lasten einer korrekten Beherrschung des Systems des Deutschen ging, den Universitäten, die auf dem schulischen Lernen aufbauen, einiges Kopfzerbrechen bereitet“¹⁰⁹ (Rösler 2001: 1465). Indeed, Grix and Jaworska diagnosed an “alarming decline in the language skills of pupils entering university” (2002: 7). Their perception is seconded in the Worton report which found that many MFL departments felt their first-year students required remedial language support as “current A Level provision does not provide students with either the grammatical knowledge or the language learning skills necessary for university-level study” (Worton 2009: 25).

This development has been traced to the introduction of the new GCSE exam in the late 1980s which took the place of the old O-levels as the compulsory school-leavers' examinations. Where the old exam had focussed on grammar rules and linguistic accuracy, the new curriculum and assessment framework put far greater emphasis on oral communicative skills and the enjoyment to be gained from language study. Only a few years later, 91% of German departments reported the linguistic competence of newly enrolled students differed considerably from previous student cohorts; only 4% of them thought that students' competence had actually improved, while 49% saw both positive and negative changes, and 16% reported an overall deterioration of language proficiency. A number of universities decried the deterioration of grammar knowledge and the lack of

¹⁰⁸ Jaworska (2009: 66-98) provides an in-depth account of the development of German in secondary and tertiary education in the 20th and early 21st century.

¹⁰⁹ “has - at least in those cases where it came at the cost of accurate knowledge of the German language system - caused universities, who build on what was acquired at school, quite a headache” (my translation)

literature and grammar in A-level curricula, while others commented positively on better listening skills, increased learner motivation and greater willingness to participate in class discourse. (Kolinsky 1994: 43) As a result, many universities have adapted their undergraduate curricula to focus heavily on the development of language proficiency and subject-specific knowledge during Year 1 (Reershemius 2010: 1678). In addition to falling, or at least changing, language standards perceived by universities, Coleman (1996) also found that first-year students' language proficiency upon entering university varies considerably, leading to heterogeneous learner groups who, nevertheless, face the same curriculum and language requirements.¹¹⁰

Today, German Studies in Britain is a discipline in crisis (Grix / Jaworska 2002, Klaus / Reimann 2003, Reershemius 2010). Inevitably, German at the tertiary level is facing similar challenges to lower-level education, in that the number of undergraduate students has fallen continuously - by 33% between 1997 and 2006/07 (Reershemius 2010: 1678). Ultimately, this trend has led to a wave of department closures: where 126 universities in Great Britain offered German undergraduate programmes in 2000, by 2006, their number had fallen by 48% to 65 (ibid.), and for 2014-15, only 53 institutions offer German either as Single Honours or Joint Honours (with another language or another subject) (Bawden 2013). Generally speaking, the younger universities and former polytechnics are more likely to phase out modern language programmes than older institutions where MFL retain their traditional place in the Humanities (Reershemius 2010: 1677). Coleman (quoted in Bawden 2013) considers this a detrimental development: "Language degrees are good for employability, but vocational language degrees are disappearing. People who do not think a Russell Group university is for them are therefore losing out."

German Studies programmes at different types of universities¹¹¹ can vary greatly with regard to their thematic focus. The older Ancient and Red Brick universities usually maintain independent German Departments whose curriculum is traditionally comprised of mostly philological and literary studies, mainly covering the period from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. At most younger institutions (Plate Glass and New universities), German is typically embedded in a Modern Languages Department or School with a stronger focus on more current political, social and economic developments in the German-speaking world. Some of these offer little to no literary element; instead, their curriculum is more strongly grounded in Cultural and Area Studies. Kolinsky (1993: 104) groups British German Studies curricula along a continuum, from purely literature-oriented to applied-languages studies, and concludes that there simply is no 'typical' German

¹¹⁰ Chapter 8 will look more closely at the consequences for both students and staff working in and with mixed-level learner groups in L2-taught content classes.

¹¹¹ 'Type' here is a purely descriptive term and is mostly determined by the age of the university, i.e. when it was founded or chartered. A detailed explanation can be found in Chapter 6, Research methodology.

Studies curriculum. Instead, she considers the wide spectrum of degree programmes to feature both strengths (flexibility, adaptability, curricula designed around research foci of academic staff) and weaknesses (pressure on staff to adapt, inability to develop distinctive academic profile) (ibid.: 101).

By and large, this shift in conceptual focus initially occurred in the 1960s and coincided with a wave of technical colleges being re-designated and new universities being founded. Many MFL programmes moved away from the traditional model of a rather literature-heavy syllabus which involved the study of the 'literary greats' throughout the centuries, towards a more contemporary, vocational model and a broader socio-cultural curriculum, heavily influenced by new disciplines such as Area Studies, Cultural Studies and Media Studies. This re-orientation was partly due to the growing influence of student choice on curriculum design: "[The students] were [...] less and less interested in studying the traditional subjects like literature or Middle High-German", and as a consequence, "some departments reduced their literature programmes, offered *ab initio* language tuition and concentrated more on German history, society, institutions and media in the 20th century" (Grix / Jaworska 2002: 7). Where a "Modern Languages degree has traditionally meant a diet of literature, whether students wanted it or not" (Coleman 2004: 150), the growing commercialisation of higher education, brought about by the introduction of university fees, has meant that student interests have come to exert considerable influence on the design and implementation of MFL degree programmes. This process coincided with developments in second language teaching and learning methodology and with the UK's increased integration in the European Union which brought with it new opportunities for linguists in the job market (Kolinsky 1994: 26). Especially those institutions founded or chartered after WW2 are characterised by a strong utilitarian focus on employability, and their curricula are designed accordingly, often based on the individual interests and fields of research of academic staff.¹¹²

One apparent consequence of this re-orientation of German Studies is highlighted by Kolinsky (1993, 1994) in a study of developments in UK German Studies in the early 1990s: Her survey of 'old' universities showed that 77% of participating departments taught content in German, and an additional 15% reported that German was used to teach selected modules, while only 8% refused to teach content in German (1994: 42). German is used to teach 73% of *Landeskunde* modules, 36% of Literature and 31% of other content modules (Business, Law, etc.) (Kolinsky 1993: 126). Kolinsky sees this as a result of the changing stature of language proficiency as an objective in and of itself. In traditional

¹¹² Kolinsky (1994: 32) criticizes that this relative freedom in curriculum design means that German Studies in the UK lack a common core which would allow programmes to be compared objectively across universities. Even the external examiner system, responsible for guaranteeing the comparability of academic standards, cannot, in her view, make up for the fact that the system lacks a coherent concept of the discipline 'German Studies', comparable to the *Grundstudium Germanistik* in Germany.

Germanistik programmes of old, it didn't seem to matter in the core content seminars whether students could speak or write German and language development was relegated to practical language classes, strictly separated from discipline-related content work and taught mainly by DAAD *Lektoren*. In the second half of the 20th century, however, the language itself took centre stage, which "hat dazu geführt, daß Deutsch nicht nur gelehrt, sondern selber als Sprache der Lehre verwandt wird"¹¹³ (ibid.). Therefore, not only is German used to a greater extent in language classes, but also in Area Studies and related content areas. Kolinsky concludes that "[v]on ihrer traditionellen Funktion als Lesehilfe ist die deutsche Sprache zum Kern der neuen Germanistik geworden"¹¹⁴ (ibid.).

The 1990s survey shows that German is even more widely used as a language of instruction in the 'new' universities, where 85% of institutions surveyed teach *Landeskunde* modules in German. Only 42% of them have Literature courses in their curriculum, but 90% of these are conducted in German, compared to little more than a third in 'old' universities. Business and other non-linguistic subjects are also more frequently taught in German, at 58% (31% in 'old' universities) (Tenberg 1993: 159-160).

Judging from these findings, the use of the target language German as a medium of instruction appears to have a longer tradition in the UK than previously thought. It clearly has been recorded incidentally in research describing the development and status of German Studies in the UK, but has not been the object of academic investigation itself. The following section provides an updated picture of the extent to which German functions as a medium of instruction in German Studies today and discusses the reasons for and institutional parameters underlying the integration of content and language in German undergraduate programmes.

7.3 CLIL in UK German Studies: Results and discussion of the online survey

In order to investigate the current proliferation of CLIL in British Higher Education, a short online survey (see Appendix 1) was administered to Heads of German staff at British universities to elicit information about institutional parameters which may influence the implementation of target-language content teaching.¹¹⁵ The 10-question online survey was submitted by email to 51 German departments at UK universities, with a response rate of 55%. The data collected from these 28 university departments allows us to determine the

¹¹³ "means that German is not just taught but is itself used as a medium of instruction" (my translation)

¹¹⁴ "from its traditional role as reading aid, the German language has become the core of today's German Studies" (my translation)

¹¹⁵ For details about survey design, please see Chapter 6.1.

extent to which L2-content teaching is practiced and the institutional context in which it takes place.

7.3.1 Institutional profiles

As discussed earlier, all German departments included in this survey feature German as a Single Honours degree or as part of a Joint Honours or Combined Honours degree. Of the 28 German departments across England, Wales and Scotland who participated in the survey, the majority, or 54%¹¹⁶, of respondents fall in the category of Red Brick university, followed by Plate Glass universities (21%) and New universities (14%). Ancient universities account for 11% of respondents, and one (4%) is a Recently created university.

The vast majority, or 79%, of German sections are positioned within a Modern Foreign Language department; 11% of German groups are situated within a MFL department combined with Politics, Social Sciences, etc. The same number represents individual Schools or Departments of German. Of these, two are 'older' universities, and only one represents a 'newer' or Plate Glass university.

82% of respondents stated that their German degrees include a mandatory Year Abroad. Among those who do not prescribe a stay abroad period, there are three (of 15) Red Brick institutions, one (of six) Plate Glass and one (of four) New Universities. All three Ancient Universities included in the survey feature an obligatory sandwich year.¹¹⁷

7.3.2 Extent of L2 content teaching

The second half of the survey relates directly to L2-content teaching. Overall, 68%, or 19 of 28 respondents, reported that some content modules in their German programmes are taught in German.¹¹⁸ If we correlate these figures with the type of university in order to ascertain whether the age of an institution is a factor in the decision to introduce L2 content teaching, the results show that two of the three Ancient universities teach content in the

¹¹⁶ Decimal points have been rounded to the next integral number: 1.1 - 1.5 => 1, 1.6 - 1.9 => 2

¹¹⁷ Interestingly, Kolinsky (1993) remarks that, in the 1960s, "the most prestigious of the universities at the time even thought that a year in Germany would dilute the programme of study rather than enhance it". This attitude has most certainly changed since then.

¹¹⁸ McBride reports in her 2003 study, based on two surveys at MFL departments in the UK to investigate the language(s) used in content modules, that 28% of teaching staff stated that they used only the target language, while nearly 50% reported that they used a mix of L1 (English) and L2 in content modules (2003: 300). With regard to type of delivery, more staff used English for lectures (34%) than for seminars (24%) (ibid: 299).

L2, as do 60% of Red Brick universities, 83% of Glass Plate universities and 75% of New and Recently created universities.¹¹⁹

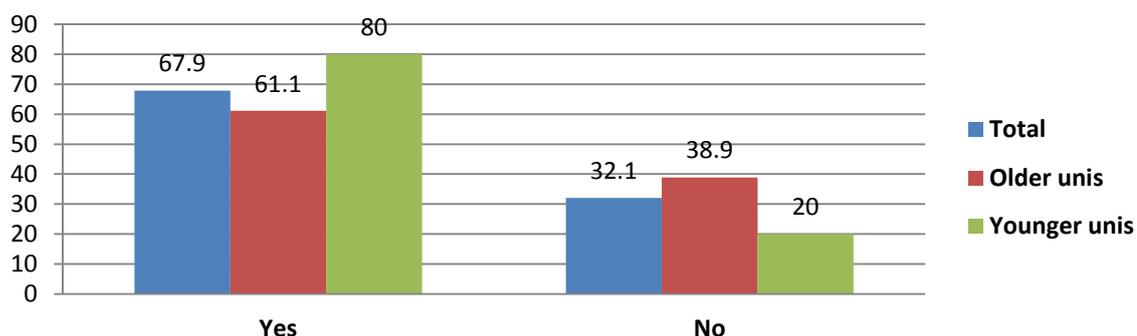


Figure 7: Q5: Are any of the content modules in your German programmes taught in German?

Compare these numbers to McBride (2003: 300) who found that only 4% of staff from pre-19th century universities (Ancient Universities) used the TL in lectures, whereas the percentage rose to 20% for 19/20th century institutions (Red Brick) and over 30% in the 1960s universities (Plate Glass) and 1990s universities (New Universities). McBride's figures are, of course, more than a decade old, the sample then was much larger and recruited respondents from all MFL departments, not just German, and the present figures do not indicate what percentage of the teaching staff actually teach through the medium of the L2. Still, the general trend is the same: older universities seem to feature less target-language content teaching than the more recently founded institutions¹²⁰.

Overall, these figures are rather surprising, as this apparent proliferation of L2 content teaching - past and present - is by no means reflected in the research literature, which could indicate that the CLIL practice in these universities is sometimes incidental. A comment made by Respondent #12 lends support to this hypothesis: "We leave it up to individual staff to decide." In this case, the danger is that it is impossible to know whether any reflection on the specific requirements of effective CLIL implementation is taking place. This is reminiscent of the problematic example of English Medium Education (EME) in continental Europe, where it is often assumed that "students studying through the medium of English as an additional language do not require an integrated approach where both content and language objectives are included" (Coyle / Hood / Marsh 2010: 24). In such cases, EME is little more than "simply teaching a content through a foreign language, while not taking into account that both content and language goals should be considered" (Costa 2009: 84), which is one of the basic tenets of CLIL. When that happens, "there is

¹¹⁹ The results are naturally skewed by the fact that more universities are counted in the later categories. As a result of the small sample size, one of the categories is only represented by one university (Recently created universities), two categories by only three institutions (Ancient and New universities), while the largest group (Red Brick) comprises 15 universities, followed by six Glass Plate universities.

¹²⁰ This trend is also confirmed by Kolinsky (1993: 126) and Tenberg (1993: 160).

a risk that the language will be considered as purely instrumental” (ibid.) and the potential benefits are greatly reduced.

7.3.3 Reasons for and against introducing L2-medium content instruction

There are indications that some universities are considering the introduction of target-language content teaching: Of those German departments (32%) where no content modules are currently taught in German¹²¹, 33% (all Red Brick universities) state that there are plans to introduce L2-taught modules. In addition, some respondents who answered in the negative nevertheless commented that German-medium instruction was currently under discussion.

Other comments added in the text box bring up three interesting aspects which may have considerable impact on the future of CLIL in British Higher Education. Two respondents remarked that teaching content in German had actually been discontinued in order to “allow students from other Schools (mainly Politics and History) to choose [sic] German content units” (Respondent #7). This is echoed by Respondent #15 who explains: “In the current climate there is more emphasis on making content units available to students without German (eg [sic] German film, Holocaust Studies, Diaspora Studies). Teaching in the target language would militate against interdisciplinarity.” In fact, this development may not be all that current: A decade ago, in her study of language use in cultural modules in UK modern language departments, McBride found that “lecturers referred to structural factors and financial or staffing constraints as leading to greater use being made of English” (McBride 2003: 301).

Still, the comments are not all doom and gloom: Some departments are going the other way by introducing more German-taught content teaching. Respondent #20, for example, states that “the European culture lectures are at the moment shared with students of French, Spanish and European Studies and therefore, taught in English. However, from next year they will be taught separately in the specific target languages, e.g. also German.” The reasons for this decision are not given in the comment, but we may look to Respondent #4’s comment for possible explanations: “Current discussions are taking place over the introduction of some content teaching in the target language (traditionally this has not been the case) - partly due to student demand, and partly due to a need to expose students to more language across the curriculum.” It appears that this trend towards more target-language provision is driven by two forces: Firstly, the students who

¹²¹ One respondent who answered ‘No’ added a comment to clarify that “[t]here is no distinction [...] between ‘dedicated language classes’ and ‘subject-related content’. Students have the option [of] studying one integrated language/content course in German as part of their normal [sic] degree course.”

are asking for greater immersion in the target language, and secondly, academic staff who recognize that greater exposure to the MFL makes pedagogical sense.

However, at least on the tutor side, there are reservations: Respondent #4, for example, cautions that

[t]here are concerns, however, that this [content teaching in the target language] might limit the depth of material and quality of class discussion that can take place. We might initially trial a 'half-way-house', i.e. teaching some classes in Germany [sic] and some in English - and similarly having some assignments in German and some in English.

This is an argument often heard during discussions about target-language teaching. Sceptics can generally be convinced of CLIL's ability to enhance language skills through increased exposure to the L2. However, doubts about its validity as an effective method to develop content knowledge are more difficult to dispel, despite ample evidence from research in secondary education settings which supports this claim. Perez-Cañado, for example, provides an exhaustive overview of CLIL research across Europe, which seems to indicate that the gains in cognitive and processing development have "positive repercussions on subject matter acquisition" (Perez-Cañado 2012: 321).

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that some examinations of CLIL contexts, especially in European higher education settings, point a spotlight at problematic aspects such as problems with lecture comprehension in English-medium instruction found in recent studies in Sweden and Norway (ibid.: 322). A number of studies have also drawn attention to losses perceived by university students, such as "frequent use of avoidance strategies [due to language deficits], inability to exhibit best performance, decrease in the quality of teaching, decrease in students' overall learning results or increase in study load" (Aguilar / Rodríguez 2012: 184-5). Rather than taking such findings as confirmation of inherent flaws in CLIL as a teaching approach, Perez-Cañado considers them a valuable resource, as they provide "potentially revealing insights into the issues which should be addressed in course design and which affect honing the language skills of these students and ensuring effective lecturing behavior on the part of professors" (2012: 322).

To summarize, it appears that a number of different forces are currently driving change in teaching provision: On the one hand, financial pressures force some German (and more generally, MFL) departments to introduce more English-taught content modules in order to provide access to students from a wider range of degree programmes. On the other hand, some departments actually expand target-language provision, either because students explicitly ask for more L2 input, or for pedagogical reasons, to provide a more immersive, L2-dominated learning space.

7.3.4 L2 content teaching in the curriculum

Moving on to question Q7 ('Please indicate at which programme level target-language content instruction takes place'), the data reveals that L2 content teaching becomes more wide-spread with each year of study: Where 53% of respondents report that their German programmes contain content teaching in German in Year 1, the percentage increases to 74% in Year 2 and 79% in Year F.

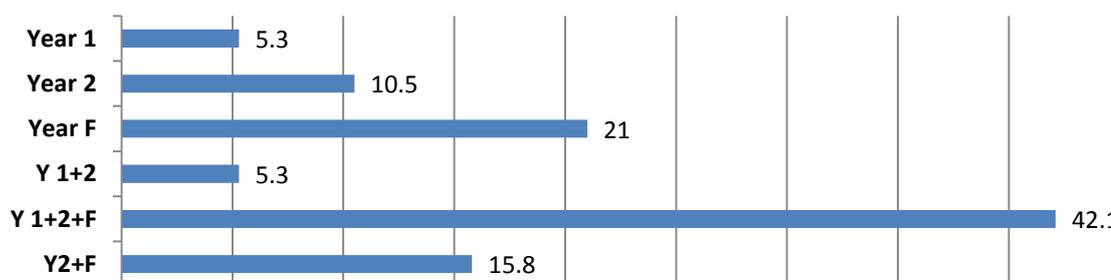


Figure 8: Q7: At which programme level does target-language content teaching take place?

Looking at the numbers in more detail, we find that, of the 19 institutions who provided information in this rubric, 42% provide L2 content teaching in all three programme years, whereas 47% only feature CLIL-type provision in Years 2 and F (21% of them only in Year F).

There may be a number of reasons for introducing CLIL later in the programme:

1. In order to prepare their students for the immersive experience of the Year Abroad, German departments increase exposure to the L2 in Year 2.
2. Once students return from their Year Abroad, they are keen to maintain and further enhance their improved language skills through continuing exposure to German.
3. Students are expected to develop more advanced language skills during their first year of study before following a more L2-heavy study programme in Years 2 and F.

With regard to point 3, opinions differ about the level of language proficiency necessary for successful target-language content teaching. Some experts believe that a minimum of B1, or Threshold, is required (Hughes / Madrid 2011). In Britain, the Languages Ladder in the National Curriculum (England) places A-level qualifications at the level of B2¹²², or Vantage, within the CEFR. When Milton used vocabulary size as an indicator for foreign

¹²² This corresponds with the IELTS requirements for international students at AU: In order to enrol in an undergraduate programme in the School of Languages and Social Sciences, international students are required to score at least 6.0 (Aston University 2012: 36), or "Competent User: has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations" (source: http://www.ielts.org/institutions/test_format_and_results/ielts_band_scores.aspx). According to IELTS, a band score of 6.0 is roughly equivalent to a mid-to-high B2 score in the CEFR (source: https://www.ielts.org/researchers/common_european_framework.aspx).

language ability based on the French wordlists contained in the original B1/Threshold level materials, he found that “A’ level students, with under 2000 words on average, look like they are just hitting the vocabulary levels needed for gist understanding which would place them at B1 rather than B2 level” (Milton 2007). And Klapper and Rees (2004) conducted a survey of A-level entrants to a German undergraduate programme and found large individual differences in entry proficiency levels in both C-tests (to measure general language competence) and grammar tests. Ultimately, their findings make them doubt the “predictive validity of A level German grades for entry level language proficiency and language progress rates” (2004: 36).

Heterogeneous learner groups can slow down language development and lead to tensions within learner groups. In CLIL settings, varying proficiency levels add yet another dimension to the level of language support that is required so that students can fully participate in the learning process. Simplifying the linguistic ‘packaging’ of the content takes careful calibration. After all, if “the simplification leads to the trivialization of the content and does not favor the proper cognitive growth of the students, then the CLIL approach is not being implemented” (Costa / D’Angelo 2011: 9).

An interesting picture emerges if we compare age of institution (Q2) and programme level at which L2 content is introduced (Q7): In the first group (Ancient universities), target-language teaching only takes place in Years 2 or F; of the ten Red Brick universities who provided data in this column, 50% report L2 teaching in Year 1, with percentages steadily increasing for Year 2 (60%) and Year F (90%). 60% of the Plate Glass Universities feature content taught in German in Years 1 and F, but all of them in Year 2. One New university provided information about programme level, stating that L2-taught content features only in Year 1, and the Recently created university included in the survey offers content in German in all three years. These findings indicate that older universities are perhaps more cautious with regard to target-language content teaching and wait until later in their German programmes to do so, while younger universities introduce L2-taught content earlier on.

If we correlate questions Q4 (mandatory Year Abroad) and Q5 (content modules taught in German) to determine whether an obligatory sandwich year spent studying or working abroad may be a significant factor in the decision to teach content in the L2, we find that the difference is minimal: Of those institutions which send their students abroad, 70% have L2-taught content modules, compared to 60% of those who do not mandate a Year Abroad. There is a slight difference in timing, however: Departments with sandwich programmes tend to start L2 content instruction in Year 1 (63%), with provision increasing equally in Years 2 and F (81%), whereas those which feature no mandatory study or work abroad provide no target-taught subject instruction in Year 1.

7.3.5 Type of content taught through the L2

Regarding the type of content taught in German, the most common modules concern politics and society (67%), followed by literature (61%), area studies (56%) and history (44%). Less frequently taught in the L2 are film (39%), economics (33%), and linguistics (28%).¹²³ In addition, in the rubric 'Other', respondents also mentioned media and business.

A closer analysis of the data shows that the range of modules taught in German differs when we compare the two groups of older universities with the younger Plate Glass, New and Recently created universities. In this group, all respondents who provided details in this rubric¹²⁴ say that politics modules are taught in German, followed by literature and area studies (83%), economics (67%), film (50%) and history and linguistics (33%). In Ancient and Red Brick universities, politics and literature, along with history, are also most frequently taught in German, but only by 50% of respondent institutions, followed by area studies (42%), film (33%), linguistics (25%) and economics (17%). These numbers indicate that while the overall range of modules is the same, the number of modules taught in German in each institution is higher among the younger universities.

7.3.6 Instructor profiles

The results for Question 9 ('Who teaches content modules in the target language (German)?') shows that, overall, the largest group are Lecturers (83%), followed by Senior Lecturers and DAAD/OAD Lektoren (50%), Readers (44%), Professors and Teaching Fellows (39%), and Language Assistants (33%). If we again apply a filter to compare older with younger universities, we find that in younger institutions, Lecturers (88%) and Senior Lecturers (63%) are considerably more likely to teach content in German than all other groups, especially Readers (12%). In the older universities, Lecturers (75%) are still ahead, followed by Readers (58%), DAAD/OAD Lektoren (50%) and Senior Lecturers and Professors (42%).¹²⁵

¹²³ It is unclear from the survey data whether this distribution is the result of curriculum structures or whether, for example, linguistics is less often taught in the target language because it is deemed 'too difficult' for CLIL.

¹²⁴ Of the eight younger universities who teach content in German, only six provided detailed information on the types of content taught in the L2.

¹²⁵ In her interview, Aston Instructor B mentions that at her former post at a Scottish university, target-language teaching was relegated to the language modules and was exclusively carried out by the [DAAD] Lektoren: "[D]ie Lektoren durften sozusagen nur den untergeordneten Sprachunterricht machen, also die Konversationsklassen." She thinks that the reason for this arrangement was that the other instructors didn't speak very good German, which she claims was common among the older generation of Germanists in the UK who had themselves gone through classical German Studies training at universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. (Interview Instructor B, p. 1) ["In other words, the lecturers were only allowed to carry out the secondary language teaching, that is, the conversation classes." (my translation)]

With regard to the language profile of L2 content instructors, L1 speakers of German teach content in the L2 in 94% of universities, and L1 speakers of English teach content in German in 72% of institutions. 63% (12 of 19) of respondents stated that both L1 speakers of English and German teach content in the L2, whereas 32% (6 of 19) reported that only L1 speakers of German actually front L2-taught content modules. It seems that while L2 speakers of German are involved in CLIL delivery at these universities, on average, the majority of German-taught content appears to be delivered by L1 speakers of German. This is quite different from many European contexts where the vast majority of content instructors involved in CLIL appear to be non-native speakers (NNS) of the vehicular language. For the Basque Autonomous Community, for example, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002: 132) report that having native speaker teachers on staff is uncommon at all educational levels, and according to Canagarajah (1999), 80% of English language teachers worldwide are NNSs. Some of the implications this fact has on the implementation of L2-medium content teaching across Europe from both the instructors' and the students' perspective are outlined in Chapter 4.

7.4 Summary

The UK modern languages landscape has undergone tumultuous changes in the past few decades. The majority of British pupils and students appear to have lost interest in learning modern languages, judging by the declining language uptake in compulsory education. Since MFL became optional post-KS3, ever fewer pupils pursue languages until A-level, which has had a clear knock-on effect on admission numbers in tertiary education. Consequently, MFL departments have had to adapt to new conditions. Many face considerable institutional pressure to deliver cost-effective programmes, leading to increased cross-departmental and interdisciplinary teaching provision. Due to various factors, including changing student expectations, curricula have been redesigned to reflect a stronger focus on broader socio-cultural themes and new disciplines such as, for example, Area Studies, Film and Cultural Studies. Overall, especially the younger universities have adopted a more contemporary, vocational model, geared towards increasing graduate employability in a globalised world. The discipline of German Studies has experienced similar developments, but under even more difficult conditions than other modern languages, as student numbers have declined at a more pronounced rate than, for example, French.

With regard to the integration of content and language, the practice of teaching subject-specific content in the target language appears to be more wide-spread than previously thought, judging from the lack of research interest this particular teaching approach has garnered. The findings of the online survey of British German departments paint an

interesting, in some ways surprising picture of the current extent of CLIL-type provision in German departments at British universities. We have seen that, contrary to popular belief, content provision in the L2 is actually quite common, but that younger universities are more likely to feature target-language content teaching. Whether or not a German programme features a mandatory sandwich year has little influence on the presence of CLIL-type content provision; however, programmes that do send their students abroad in their third year are more likely to introduce the L2 in content modules in Year 1 rather than later.

The text commentaries provide insight into the reasons for and against introducing L2-taught content modules: On the one hand, financial pressures have become an incentive to provide more cross-disciplinary content in English. On the other hand, some universities report that they are thinking about introducing German-taught content modules, or have already done so, because their students demand it, or because they feel that it makes sense from a pedagogical perspective. On the whole, British institutions provide a wide range of subjects in German, but the volume of L2-taught content is greater among the younger universities. In general, the different types of teaching staff are all engaged in L2-content instruction to some extent, but Lecturers, Senior Lecturers and DAAD/OAD Lektoren carry the lion share of L2 provision. Finally, German L1 speakers are more likely to teach in the target language, but L1 speakers of English are also well-represented among the CLIL practitioners in Higher Education.

The preceding section provides the macro-context for the case study at the heart of this project which analyses the implementation of integrated content and language instruction in the German programmes of a Plate Glass university in the West Midlands, based on quantitative and qualitative data gathered from undergraduate German students and instructors. Like all educational settings, the institution under consideration represents a particular social, cultural and political context, influenced by a multitude of factors, including university policy, institutional learning and teaching frameworks, individual teaching practices, the makeup of the student body, and so on. Data collected from students and staff allow us to understand how institutional factors, departmental policies, curriculum design and pedagogical principles shape how students and staff experience this particular teaching approach, and that is the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 8: Case Study: CLIL at Aston University

Chapter 7 provided an overview of the macro-context of the present case study by outlining recent developments in and the current status quo of L2-medium subject teaching in British German Studies departments. We now turn to the micro-context: The following chapter investigates how one Plate Glass University in the West Midlands implements subject teaching in the target language German. In order to paint as varied and detailed a picture as possible, we will first provide a detailed profile of the School of Languages and Social Sciences (LSS), with a particular focus on the academic subject group (ASG) Languages and Translation Studies which hosts the German group under investigation.

8.1 The micro-context: Languages and Translation Studies (LTS)

The German group at Aston is part of one of 4 academic subject groups which make up the School of Languages and Social Sciences¹²⁶. The three language sections German, French and Spanish and Translation Studies are incorporated in the ASG Languages and Translation Studies. Students can study German either as a main subject (i.e., Single Honours), or in combination with either another language (French or Spanish), with Translation Studies - which requires either one or two modern languages - or with one of the subjects on offer in LSS, for example International Relations, Politics, English or Sociology. Depending on the subject combination, all German students acquire a minimum of 40 and up to 80 out of 120 required credits in each academic year through the medium of German. The basic 40 credits consist of a core language module and a core subject module such as *German History* in Year 1 and *Post-War Germany* in Year 2. The rest of the credits come from German-taught optional modules, from English-taught modules in the combination subject or from another language studied as part of the university-wide language programme (UWLP).

In addition, Aston offers an integrated degree in International Business and Modern Languages (IBML). In this IBML programme, 60-70 credits are taught in English by the Aston Business School. The other 50-60 credits are provided in German in the form of a 20-credit core language module and through business-oriented subject modules; in addition, the IBML students also join the students from LSS language degree programmes in their core *History and Society* module.

Finally, after their second year of study, all undergraduate language programmes feature an integrated Year Abroad in one of the German-speaking countries, where students

¹²⁶ The four ASGs which make up the School of Languages and Social Sciences (LSS) are LTS (Languages and Translation Studies), English, Sociology and Social Policy, and PIR (Politics and International Relations).

undertake a work placement, work as language assistants through the British Council, or study at a German-speaking university.

8.1.1 Institutional profile

Chapter 6 has described the development of *Germanistik* / German Studies in the UK in the past decades and highlighted the remarkably varied range of programme structures. Kolinsky (1993) traces this diversification of degree programmes back to the two major waves of expansion in the university system in the 1960s and 1990s, when existing polytechnics were re-designated and new universities chartered. As a result, a “mix-and-match programme of language, literature and area studies” has now become the norm for the majority of institutions. In her study, Kolinsky documents where different universities position themselves on a continuum from courses with a clear emphasis on literature to those which specialise in applied language study.

Lit total: 5	Lit/mgs total: 21	lit/mgs total: 13	MGS/lit total: 5	MGS total: 3	ARS total: 5
Bristol Cambridge Durham Oxford UCL	Aberystwyth Belfast Birmingham Cardiff Edinburgh Exeter Glasgow Goldsmith Keele Kings/Lon Leicester Manchester Newcastle Reading RBHN/Lon St. Andrews Stirling Strathclyde Sussex Warwick Westfield	Aberdeen East-Anglia Hull Kent Lampeter Lancaster Leeds Liverpool Nottingham Queen Mary Sheffield Southampton Swansea	Bath Bangor Bradford Salford Ulster	Aston Loughborough Surrey	Essex Heriot Watt Umist York Buckingham

Table 3: Universities between Literature and Modern German Studies 1991/92 (adapted from Kolinsky 1993: 104)

She differentiates between the following categories: Lit = courses with emphasis on literature only; Lit/mgs = courses with emphasis on literature, but small element of *Landeskunde*; lit/mgs = courses with equal emphasis on literature and *Landeskunde*; MGS/lit = courses with main emphasis on *Landeskunde*, but some literature; MGS = courses with emphasis on *Landeskunde*; and ARS = courses with emphasis on Applied Language Studies. (Kolinsky 1993: 104) As we can see, Aston’s German Studies programme is categorised as a course with an emphasis on *Landeskunde*, which is borne out if we look at a list of content modules taught throughout the degree. In Year 1, Single

Honours students are required to attend the core content modules *German Language Past and Present* and *German Current Affairs*, in Year 2, core content modules include *Metropolis Berlin* and *Austrian Cultural History*, and in final Year (F), students attend, for example, *German-Jewish Biographies* and *German Popular Culture*. All of these modules are taught and assessed in German.

One core module in Year 1 is the recently introduced *Introduction to Film Studies*, a module shared between the three languages where bi-weekly lectures taught in English to students of German, French and Spanish are complemented with L2-taught seminars with L2 supervision and assessment. It appears that, despite Aston's strong commitment to target-language teaching, LTS is facing similar pressures to those described in Chapter 6 and has begun providing some content modules shared by all MFL students, likely due to falling student numbers and budgetary restraints.

In general, teaching units are designed around topics relating to contemporary society, politics and culture in the German-speaking world, using authentic multi-media materials and multi-mode tasks. The language modules are designed to interlink with content modules and to support the linguistic and academic requirements of the L2 content classroom. A wide range of assessment types are used to test different skills. Marking criteria and feedback procedures are structured according to mode (written, oral production), module type (language or content module) and language level (Year 1, Year 2, Year F) and are harmonised across the languages. In content modules, the content mark carries a weighting of 60% and the language mark attracts 40% of the final mark, and vice versa in language modules. (See Chapter 8.2.10)

8.1.2 Instructor profiles

At the time the bulk of the interviews with German instructors were carried out (January 2012), the German section included four permanent members of staff (Lecturer to Professor level) and one DAAD lecturer in the fourth and last year of his appointment. They all agreed to be interviewed about their experiences as CLIL instructors. In addition, one former member of staff was interviewed because she was the only one who could provide insights from the perspective of an L1 speaker of English rather than German.

The following instructor profiles are based on short questionnaires administered prior to the interviews to collect information about their educational background, experience of teaching language and of teaching in higher education and other educational settings.

Instructor A is in his mid-forties. He received his undergraduate degree in History, German and Education at the University of Freiburg, Germany, and holds a PhD in German History from Durham University, UK. His main areas of research are German history and politics,

migration studies and Anglo-German relations. While A is qualified to teach German in German secondary education, he has no formal qualification in teaching German as a Foreign Language (GFL), but has received some training through the DAAD and Goethe Institute and is an HEA Fellow¹²⁷. His teaching experience outside the UK includes two years as a graduate tutor in History at Freiburg University and three months teaching GFL at the University of Connecticut, USA. He has lived and worked in the UK for 14 years, holding positions as a sessional tutor, DAAD-Lektor, Lecturer and Senior Lecturer at three British universities. Since joining AU in 2007, he has taught mainly history and politics content modules and German language skills for IBML.

Instructor B is in her early fifties. She received both her undergraduate degree and her PhD in Linguistics at Hamburg University, Germany. She is qualified to teach German language and literature as well as RE in German secondary education, and spent two years teaching German and Yiddish at secondary level in Germany. Her research is in the field of linguistics. Like Instructor A, she has no formal qualification in GFL but attended two week-long workshops during her 2-year DAAD lectureship at a Scottish university and has 17 years of practical experience teaching GFL in the UK. Instructor B has been at AU since 1996, teaching German language skills, linguistics and a number of culture content modules.

Instructor C is in her early forties. She is qualified to teach English and German at German secondary schools and received a PhD in Modern German literature and Scandinavian Studies from Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany. Her research interests include cultural and literary studies, comparative literature and film studies. Like Instructors A, B, D and E, she has no formal qualification in GFL. Her teaching experience includes two months teaching English and modern German literature and film at secondary and tertiary level and 5 years as DAAD-Lektor at an English university before joining AU's German section in 2004, where she mainly teaches Business German and Business content modules and Film Studies and German History and Society modules. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Instructor D is in his mid-forties. He received his undergraduate education at Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich, Germany, and holds both an MA and PhD in German Literature from the University of East Anglia, Norwich. His field of research is German literature. He has no formal qualification in language teaching, but has been teaching a range of content modules, including German History, German Post-War Culture and Austrian Cultural History, since he took up his post at AU in 1999. Since then, he has also completed a Certificate in Education at AU and is an HEA Fellow.

¹²⁷ A professional recognition scheme of the Higher Education Academy to promote the professionalisation of teaching in tertiary institutions.

Instructor E¹²⁸ is in his early thirties. He completed his teaching qualification for German secondary schools (Politics, English, German) at the University of Mannheim, Germany, and completed a PhD in German History at AU. His research interests lie in the field of Germany History and Politics. After teaching German, English, Maths and Politics at a German secondary school as part of his teaching degree, Instructor E spent two years working as a language assistant at the University of Greenwich, UK, before joining AU as DAAD-Lektor in 2008, teaching a variety of IBML language skills modules as well as content modules on Business and German Culture and Society. He is an HEA Fellow.

Instructor F is in her late 40s. She was born and educated in the UK, holds a Bachelor degree in German and European Studies and received a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of London. Her field of research is Translation Studies. Instructor F holds an RSA certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and worked as Lecturer of German language, English language and literature, EAP and German-English translation at a number of UK universities before joining AU in 2002 as Lecturer in German and Translation Studies. She left AU in 2009 and currently works as a freelance translator from German and as an EFL trainer in Berlin.

To summarize, five instructors are L1-speakers of German and German citizens. They all received their undergraduate education at German universities, and two of them hold PhDs from German universities. One (former) instructor was born and educated in the UK and holds an undergraduate degree in German. Four instructors received PhDs from UK universities. Four of the six instructors worked as DAAD lecturers at various UK universities, including AU. Although none of them are formally qualified to teach GFL, four have teaching qualifications for German at secondary level, and one is a qualified to teach EFL. They all have at least 4 years of experience teaching German language or related subjects through German.

8.1.3 Student profiles

Student data was collected through questionnaires and classroom observation. Due to the timetable of modules offered at any given time in the academic year, the following modules were selected: LG1011 (Sociolinguistics) and LG3201 (German Cultural History) as well as LG3041 (Business Debates) in TP1 2009-10, LG1043 (German Economic History) in TP2 2009-10, and LG2050 (Contemporary Germany) in TPs 1 and 2 of 2009-10.

Due to varying attendance numbers in the modules, questionnaires were completed by 60 students in round 1 (i.e. at the beginning of the TP), and 58 students in the same modules

¹²⁸ Instructor E has since left Aston University to take up a teaching post at another English university.

completed the questionnaire in round 2 (towards the end of teaching). They had an average age of 20.17. In round 1, 20 students were from business-related modules, 20 from general German modules and 20 from the shared module LG2050. Of these 60 students, 35 were female, 25 were male. Of the 58 students in round 2, 36 were female and 22 were male.

In round 1, section B of the questionnaire included questions regarding the students' Language Background, asking about language(s) spoken at home, languages learned at school, contact with German speakers and visits to German speaking countries.

Question B1/1 concerns the language(s) primarily spoken at home. Less than two thirds of the students (37, or 62%) gave English as their primary language, followed by German (6, or 10%), Bulgarian (5, or 8%), French and Polish (3, or 5%, respectively), and Russian, Greek, Albanian, Slovakian, Twi¹²⁹ and Somali (1 student each). In answer to question B2/1, 21 students (35%) stated that they considered themselves multilingual; the languages spoken at home included English (9, or 15%), German (7, or 12%), and French, Latvian, Urdu, Thai, Italian, Ukrainian, Arabic, Somali, Twi, Czech, Slovakian, Albanian and Dutch.¹³⁰

When asked what language(s) other than German the students had studied in primary and/or secondary education, the large majority listed French (39, or 65%), followed by Spanish (12, or 20%), English (10, or 17%), Russian (2, or 3%), and Latvian, Italian, Welsh and Arabic (1 student each). 6 students (10%) stated that they had only ever studied German in school. On average, the students had studied German for 6.2 years prior to university.

Question B5/1 touches on one of the core elements of CLIL, namely the amount of exposure to target language teaching. Here, the students estimated how much classroom interaction in the L2 they had experienced during primary and secondary education. Granted, this concerns language classes rather than content classes (since we have to assume that the students had not been exposed to CLIL teaching in primary or secondary German language education). However, as we are interested in how undergraduate students deal with teaching and learning exclusively in the target language, it stands to reason that any prior experience with working in an L2-only environment will ease the transition to a CLIL university context.

¹²⁹ Also known as Akan, widely spoken in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, see <http://www.twi.bb/twi.php>.

¹³⁰ In such a relatively diverse student body, CLIL could be seen as a way of levelling the playing field. In a slightly different, but relevant context, Coyle et al. (2010:7) state that "CLIL plays a role in providing a pragmatic response towards overcoming linguistic shortcomings, and in promoting equal access to education for [...] students, including those with additional support needs".

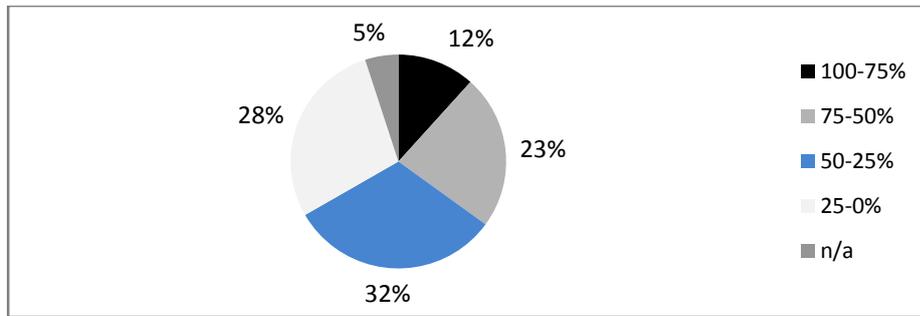


Figure 9: B5/1. Up to A-levels, how much classroom interaction was in German? (n=60)

For 60% of the students, no more than half of their classroom interaction in secondary education happened in the target language, while only 12% stated that at least three quarters of the time spent in the language classroom actually featured the L2. This means that, beyond general issues involved when transitioning from secondary to tertiary education, students will also have to adapt to target-language-only teaching in both language and content modules, a process which needs to be facilitated by instructors in Year 1 language and content modules. Incidentally, Instructor C considers the students' inexperience with CLIL to be an advantage:

Ich denke, dass CLIL gut bei unseren Studenten ankommt, hat auch was damit zu tun, dass sie es nicht aus der Schule kennen. [...] Die kommen meistens aus Schulen, wo wenig in der Fremdsprache passiert, und finden das neu und aufregend und anstrengend und super.¹³¹
 (Interview Instructor C, p. 12)

With regard to less formalised exposure to German, 20% of students 'frequently', 45% 'occasionally' and 25% 'hardly ever' had contact with German speakers outside the classroom. The vast majority had visited German-speaking countries before, for a variety of reasons:

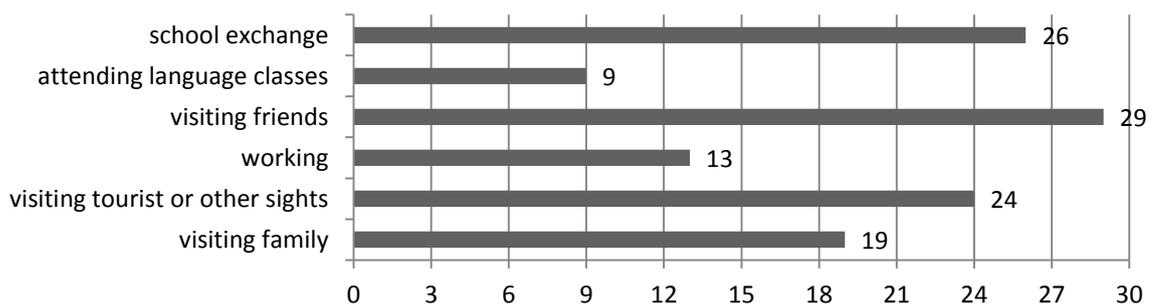


Figure 10: B7a/1. What was the purpose of this visit / these visits? (n=60)

The graph shows that 19 students have visited family in the German-speaking countries, and as we saw earlier, more than 10% of students stated that German was the primary language or one of the languages spoken at home.

¹³¹ "I think the fact that CLIL is well-received by our students also has to do with the fact that they are not familiar with it from school. [...] They usually come from schools where little teaching happens in the target language, and they find it new and exciting and exhausting and great." (my translation)

To summarize, the student sample comprises roughly 60% females and 40% males; 62% identify English as their primary language, the remaining 38% list other languages, such as German, Bulgarian and French, as primarily spoken at home. The majority of students studied at least one language other than German in primary and/or secondary school, with French in the lead with 65%, followed by Spanish and English. The majority of students state that less than half of classroom interaction in secondary education was in German, but most students had been exposed to German outside the classroom, be it through contact with German speakers or during visits to the German-speaking countries.

8.2 Findings

What follows is a combined analysis of quantitative data from student questionnaires and qualitative data from interviews with German teaching staff at Aston University.¹³² The findings are grouped according to common themes, and information gathered from students and staff are combined and contrasted to provide a detailed picture of teaching practices at Aston and the experiences of the two parties involved in content teaching in the target language German, which will also be compared to findings from the online survey of UK German departments which was the focus of the previous chapter as well as other European CLIL settings (see Chapter 4). In addition, various internal documents and data (External Examiner Reports, LTS Five Year Review) will be used to provide an external perspective on the context under investigation and to round up the analysis.

8.2.1 Heterogeneous learner groups

As section 8.1.3 has shown, undergraduate students bring a wide range of linguistic skills in multiple languages to university. All of this has immense implications for the level of linguistic competence of students, especially at the First Year level. While all Year 1 students come with A-levels or comparable qualifications in German (usually grades A or B), experience in the classroom has shown that the actual language proficiency among the Year 1 groups varies, sometimes quite dramatically. Instructor B, for example, states that “wir haben ja so einen leicht irrwitzigen ‘student intake’ - eine Gruppe von sehr guten Studenten und eine Gruppe von sehr schwachen Studenten, und das wird, habe ich den Eindruck, in den letzten Jahren auch immer deutlicher”¹³³ (Interview Instructor B, p. 12).

¹³² Caveat: As mention in Chapter 6, both the questionnaires and the interview guide were created when the focus of the study was L1 use in L2 content teaching which later switched to a more far-reaching analysis of CLIL practices in general. Not all data collected was included in this analysis; some questions are not discussed in the present chapter, but the responses collected but not considered here may be used for subsequent research.

¹³³ “we have a slightly ridiculous student intake - a group of very good students and a group of very weak students, and I get the impression that this has become more obvious in recent years” (my translation)

As we have seen, some students have spent extensive periods of time in German-speaking countries (on school exchanges, family visits, doing au-pair work, etc.), while others have hardly been exposed to German outside the classroom. Each year's intake also includes students who identify as bilingual or German L1 speakers. In addition, a growing number of international students bring L1s other than English to the table. CLIL can provide an even playing field for these students by taking the focus off the majority language of the environment. But this multilingual student body also necessitates a discussion about how all these different skill levels can be harmonised, and what support structures are in place to facilitate both linguistic development and the acquisition of subject knowledge for all students, regardless of what prior knowledge, experience and skills they bring to the table.

If we look at what the instructors say about how they deal with these heterogeneous learner groups, the interview data suggests that they perceive similar challenges and have developed a number of strategies for integrating learner groups with mixed skill levels. One common challenge is the role of bilingual or L1 speakers of German in the classroom. Instructor A usually assigns them as tutors in group work to support learning. He cautions, however, that using them as tutors for their fellow students requires a careful touch: On the one hand, these students want to be perceived as peers and not as external observers or facilitators, and on the other hand, there is a danger of their taking too strong a lead and dominating the group discussion. (See Interview Instructor A, p. 2)

Instructor B also uses these linguistically advanced students as tutors, but finds that they tend to intimidate weaker students, especially in group discussions. For her, one solution is to fall back on the students' shared everyday language, English, when the group becomes too strongly dominated by German L1 speakers, thus allowing the more timid students to participate in the discussion and ascertain their place in the group. (See Interview Instructor B, p. 11)

For Instructor C, the problem is less one of linguistic skills; she feels that the smooth integration of L1-speakers or bilingual students in the classroom is closely related to those students' attitude regarding their privileged position in comparison to their peers and to their willingness to be patient and supportive of their fellow students. One strategy C uses is to make sure that the strong students work with L2-learners rather than forming an L1-speaker group. (See Interview Instructor C, p. 5)

Instructor D identifies two distinctly different approaches taken by L1 or bilingual speakers of German: openly-demonstrated boredom or over-enthusiastic participation. In both cases, he favours approaching students individually to integrate potential problem cases in the learning process, for example by explaining:

Ihr seht ja schon, wie das hier abläuft; es wäre super, wenn ihr einspringt und dann was sagt, wenn es wieder hängt und sich keiner was zu sagen traut, aber bitte, bitte, ihr könnt schon Deutsch, die müssen das lernen, entmutigt sie nicht, lasst ihnen erstmal die Gelegenheit. Und ihr müsst mich nicht beeindrucken, dass ihr das wisst.¹³⁴

(Interview Instructor D, p. 10)

Instructor E, who mostly teaches on the business and modern languages programme, sees the mixed-ability groups as an advantage in some regards: “Die Herausforderung führt in der Regel dazu, dass alles sich verbessern, während wenn alle auf einem ähnlichen Niveau sind, gibt es oftmals nicht die Motivation für Studenten sich anzustrengen.”¹³⁵ (Interview Instructor E, p. 4) E partly contributes this effect to the rather marked competitive tendencies of this group of students in general. Overall, he feels that as an instructor, he needs to get involved and assign L1 speakers to mixed-level groups rather than allowing them to form L1-speaker clusters which can be de-motivating for other students. Some of these L1-speakers of German are interested in becoming teachers themselves and are happy to take on tutor responsibilities, so E uses various forms of group work, presentations and task-based activities where stronger students can support those with less developed language skills.

Instructor F is less optimistic about the presence of L1 speakers of German; she sees it as a social issue in the classroom: “[S]ocially, there’s also a problem in that the German native speakers in the class have such a massive head start that they will always be underchallenged and they will always be making difficulties for the other ones.” F also worries about classroom coherence within the non-L1 speakers, who “will tend to be divided according to grammar rather than according to intellectual capacities. So I think there are a few problems with it in terms of the social make-up of the class.” (Interview Instructor F, p. 3)

However, heterogeneity is not only an issue with regard to linguistic skill, but also when it comes to the knowledge base students bring to the content classroom. Instructor A, for example, points out that, since the students come from diverse, international backgrounds, he can never be certain that they will have a shared pool of knowledge about a certain topic. When dealing with groups including, for example, students whose first language is neither English nor German, he says that,

Ja, ich erkläre manchmal schon Dinge, die einem Engländer klar sein müssten. Wobei allerdings es sich ja hier um Deutschland handelt, sozusagen um einen *third space*, der für beide neu definiert werden muss. Und natürlich assoziiert oder hat ein Pole über

¹³⁴ “You can see how things work here; it would be great if you could jump in and talk when there’s a snag and they are all too shy to talk, but please, please, you already speak German, they have to learn, please don’t discourage them, let them have the opportunity. And you don’t have to impress me with what you know.” (my translation)

¹³⁵ “The challenge generally helps everybody improve, while, if they are all on a similar level, students often don’t feel motivated to work hard.” (my translation)

Deutschland ein anderes Wissen - ich sage nicht, ein besseres, aber ein anderes Wissen - als ein Brite, oder hat andere Stereotypen über Deutschland als ein Brite.¹³⁶

(Interview Instructor A, p. 2)

Similarly, A describes how, in a previous position where he taught seminars on European integration and politics in English, he had to explain complex terminology both for English students who were unfamiliar with the context and for international students who may have been familiar with the concept but not the terminology, or neither.¹³⁷ Likewise, the fact that a student is an L1 or bilingual speaker German does not automatically mean that they have deeper knowledge of the subject matter discussed in the CLIL content seminar, therefore, the challenge for these students is on the content side, and Instructor B (Interview p. 11), for example, sets them additional tasks, requiring deeper cognitive engagement, to ensure that they benefit in equal measure, if with a different focus, to less linguistically able students who, by necessity, spend more of their energy on language acquisition.

8.2.2 Motivation for studying German

Let us now turn to the reasons why students decide to study German at university. Understanding what motivates students to study German can help instructors to engage them in the learning process by tailoring content and learning activities - within the framework of institutionally designed curriculum outlines and specific learning outcomes described for each module - to their interests and objectives.

In round 1, students were asked to choose from a list of possible reasons, or to add motives of their own¹³⁸:

¹³⁶ "Yes, sometimes I explain things which should be clear to an English student. However, we are dealing with Germany, what could be called a third space, which needs to be defined for both groups. And of course a Polish student has different associations with and knowledge about Germany - I'm not saying better knowledge, but different knowledge - than a Brit, or has different stereotypes about Germany than a Brit." (my translation)

¹³⁷ See Chapter 4 for the importance of language as a mediator for knowledge and the subsequent importance of language awareness and focused language work in discipline-specific teaching, be it in the L1 or the L2.

¹³⁸ Multiple answers were possible.

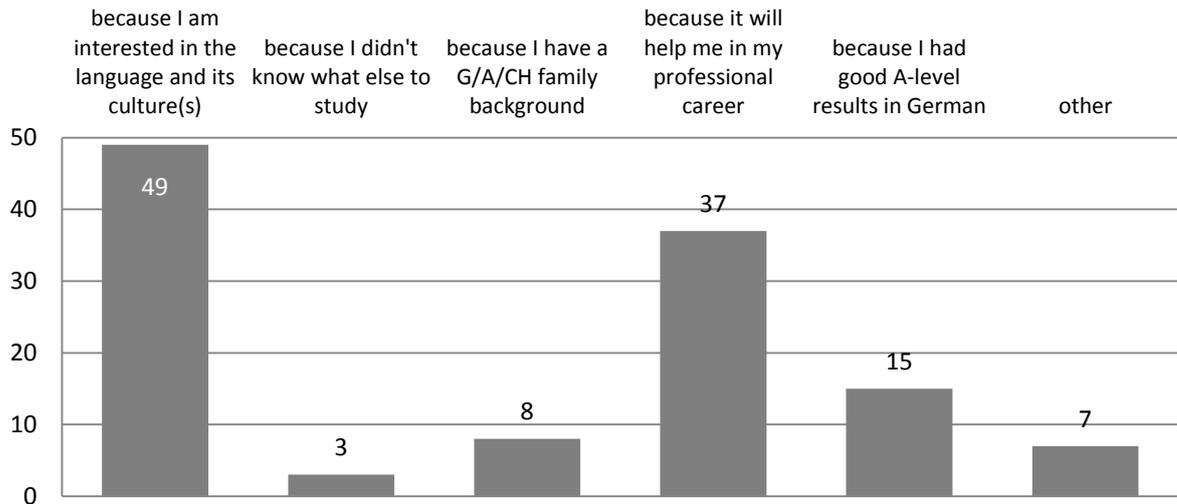


Figure 11: C1/1. Why did you decide to study German? (n=60)

Some of the additional motives included: ‘to better my German speaking ability’, ‘I would like to work and live in Switzerland’, ‘my family has German friends’, ‘I have been studying it for 7 years’, ‘I studied in a German secondary school’, ‘as an English native I consider it of extra importance to learn another language’.

As we can see, the reasons range from the practical to the pragmatic; what these numbers indicate, however, is that the biggest motivators for students to study German at undergraduate level is a genuine interest not only in the language, but the culture that goes along with it, followed by the expectation that a degree in German would improve their opportunities in the job market later on.¹³⁹ This chimes with Worton (2009) who found that students taking a language either as part of an integrated degree module or as an option in a non-linguistic degree are mainly motivated by “the benefit that this will bring to their career prospects. The next two most important reasons were to obtain a qualification and for personal reasons.” (Worton 2009: 27)

The instructors were also asked to comment on what they thought motivated students to study German. Instructor C explains that, in her discussions with students about this topic, typical answers are ‘I had good grades in German’ or ‘I didn’t know what else to do’; as the figure above shows, 30% of students give these same reasons. As one of the instructors mainly involved in teaching on the business with MFL programmes, C also states that “für die Wirtschaftsstudenten ist es eben die Attraktivität im deutschen Wirtschaftsraum arbeiten zu können”¹⁴⁰ (Interview Instructor C, p. 10). Instructor B confirms this observation, explaining that, especially for these students, job prospects play

¹³⁹ Similarly, in the Norwegian context, Hellekjaer (2010: 245) found that the students’ “belief in the utility of English for future careers or interest in working abroad enhances their efforts to master [English-medium] lectures”.

¹⁴⁰ “for the business students the attraction is being able to work in the German economic area” (my translation)

an important part in the decision to study German. B also talks about a second large group of what she calls 'Germanophile' students who have a genuine interest in the language and the culture and have usually spent some time working or studying in a German-speaking country (see Interview Instructor B, p. 2). Overall, Instructor C feels that the main motivation for students is to gain mastery of the language rather than deep engagement with an academic discipline:

[D]ie meisten möchten ja nicht wirklich auf extrem hohem Niveau sich mit kulturwissenschaftlichen Theorien auseinandersetzen, oder politischen oder anderen. Sie möchten hauptsächlich eine besonders hoch entwickelte Sprachfähigkeit mitnehmen, und die Gelegenheit sollten wir ihnen dann auch geben. Und dann müssen sie so viel wie möglich auf Deutsch machen.¹⁴¹ (Interview Instructor C, p. 7)

In contrast, Instructor D states the somewhat disillusioned opinion that, while the logical answer would be that the students are interested in German culture, his daily experience in the classroom is that interest in the subject is far less pronounced than a desire to gain good grades: "Das merkt man [...] bei Angeboten, die über das, was assessed wird, hinausgehen, [dass da] kein Interesse besteht."¹⁴² (Interview Instructor D, p. 15) He concludes that one explanation may be that they have made the strategically sound decision to study German because it is likely to afford them promising career opportunities due to the general lack in language graduates in the UK.

This opinion is supported by a recent report on UK labour market demand for modern language graduates, published by the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML). The report found that the European "Big4" French, German, Spanish and Italian remain most in demand by employers specifying a language for recruitment. To give an example: Recruitment agencies reported that in the last 12 months, German was the most requested language, with more than 1,500 jobs requiring German, about 25% of the total (Mulkerne / Graham 2011: 38). At the same time, a number of employers lamented the lack of sufficient language skills among their prospective recruits from the UK labour force. Discussing future skill needs, the report is quite clear about the significant role of higher education in closing a skills gap caused by a decrease in German uptake post-GCSE and growing pressure on German departments in universities to fulfil recruitment targets and provide cost-effective learning and teaching.

Following on from the motivation for studying German, let us look at some of the reasons for choosing AU. The following figure shows that the majority of students (73%) researched different degree programmes and chose their favourite. The perceived

¹⁴¹ "Most of them don't really want to engage with cultural, or political, or other theories at a high level. They mainly want to acquire highly developed language skills, and we should give them the opportunity to do so. And in that case, they have to do as much as possible in German." (my translation)

¹⁴² "You can see that [...], when you offer content which goes beyond that which is assessed, [there is] little interest." (my translation)

reputation of the university is also a strong reason for students to decide to come to AU (60%). And as in the previous graph, almost 60% of students are of the opinion that the AU degree will increase their chances in what today is a very difficult job market and for 40% of students, a campus visit helped them decide on this university.

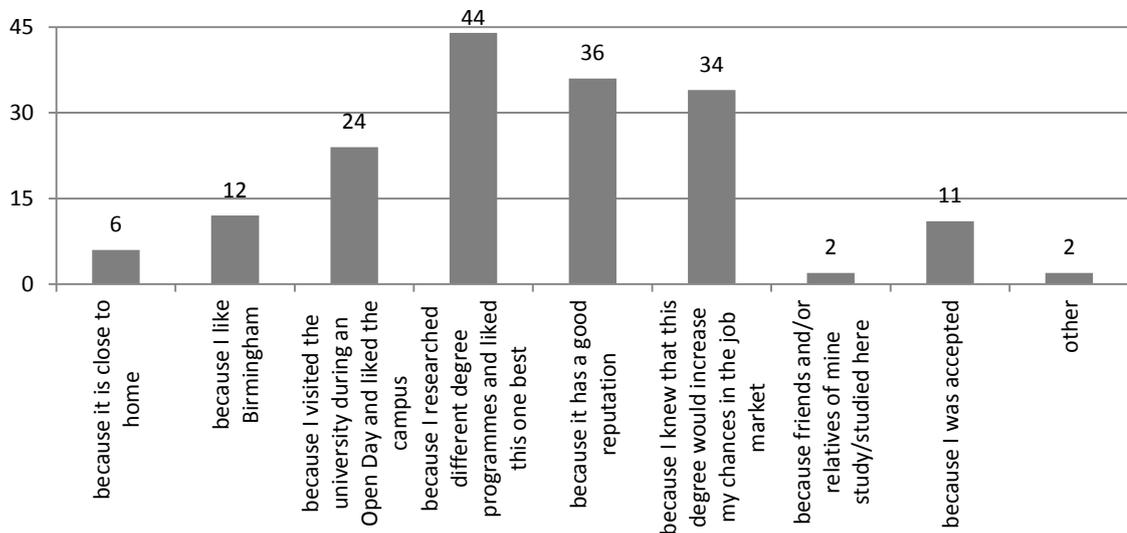


Figure 12: C2/1. Why did you decide to study German at this university? (n=60)

In the ‘other’ category, only one student added ‘due to Integrated Approach’. This leads us to the next question: Did the students know about AU’s approach to CLIL before they started their degree, and if so, did this approach influence their decision to study at this university?

8.2.3 Awareness of CLIL

Two questions in section C/1 concern the students’ knowledge of the Integrated Approach and whether it played a role in their decision to come to Aston. Question C3/1 asks: *Did you come across the concept of the Integrated Approach when you investigated this university?* The results are quite surprising, given the fact that the School presents its policy of teaching content in the target language as its USP¹⁴³ in numerous ways, from its prospectus and website to the language degree programmes’ UCAS descriptors and the presentations at Open Days and other marketing events. Despite these efforts, only 39% of students say that they came across the Integrated Approach when choosing their university.

These findings allow us to draw the following two conclusions: a) The information about what the Integrated Approach means does not reach the students as intended, or b) the term itself, which is used within AU as a label for target-language content teaching, is not

¹⁴³ unique selling point

communicated to the students, even when they are informed about what the approach entails or when they experience it themselves. Both of these options indicate problems: After all, how can AU use the Integrated Approach as a USP if it is not communicated to the intended audience? And how can the university communicate better to the students what to expect when they start their first year?

One possible implication becomes clear when we look at question C4/1: *Did the Integrated Approach used at this university play a part in your decision to come to this institution?* The figures show a direct correlation between a student's knowledge about the Integrated Approach and their decision to study at this university: Of the 23 students who, in round 1, indicate that they were familiar with the approach, 22 state that it influenced their decision to come to AU. This indicates that for them, it was a positive deciding factor – these students seem convinced of the advantages of the Integrated Approach.

When asked whether the Integrated Approach plays a role in the students' choice of university, Instructor A comments that, when speaking with First Year students, some of them indicated that the Integrated Approach had attracted them to Aston. (Interview Instructor A, p. 10) Instructor B has had similar experiences, especially when talking to personal tutees, but cannot comment whether the message about the approach reaches all students. (Interview Instructor B, p. 2) Instructor F also refers to the fact that Aston's Integrated Approach is highlighted during the Open Days, but she is far from sure whether they understand what that actually means: "I think it sounds to them kind of like a magical state that they'll reach over night when they get there, and they'll be able to do it. I'm sure it sounds glamorous to them, and they think it will teach them a lot." (Interview Instructor F, p. 1)

Instructor C notes that at Open Days and other marketing events, the integrated nature of the International Business and Modern Languages (IBML) programme is highlighted specifically as its USP (Interview Instructor C, p. 11), given that it is one of only two programmes of its kind.¹⁴⁴ Instructor E confirms this, stating that, for him, IBML is the most comprehensive realisation of the approach "weil es sowohl im Unterricht Sprache mit Inhalt, Business-Inhalt, und dann noch einmal mit Deutschland verbindet".¹⁴⁵ (Interview Instructor E, p. 1) Thus, the programme integrates language acquisition with cultural content and business knowledge.

According to Instructor D, who has been involved in Open Day presentations for years, it is especially the parents - often from non-academic backgrounds - of potential students who consider the integration of language and content to be a logical and valuable approach and who are convinced that to 'learn the language in the language' is only

¹⁴⁴ The other is the BSc in International Management and Modern Languages (IMML) at the University of Bath.

¹⁴⁵ "because it combines language with content, business-related content, and, in addition, connects with Germany" (my translation)

natural. From conversations with students themselves, D gained the impression that their main motivations for choosing this university has less to do with academic considerations and rather more with the central location of the university campus. (See Interview Instructor D, p. 13)

In round 2, that is, during the second observation of the same tutorial groups at the end of the teaching term, the open question Question B1a/2 asked those students who had come across the concept of the Integrated Approach before how they would define it. Here are some of the definitions provided by the students:

- “Teaching and learning by using the language whilst learning about the language and related topics”
- “It means that we learn the language through lectures in different subjects in the target language.”
- “teaching in the target language and assessing”
- “It means immersion in the language and an approach that means bringing the two subjects together.”
- “learning business with German rather than the two separately”

Some of the answers are quite knowledgeable and show that the students are aware of the methodology and its benefits. However, the main focus for most students seems to be on language proficiency rather than the development of content knowledge. This may be a reflection of what the students themselves prioritize: improving and perfecting their language skills may well be more important to them than gaining understanding and knowledge of the German-speaking countries, an idea which is also echoed by some of the instructors.

Instructor A, for example, thinks that the long-term objectives of his content teaching are that students develop their language skills and acquire transferable skills such as intercultural competence:

[Die Studenten] werden vergessen, wann die Mauer gebaut wurde und wie genau der Marxismus-Leninismus funktioniert hat, aber sie werden mit einer gewissen Sensibilität an Ostdeutsche herangehen und zumindest schon mal gewisse Themen nicht ansprechen, was sie sonst vielleicht gemacht hätten. Also das ist so eine längerfristige interkulturelle Kompetenz.¹⁴⁶
(Interview Instructor A, p. 2)

As this quote shows, he holds the pragmatic view that most of the content knowledge they acquire will be forgotten with time, especially if the students decide not to go into

¹⁴⁶ “[The students] will forget when the Wall was built and how Marxism / Leninism worked in detail, but they will show a certain sensibility when they encounter East Germans and know which topics not to mention, which otherwise they might have done. So it’s a kind of long-term intercultural competence.” (my translation)

postgraduate education but join the labour force after gaining their undergraduate degrees.

In round 2, students were also asked question B3: *Do you believe that the Integrated Approach should be advertised more strongly to promote the uni?* Again, the majority, that is 55% or 32 out of 58 students, responded in the affirmative. In question B3a/2, those who had answered 'yes' were asked to state why it was important that AU advertise the Integrated Approach more strongly.

The answers seem to fall into various categories. Some students clearly feel that not enough information is provided about the Integrated Approach, which is reflected in answers like:

- "because it is unclear what it is!"
- "I am not aware of it – therefore if it is a positive thing it is important to know about it"
- "raise more awareness"

Other students highlight what they perceive as the pedagogical advantage of this Integrated Approach. These students are aware of the advantages a CLIL approach brings and how it can enrich their learning experience and future career prospects:

- "because it improves the teaching and involves the student more immersing him/her in the foreign language"
- "because it makes learning more effective"
- "because you learn two skills at the same time"
- "Because it is an approach that could be seen to give language students here an advantage over students at other universities."
- "because it benefits the students in their language skills"
- "It is a real strong point of the degree programme and I think it would interest a lot of people."
- "Because it is so, so much better – better grasp of the language and everyone assumes this will happen, but there are only two unis that do it."

This last answer also hints at another reason that many students mentioned. Some appear to have done extensive research into what different universities have to offer and they clearly see the Integrated Approach as a strong asset for the university:

- "Because it is a USP of Aston which other unis don't offer."

- “Because it is a great asset and attraction for students that are interested in learning languages at Uni.”
- “Because not many universities offer it and students are searching for opportunities to learn in this manner.”
- “It may later help to influence students to come to the university.”
- “It’s the reason why I’m here.”

Along the same line, Instructor E thinks that Aston needs the Integrated Approach to distinguish itself among the many MFL programmes available in UK Higher Education. For him, the chance CLIL gives Aston to stand out from the crowd is more important than any influence it may have on students’ choice to study at AU. (Interview Instructor E, p. 2)

Some of the student answers also reflect another aspect of CLIL which needs to be addressed, that of transparency. This is reflected in the following answers to question B3a/2:

- “important part of course delivery”
- “to let students know how involved they’ll be with the course”
- “so that people know they are expected to speak in the target language”

These statements can be read as simple requests for more information about the approach, or they may reflect a certain apprehension regarding the expectations of students to fully engage in the CLIL process, especially if they feel that they are less well prepared for such dense exposure to the L2 than some of their peers. This is also reflected in a comment by Instructor B: “Man darf aber auch nicht vergessen, dass es bestimmt Studenten gibt, die das einschüchternd finden, also die Vorstellung, dass sie die ganze Zeit in der Zielsprache unterrichtet werden, das sie das auch abschreckend finden.”¹⁴⁷ (Interview Instructor B, p. 2) When asked whether knowing about the Integrated Approach can motivate students to take up a foreign language, Instructor F thinks that “good and highly motivated students, they’ll see that the rewards are very large, but the majority may well just think, ‘That’s a bit above my head.’” (Interview Instructor F, p. 2) In that respect, making more potential applicant aware of the CLIL approach as practised at Aston may well be a double-edged sword and could attract students as well as scare them off.

Either way, the university needs to consider the personal experiences of these students if it hopes to provide them with a supportive environment conducive to L2 teaching and learning. This may have implications for how LTS actually implements CLIL: There may

¹⁴⁷ “But it shouldn’t be forgotten, that there are some students who may find that intimidating, that is, the idea that they will always be taught in the target language, that they might find that deterrent.” (my translation)

be a need to provide extra language support by using various scaffolding techniques. Tutors may have to think carefully about the forms and language of assessment. And additional resources may have to be made available to supplement L2 lectures with tutorials to give students an opportunity to recap and process lecture content.¹⁴⁸

Commenting on how he prepares students in his L2-taught content modules for what is to come, Instructor A states that he talks to his students very candidly about the approach from the start, explaining that they might struggle a little at the beginning, but that it would pay off in the long run if everything was done in German. He also sets down clear rules about language use in class, asking for exclusive use of German if at all possible and encouraging students to switch back to German if they slide into English, especially during group work. He also uses the L2 outside the classroom, during individual consultation during his office hours, 80-90% of which are conducted in German, unless the topic is personal or requires delicate handling. (Interview Instructor A, pp. 4-5)

Let us return to the question of advertising the Integrated Approach, which is the subject of question B3b/2. Here is what the students suggest:

- “Make sure it’s clearly explained on the website and prospectuses, on open days; contact schools where studying languages is central and target them directly.”
- “Prospectus / Website – make it a USP”
- “communicate directly to potential students”
- “students give first hand opinions on how it has helped”
- “maybe it should be advertised on posters they send out to colleges etc.”

One Final Year student has this rather prosaic, yet sound advice: “call it something simpler”. Indeed, if the university wants to make the most of its CLIL policy as both marketing USP and pedagogical tool, it may be advisable to align its approach with the national terminology and call it CLIL. This holds true especially in light of the fact that more and more of the schools the students are recruited from are themselves piloting various CLIL approaches which means that prospective students will already be familiar with the method, if not the terminology.

When asked about whether Aston University needs to advertise the Integrated Approach more effectively, the instructors are not always in agreement. Instructor A, for example, thinks that the Approach raises the university’s profile and is advertised sufficiently in the

¹⁴⁸ Students receive additional support through, e.g., study skills portfolios embedded in content modules to develop essay writing skills in the MFL. In addition, teaching assistants from Germany, France and Spain offer extracurricular conversation classes and language support.

prospectus, on the website and at Open Days. (Interview Instructor A, p. 10) Instructor B agrees in principle, but thinks that advertising efforts could be increased and that the message sometimes gets lost. (Interview Instructor B, p. 2) Instructor F, on the other hand, thinks that it should be advertised more, especially in print material; in fact, she cannot recall seeing it mentioned in the prospectus at all. (Interview Instructor F, p. 2)

8.2.4 Perceived benefits of CLIL

Some of the questions in section D asked students to evaluate the impact of the CLIL approach on their language skills and their experiences with the method.

Question D20 asks the students to agree or disagree with the following statement: *I consider using German to communicate in class a beneficial and rewarding challenge.*

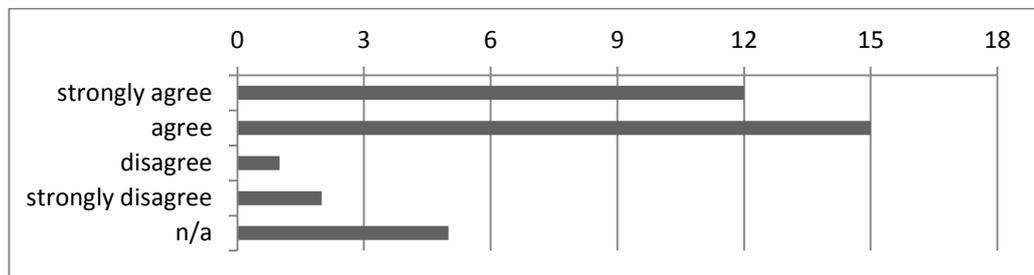


Figure 13: D20. I consider using German to communicate in class a beneficial and rewarding challenge. (n=58)

By this time, the students had actually been involved in the CLIL process as active participants, and some may have found the experience slightly more challenging than others. In general, these numbers are encouraging – the students seem willing to engage in the CLIL process and seem to see the benefits of studying in an L2-only environment.

Question D26 was only put to Second and Final Year students and asked them to agree or disagree with the following statement: *I believe that, without the Integrated Approach, my language skills would not have improved as significantly as they have.*

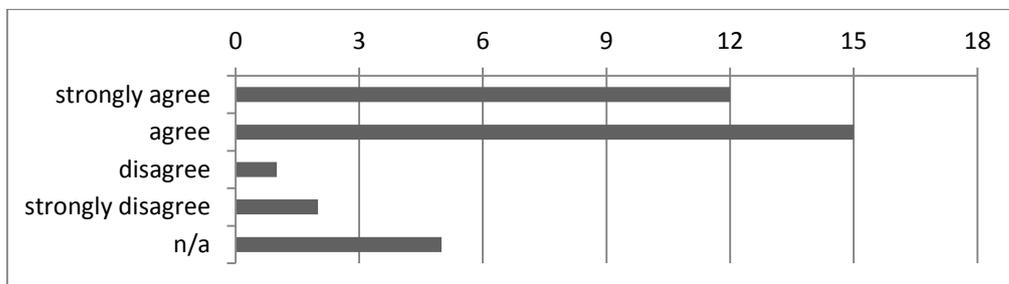


Figure 14: D26. I believe that, without the Integrated Approach, my language skills would not have improved as significantly as they have. (n=35)

Again, the results were very positive, with 77% in agreement. It appears that the majority of students personally experience L2-medium instruction as a benefit.

Let us now look at what the students think about the Integrated Approach as preparation for their Year Abroad. Year 2 students were asked to agree or disagree with this statement in D30: *I feel more comfortable about going abroad next year because I have gotten used to using German to communicate in and out of class.* Again, the affirmative answers were in the clear majority, at 82%, while only 3 students disagreeing with the statement. However, the reason for these negative answers is not necessarily that these students felt that L2 instruction did not help prepare them. It could also be interpreted as showing that they felt confident enough in the first place - given that a number of students in this particular group were L1 speakers of German or identified as bilingual.

In round 1, in question D30, the students in their final year of study, who had spent the previous year working or studying in a German-speaking country, were asked to agree or disagree with the statement: *I believe that my Year Abroad was more beneficial and successful because I had been taught exclusively in German in Years 1 and 2.* Again, the results are overwhelmingly positive, with 88% of students strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement. And in question D31, 88% of final year students agreed that they believed that their Year Abroad would have been more difficult if content modules had been taught in English.

All in all these results indicate that the students in all year groups see clear benefits in the university's approach to CLIL. However, these benefits appear to be most strongly related to linguistic development - the C, or content, element of CLIL finds little mention in these results.¹⁴⁹ This is confirmed by some of the instructor comments. Instructor F, for example, states that the advantage is a language practice one. For her,

it is obviously better for them to speak in German about something that has real substance, clearly that's a good way of using language. It forces them to engage in a different way with language. That's a massive advantage, and it enriches the process in that sense.

(Interview Instructor F, p. 4)

Instructor C confirms this impression, and while she is not entirely convinced that the students are able to fully realise their cognitive-academic potential when learning through the L2, the opportunity for language gains this approach garners are evident to her. (Interview Instructor C, p. 7) According to her, students often come back from their placement year, where they have had a chance to compare their language proficiency to that of other British German students, and report that they felt more linguistically prepared and capable than their peers. (ibid., p. 11)

¹⁴⁹ This is mainly due to the fact that the focus of the study changed after these questionnaires had already been administered (see Chapter 6), therefore the questionnaires contained few questions that refer directly to the content element of CLIL at Aston.

8.2.5 Challenges of CLIL instruction

In the previous section, student and staff data were mined to determine what they perceive to be the major advantages of the CLIL approach. We now turn to some of the challenges this approach brings with it, mostly on the part of the instructors.

Instructor B (Interview Instructor B, p. 2-3), for example, reports that one of the challenges of L2-medium teaching is to find adequate teaching materials, as the textbook culture is less developed in German than in English¹⁵⁰ which results in a lack of appropriate authentic texts (see Moate 2011). Many of the relevant texts available in German are characterised by the highly complex, rather idiomatic and formulaic style typical of German academic writing (cf. Fandrych 2006) and are increasingly difficult to process by undergraduate students, especially those who have only just made the transition from secondary to tertiary education. However, Instructor B sees this as one facet of a wider problem: She contends that undergraduate students appear increasingly less able to process complex academic texts, even in their L1, English¹⁵¹. She bases this evaluation on her experience of teaching a Year 1 content module in English which is shared by students from across the languages, where she has noted an increasing lack of text comprehension skills. She speculates that one of the reasons for this development is the fact that more and more, weaker students are accepted into the programme despite overall higher UCAS requirements, as the falling student numbers have meant that more students are admitted through the clearing process where entry requirements tend to be handled more flexibly.

Instructor E's comments also refer to teaching materials, but for him, the challenge is that preparing appropriate materials and designing effective teaching units requires more time and effort on behalf of the teacher, and in the classroom, most activities (e.g. working with written texts) take longer and require careful scaffolding. (Interview Instructor E, p. 5)

Earlier, we saw that some university lecturers teaching in the L2 English feel comfortable in formal L2 teaching situations but experience linguistic limitations in more social, informal communicative situations (see Chapter 4). This sentiment is mirrored by Instructor A, but from the perspective of someone who teaches in his L1: He also finds it more difficult to communicate in his L1 with learners of German in situations where language functions as a social lubricant, e.g. when trying to build rapport with students through humour, "weil

¹⁵⁰ Conversely, Unterberger (2012: 89) reports that many programme directors at Austrian business faculties with English-medium postgraduate programmes state that "most of the literature and textbooks for the narrowly specialized subjects of the programmes is published in English anyway and that their expertise in the field has been largely acquired through English", which makes it "only natural to set English as the medium of instruction". Ball and Lindsay (2012) report similar motivations for the introduction of EMI at Basque universities.

¹⁵¹ This chimes with what Hellekjaer (2010) found when he investigated listening comprehension among Norwegian students, where some of the problems reported with regard to students' understanding of key concepts and subject specific vocabulary apply to both lectures conducted in the students' L1 (Norwegian) and their L2 (English).

deren Deutsch halt nicht so gut ist wie mein Englisch, und man dadurch eine Wand aufstellt zwischen sich und den Studenten”¹⁵² (Interview Instructor A, p. 7). In a similar vein, Instructor C notes that she tends to use English with Year 1 and 2 students when she wants to use humour in class - and they do as well. She thinks that humour is an important part of British culture and that students find it important to be able to joke and laugh. (Interview Instructor C, p. 6)¹⁵³ Instructor B mentions that, in her experience, students are less open and less likely to engage in interaction with her when they are taught in their L2. (Interview Instructor B, p. 3)

The answer of Year 2 and F students to question D24 echoes some of these reservations; in it, students were asked whether they had had a hard time getting used to the exclusive use of German in the classroom in Year 1 (and 2 for final year students). The percentages of those who agree and disagree are very similar, only slightly skewed towards disagreement (54% disagree). This indicates that they do find it difficult to learn to cope with the large amount of German used in the classroom, both by their instructors and by themselves. Still, the previous subchapter and other sections show that despite this, they consider this approach to have clear benefits, and that the extra effort is worth it.

For Instructor C, the main challenge is the dual nature of the approach, the need to cater to both content and language outcomes simultaneously without overtaxing the students. She finds this an arduous task, and “ich weiß nicht, ob [die Studenten] das selber manchmal so richtig begreifen, wie schwierig das eigentlich ist, was sie machen“¹⁵⁴. (Interview Instructor C, p. 8) This is echoed by other studies investigating the experiences of CLIL teachers who found CLIL practice ‘dramatic’, ‘nightmarish’ and ‘exhausting’ (Moate 2011: 336).

Instructor D thinks that method needs to be considered separately from context; in his opinion, Aston doesn’t really attract the high-calibre students who would find it easier to deal with this L2-focussed approach from the very beginning, which is why he tends to use more English in the lower years but switches to German only in final year. (Interview Instructor D, p. 1)

Instructor F expresses a certain amount of trepidation with regard to the content dimension of CLIL instruction:

In principle it should be an advantage that they get to know a different way of approaching the topics, however, I’m not sure whether they get to that stage. I think there is a certain problematic aspect of it, and that is that the classes can’t take place at such a high intellectual

¹⁵² “because their German isn’t as good as my English, so you create a barrier between yourself and the students” (my translation)

¹⁵³ Moate (2011) reports the same perceived threat the L2 posed to humour in teaching among upper secondary teachers in Finland.

¹⁵⁴ “I don’t know whether the students themselves understand how difficult what they are doing really is” (my translation)

level as they would be able to if you bypass the language question. [...] [I]f they had been in English [...] I would have been able to challenge them in a different way, and they would have been able to say more carefully what they mean.

(Interview Instructor F, p. 2-3)

She returns to this point later on, referring to the degree of sophistication students can express in their L2, stating that “thinking happens through speaking, and so if somebody is, basically, handicapped with their speech, it will certainly slow down the amount of thinking effort they can put in”. (Interview Instructor F, p. 4) In this view, one of the main drawbacks of CLIL is the linguistic load that many students experience and fail to account for when working through their L2. As we have seen in Chapters 3 and 4, this is where scaffolding in all its forms comes into play; if done correctly, it can help students overcome the language hurdle and focus on what they want to say rather than worry about how they say it.

8.2.6 Language use in the CLIL classroom

Most of Section D of the student questionnaire concerns language use in the CLIL classroom, specifically the students’ attitude towards the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom.¹⁵⁵ The first group of questions - D 1-7 - read as follows:

- D 1. I enjoyed attending classes taught exclusively in German.
- D 2. My instructor enforced the use of German in the language classroom throughout the term.
- D 3. I would have preferred it if the instructor had used more English in class.
- D 4. I used more German with fellow students than with my instructor.
- D 5. The fact that German is spoken throughout all classes has made it easier for me to communicate in German.
- D 6. I used more German with my instructor than with fellow students.
- D 7. My instructor always made an effort to speak German with me outside the classroom.

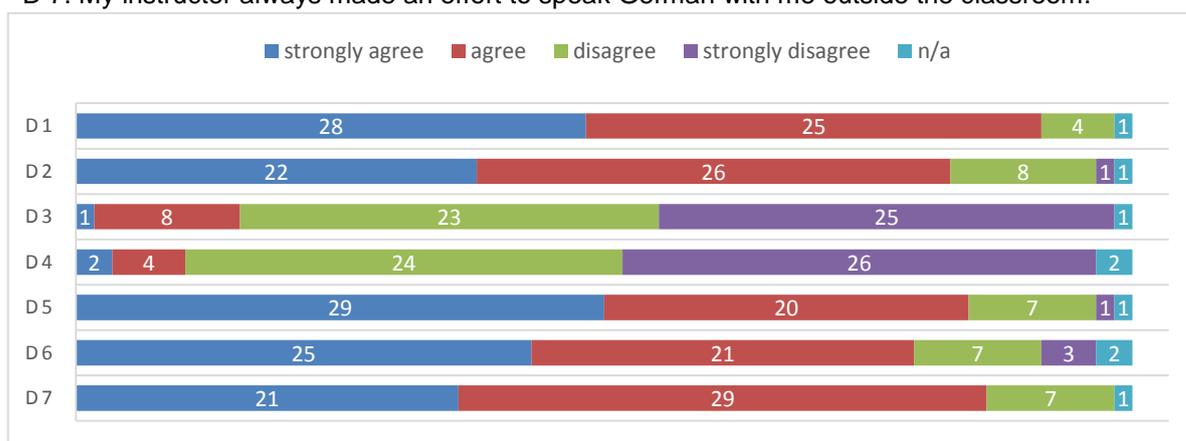


Figure 15: Questions D1-7 (n=58)

¹⁵⁵ Some of the questions (D8-10) concern the amount and purpose of L1 (English) used in the L2 (German) classroom, language use between student and instructor, instructor and student, and among students. Since the focus of the investigation changed after the questionnaire was administered, this data will not be considered in the present study, but remains an interesting source for future analysis.

Overall, the results are largely positive; students feel well-prepared for attending classes, and they feel that instructors make their expectations about the use of German in class clear. They also largely agree that the fact that German is spoken throughout all classes makes it easier to communicate in German. The strongest negative results come with questions D3 and D4, indicating that the majority of students would not like it if their instructors used more English in Class (83%) and do not necessarily find it easier to use German with fellow students than with their instructors (86%). In related question D4, only 10% said that they actually used more German with fellow students, while in answer to question D6, 79% confirm that they actually used more German with their instructor than with fellow students. This confirms the perception that whether students use German or English in classroom interaction very much depends on who they are communicating with. Questions D11-23 concern students' opinions regarding the use of German in the classroom for different purposes:

11. I believe the fact that I had to use German in class has improved my ability to communicate in German.
12. I believe that I must use as much German as possible in class in order to become proficient in German.
13. I believe that it helped that instructor and students only used German to discuss module information and other admin issues.
14. I believe that, even if students use English occasionally, the instructor should always use German only.
15. I believe that it helped that instructor and students always used German to discuss grammar and usage of German.
16. I believe that sometimes it makes things easier to use English, even if it would be more beneficial to use German all the time.
17. I believe that, because I had to use German, I became more anxious about my German abilities.
18. I believe that I would retain more information if I was taught in English.
19. I believe that, because I had to use German, I become more confident about my German abilities.
20. I consider using German to communicate in class a beneficial and rewarding challenge.
21. I have now reached a point where I don't want or need to use English in class.
22. I believe that my instructor used English only when it is absolutely necessary.
23. I believe that my instructor used English very efficiently and purposefully.

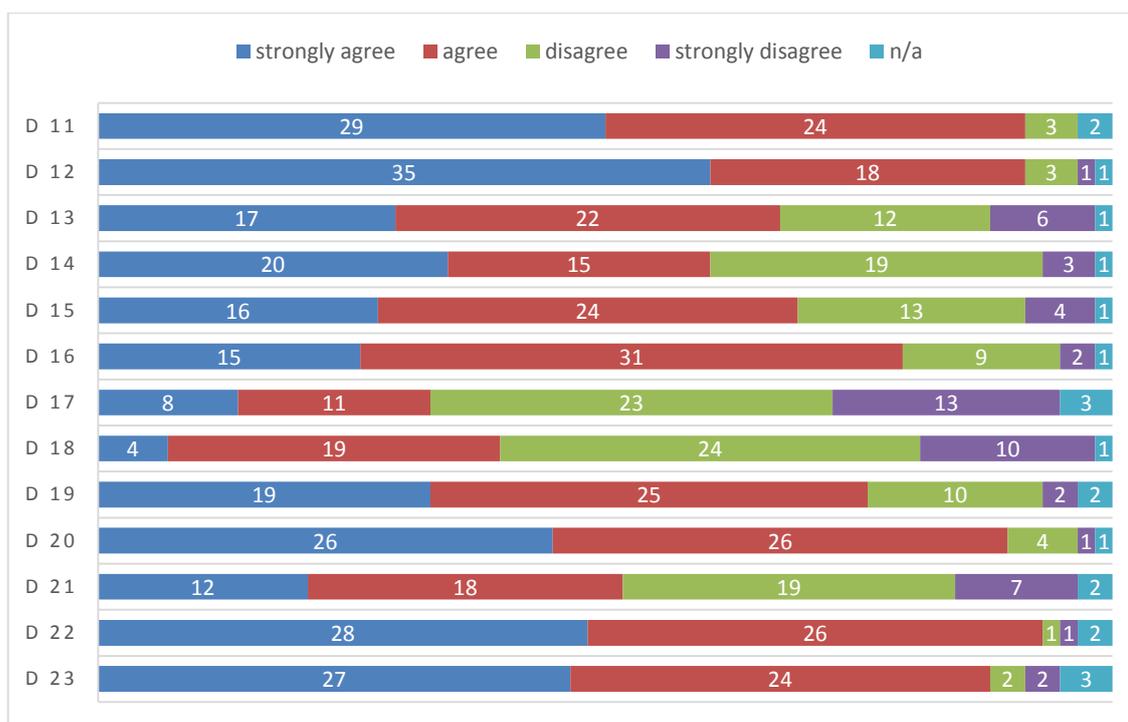


Figure 16: Questions D11-23 (n=58)

As the data shows, students have a generally positive attitude towards the use of German in the classroom. For example, 91% agree that increased use of German will improve ease of communication (D11), and the same percentage confirms that it aids proficiency (D12). The percentages are less clear when we look at the *exclusive* use of German in the classroom: In D13, only 67% of students think that only German should be used for classroom maintenance such as administrative information, and even fewer think that the instructor especially should always use German (D14, 60%). This aligns with some of the comments instructors made with regard to when they tend to use English in class (see Appendix 3, Supplement 1, Question 2). Instructor B, for example, states that she tends to switch to English when giving information about assessment content and structure (Interview Instructor B, p. 7), and the same is true for Instructor E (Interview Instructor E, p. 10). Instructor C notes that she usually explains assessment criteria and other course information in English, “weil das einfach ganz wichtig ist und man möchte, dass auch die schwächeren Studenten das auf jeden Fall verstehen”¹⁵⁶. (Interview Instructor C, p. 5) Instructor D also strategically uses the L1 to ensure comprehension, and he uses visualisation, notations on the blackboard to illustrate complex content points. (Interview Instructor D, p. 5)

In question D15, students indicated whether they believed that instructor and students should always use German to discuss grammar and usage of German. Interestingly, only

¹⁵⁶ “because that is very important and you want to make sure that the weaker students also understand” (my translation)

29% disagree, which could mean that what they may have imagined to be difficult to do in the L2 at the beginning of the year - talking about German grammar - turns out to be manageable - and beneficial - in German after all. However, what is beneficial is not necessary easy: Perhaps not surprisingly, 81% of students agree with this statement in D16: *I believe that sometimes it makes things easier to use English, even if it would be more beneficial to use German all the time.*

When asked in D17 whether they became more anxious about their German abilities because they *had* to use it in class, students appear quite confident overall, but still, 33% agree with the statement. This indicates that the practice of some instructors to insist on exclusive use of the L2 is less traumatising than might be expected, but still significantly so for a third of the student population. Instructor A, for example, is rather strict about L2 use because “[d]ie Studenten sollen auch spüren, sobald sie die Schwelle in ein Klassenzimmer überschritten haben, ist das deutsches Territorium.”¹⁵⁷ (Interview Instructor A, p. 4) Instructor D, on the other hand, tends to use more English in Year 1 and then phases out the L1 in Years 2 and F. (Interview Instructor D, p. 1)

In answer to D18, asking whether they thought they would retain more information if content was taught in English rather than German, 40% of students agreed. The reason for this may be the fact that, having been involved in the CLIL process as active participants, some may have experienced difficulties dealing with complex subject matter in the foreign language. According to Instructor F, the limited language proficiency of students means that “staff are very frustrated about not being able to put across the points they want to [put] across, and not having a dialogue with students because they are just sitting there, silent, or just saying two-word sentences.” This frustration sometimes leads to staff giving up and speaking English, “possibly in a way which is unpredictable for the students, which I don’t think is helpful”. (Interview Instructor F, p. 8)

The issue here is one that is central to CLIL in any context: how to design a curriculum, and more specifically, individual learning units which serve both language and subject learning objectives to a satisfying degree and provide the necessary scaffolding to enable students to function efficiently in the learning space. One way to interpret the students’ experience reflected in their answers to D18 is that they feel that content acquisition suffers as a result of L2 use.

Overall, the vast majority of students believe that their instructors only use English when it is absolutely necessary (question D22, 93%) and that their instructors use English effectively and purposefully (question D23, 88%). The question of purposeful use of the learners’ L1 was also put to the instructors. While we have seen that Instructor A is quite

¹⁵⁷ “the students should feel that, as soon as they enter the classroom, they are on German territory.” (my translation)

reluctant to use English in his classroom, Instructor B considers the L1 to be an important contrastive tool in both her language and content modules. In the former, she tends to compare and contrast the languages to illustrate similarities and differences at the linguistic level. In her sociolinguistics module, she makes the point that she wants students to not only understand how the German language developed, but also to learn something about their own language. In fact, she points out that “wenn man sich unsere Lernziele mal genau ansieht, da steht nämlich auch immer wieder [...] Umgang mit englischen Texten, das Verfassen von englischen Texten. Es geht ja nicht nur darum, dass die Deutsch lernen.”¹⁵⁸ (Interview Instructor B, p. 5)

This point is also picked up by Instructor F, the only L2 speaker of German who participated in the staff interviews. Overall, F is the most critical of all the instructors who took part in this study and the only one who is not fully convinced by the Aston approach. Her main argument is that there is not enough space in the degree for students to develop writing and speaking skills in English, which she considers to be a key skill of the “classic humanities graduate”, and she feels that “the majority of [students] just are missing out on what should be their birthright”, meaning that “they come [to university] using an 10-year-old’s language and they should leave using a graduate’s language” which is not necessarily happening. (Interview Instructor F, p. 10-11)

This is an important point in CLIL settings, where, as we have seen in Chapters 3 and 4, the continued development of the learners’ L1 is a key concern. Research in these settings has shown that L1 development is not stunted when learners engage in L2-medium content instruction, in fact, some studies have even found evidence that CLIL learners score as high, if not higher, than their monolingually educated peers in L1 development. However, much of this research comes from pre-tertiary contexts where students rarely receive all of their schooling in the target language. As we saw in Chapter 4.2.5, some researchers in HE contexts have raised similar concerns (Sercu 2004). In order to ensure parallel L1 development in L2 medium instruction, Coyle et al. (2010) recommend, for example, the planned and purposeful use of translanguaging and the introduction of additional materials in the L1. Instructor C usually includes short summaries in English in her German history lecture to, on the one hand, ensure understanding, and to provide students with the opportunity to develop content knowledge in the L1. (Interview Instructor C, p. 4).

¹⁵⁸ “if you take a close look at our learning outcomes, they do talk about working with English texts again and again, producing English texts. It’s not just about them learning German.” (my translation)

8.2.7 Integration of content and language

We now turn mainly to data from the instructor interviews to investigate how content and language are integrated at AU, since they are involved in designing and developing new modules, which is where important decisions are made with regard to the weight that is given to content and language in, for example, the learning outcomes, and they are also on the frontline, so to speak, as they all teach CLIL.

Instructor B explains that when new modules are designed, thinking about and formulating learning outcomes for both content and language is part of the process. New module specifications then undergo a peer review process to make sure they comply with ASG requirements. (Interview Instructor B, p. 4)

In practical terms, Instructor A states that, for him, the integration of language and content means

dass ich inhaltlich teilweise runterschrauben muss in Komplexität und Inhalt und auch Schnelligkeit dessen, was ich vortrage. Dass ich auf sprachliche Dinge eingehe, vor allem auch Fachterminologie. Ich verstehe mich dann weniger als Grammatiklehrer, sondern mehr als Terminologievermittler, der auch mal komplexe Terminologie einführt in den Unterricht, die hoffentlich klar erklärt und die Studenten dann dazu auffordert, auch mutig genug zu sein, das selber zu verwenden.¹⁵⁹ (Interview Instructor A, p. 1)

Ideally, there should be clear links between language and content classes, for example by designing content-based activities in language classes which in turn support content-class goals. In this context, Instructor A feels that language and culture modules could be integrated and harmonised more effectively by creating a curriculum map which not only concentrates on content, but language aspects. However, recent harmonisation efforts within the German group and the ASG have already led to a certain degree of homogeneity. (Interview Instructor A, p. 11) Instructor D doesn't quite agree; he feels that there is a certain amount of division still within the ASG because over the years, each language section had developed fairly independently - "Jede Sprache kocht ihr eigenes Süppchen." - and that the harmonisation process has to be bottom-up rather than top-down, because colleagues from the different sections are likely to be reluctant to simply let go of historically grown organisational and pedagogical structures without consultation and discussion. (Interview Instructor D, p. 3)

Instructor B states that when she comes across a grammatical aspect many students have difficulty with, she either takes some time in her content class to explain and practice that aspect, or she asks the colleagues who teach the language modules to dedicate some time to it. Overall, however, she thinks that the content and language sides of the

¹⁵⁹ "that I have to sometimes reduce the complexity and amount of content and the speed at which I deliver it. That I address linguistic issues, especially specialized terminology. In those moments, I don't see myself as a grammar teacher, but a mediator of terminology who introduces often quite complex terminology, hopefully explains it clearly and encourages the students to be brave and use it themselves." (my translation)

programme could be coordinated much more effectively and feels that, in some instances, the language tutors are not as cooperative as they could be. The expectation here is that language tutors should exhibit a certain amount of flexibility in how they support the language needs of students in content modules, based on input from content instructors. (Interview Instructor B, p. 8)

With regard to the existence of clear language and content learning outcomes, Instructor C feels that the situation could be improved, and that even if such outcomes exist on paper, some instructor “sehen sich wirklich nur als Inhaltsvermittler, die sich eben auf die Situation einstellen, dass sie es nicht mit Muttersprachlern zu tun haben”¹⁶⁰ by randomly switching to English to explain certain lexical items learners haven’t understood in German. She mentions that, during peer observations, she has seen colleagues explain certain vocabulary that the students themselves might have been able to work out, simply because the instructors found them easy to translate into their L2 (English), while more complex and discipline-specific words remained unexplained because they hadn’t sufficiently prepared for the possibility that they would have to give explanations in English. She admits that the same has happened to her as well. (Interview Instructor C, p. 2)

For Instructor C, the degree of integration between language and content is also linked to whether the instructor is an L1 or L2 speaker of the vehicular language. She explains that, when she inherited teaching materials she found that her predecessor, an L2 speaker of German,

hat im Vergleich zu anderen Leuten hier im Department wesentlich stärker immer Sprachelemente eingebaut. Es ging wesentlich starker um Wortschatzbildung, es ging immer mal wieder stärker darum Grammatikkapitel aufzugreifen mitten in einem inhaltlichen Thema, wo andere Dozenten das vielleicht nicht gemacht hätten.¹⁶¹

(Interview Instructor C, p. 1-2)

C also comments that L2 speakers of the vehicular language have a better feeling for the difficulties which learners face, especially if they share the same L1. On the other hand, she recognizes that teaching in their L2 is more arduous for them. Instructor F confirms this impression, referring to the same former colleague who “always used to say, ‘God, I spend hours before class checking genders’ of the words she was going to use” (Interview Instructor F, p. 5).

¹⁶⁰ “they purely see themselves as content mediators who then simply adapt to a situation where they are not dealing with L1 speakers” (my translation)

¹⁶¹ “she always built in language elements much more frequently than other colleagues in the department. There was much more focus on vocabulary development, there were more instances where she would take up a certain grammar aspect in the middle of a thematic unit, where other teachers may not have done so.” (my translation)

With regard to the weighting of content and language in the marking process, Instructor F comments that

it's very difficult because what do you want the students to come out with in the degree, what is it you want your finished student to be? And if you demand that their German is really, really good but you don't care whether they can't think or research, then you have to mark differently from if your main thing is, you want them to be ready to work and ready to think.

She thinks that one of the problems here is that there is too little co-ordination between the content and the language side, and that "the situation in the content classes is exacerbated when it's already difficult". (Interview Instructor F, p. 5)

One degree programme which appears to integrate language and content more successfully than others was mentioned earlier, International Business and Modern Languages (IBML). This is a relative large distinct group of students, and Instructor C explains that business-oriented modules were designed specifically for them, both content modules¹⁶² and German for Business language modules.¹⁶³ This opportunity to tailor the programme content specifically to the needs of one group of students is not afforded to other study combinations because they often feature only a handful of students who are enrolled in more general content modules alongside peers who might have a very different combination subject. (Interview Instructor C, p. 3) However, Instructor E, who is involved in teaching both the language and content side of IBML, explains that he differentiates quite clearly between the German for Business language module and the International Business Environment content module he teaches. In the former, the focus is on developing the four skills and practicing grammar, albeit by using business-related materials, and in the latter, his main objective is to cover the topics specified by the curriculum, but any language development - apart from vocabulary clarification - that occurs is incidental and purely stems from talking about the topics in German. (Interview Instructor E, p. 3) It seems, then, that classroom practice does not actually correspond to the ideal which underpins the IBML programme - seamless integration of content and language.

8.2.8 Instructors: Language or subject expert?

In higher education, content modules are generally taught by research-active subject specialists whose own research informs their teaching. According to Worton, in UK universities, "[t]he vast majority of staff in all [MFL] Departments are involved in language

¹⁶² For example, International Business Environment, German Economic History, and German Business Debates

¹⁶³ Since the introduction of the new fee regime in 2012, student numbers have fallen to such a degree that maintaining separate language modules for IBML students is no longer viable, and the new shared language module combines business-specific language development with more general communication skills.

teaching; 36% reported that all of their staff are involved in the language elements of their programmes; 68% reported between 80% and 100% involvement.” (Worton 2009: 30) This raises the question of what kind of language pedagogical support these subject specialists require to provide successful and effective CLIL instruction. They are specialists in their subjects, but are they specialists at teaching language, which is a declared aim of CLIL instruction proper? Coincidentally, all members of the German teaching staff in the German department under investigation are native speakers of German. Does that mean that they are automatically equipped to teach it?

Instructor A states quite clearly that he is neither a subject specialist who also teaching language, nor a language teacher who teaches subject content: “Es hängt von dem Kontext ab, über den ich gerade spreche. Ich habe manchmal längere Phasen, wo ich auch mal auf was Sprachliches eingehe, aber zumeist ist es eigentlich der Inhalt, der mich vorantreibt, selbst in Sprachkursen.”¹⁶⁴ (Interview Instructor A, p. 1)

Instructor B considers herself to be both, despite the fact that she is a specialist in Linguistics and her main role is that of a content expert. Still, she states that “dieser Sprachunterrichtsaspekt an der ganzen Sache fast noch befriedigender ist als denen jetzt irgendwas beizubringen über die zweite Lautverschiebung oder sowas.”¹⁶⁵ She especially enjoys seeing how students develop over time and learn to stand on their own feet, linguistically speaking. (Interview Instructor B, p. 5)

For Instructor C, the answer depends on the context of the individual modules she teaches, but generally, she teaches modules in thematic areas she didn't study which means that she doesn't consider herself to be a subject expert. On the other hand, comparing the local context with teaching similar modules to L1 speakers at German universities, she feels that the level of engagement and depth of involvement with the topic is reduced at Aston which she attributes to the language of instruction. However, she doesn't see this as a reason to change the approach to content teaching at Aston. (Interview Instructor C, p. 2)

Instructor E sees himself more as a discipline specialist who also teaches language. Consequently, he sometimes has to make sure not to overwhelm students with too much content, so the compromise is on the content side rather than the language dimension. (Interview Instructor E, pp. 7-8)

¹⁶⁴ “It depends on the context at the time. I sometimes have longer phases where I address certain language issues, but generally it's the content that drives me, even in language modules.” (my translation)

¹⁶⁵ “that in all this, this aspect of language teaching is almost more satisfying than teaching them about the second Germanic consonant shift or something.” (my translation)

Instructor F feels that she “didn’t quite fit into either of these things” and thinks that she was more a skills teacher, as a translator.¹⁶⁶ In the German group, she was involved in language teaching in the second and final year language module, where she taught the translation element of the modules “and that was all working with passive language skills. And I think I saw that as partly being working on their English. So language yes, but not necessarily German language.” (Interview Instructor F, p. 5) As the only L1 speaker of English on the staff at the time, she is generally keen on developing the L1 proficiency of the students and feels that more effort should be made to give students the opportunity to develop academic skills, especially written productive skills, in English.

8.2.9 Teacher training

Most universities - including AU - make an effort to allow research-active staff to teach modules which reflect their own research interests. However, the changing nature of German Studies curricula means that literature is becoming increasingly more peripheral, while it remains a popular research specialisation among academics. Kolinsky (1994: 34-35) discusses this discrepancy in relation to area studies: Most instructors who teach area studies modules have no related academic qualifications; instead, they take on these modules as required by the department’s curriculum, focussing on political, social and economic developments, when most of them are actually experts in German literature. Kolinsky calls this a “structural weakness” (*Strukturschwäche*) of UK German Studies which may prove disadvantageous in the long run.

In addition, the British tertiary sector seems to mirror findings from diverse European contexts with regard to pedagogical training for teaching staff. As we saw in Chapter 4, few universities provide pedagogical/methodological or linguistic training opportunities for L2 content teachers, and even if the opportunity is provided by the institution, academics appear to be reluctant to take their employer up on the offer. Similarly, in Britain, “very few languages academics have undergone professional training in the teaching of a foreign language” (Worton 2009: 30), even when they teach language modules or conduct their subject teaching in the target language.

The situation is somewhat different at Aston University. As we saw earlier (Chapter 8.1.2), of the six instructors involved in the present case study,¹⁶⁷ five are L1 speakers of German and four of them are qualified to teach German at secondary level in Germany, but none of them have received training in Teaching German as a Foreign language. The one

¹⁶⁶ However, she also sees her former role as that of a subject specialist in Translation Studies as she was mainly responsible for Translation Studies theory modules taught in English. (Interview Instructor F, p. 5)

¹⁶⁷ At present, all five staff members involved in delivering the German programme are L1 speakers of German, including the author.

participant who is a L2 speaker of German has no formal training in teaching German, but is qualified to teach English as a Foreign Language. Therefore, the majority of staff has some background in language pedagogy, but none of them have any formal training in CLIL pedagogy, except what they have learned on the job.

Asked whether he had any theoretical background in CLIL, Instructor A explains that his engagement with CLIL had always been practical rather than theoretical and he had studied curriculum maps and assessment structures when he started his job at Aston in order to understand the practical implications of the approach. He also notes that while the institution offers no official CLIL training, new colleagues are usually inducted unofficially by their colleagues and line managers. In fact, he doubts the necessity, but also the practicality of requiring teaching staff to undertake CLIL training, given their already extensive workloads. He admits that it may be beneficial to require some methodological training from DAAD lecturers and teachers in similar roles, but insists that from Lecturer upwards, other things take priority, such as administrative and research responsibilities. One reason why he doesn't think theoretical-methodological training is necessary is the recruitment process for new colleagues:

[W]enn interviewt wird, also wenn neue Leute kommen, da wird ja dann immer auch mal in die Richtung gefragt, oder es wird zumindest geschaut, ob die Leute anpassungsfähig sind, und das ist schon mal eine Voraussetzung. [...] [I]ch bin aber auch nicht zufällig hier ausgewählt worden, weil ich auch in diese Richtung tendiere und von diesem Ansatz begeistert bin.¹⁶⁸

(Interview Instructor A, p. 9)

Instructor B also feels that it is up to the individual to familiarize themselves with the theoretical and methodological literature on CLIL, alongside support by mentors or predecessors and colleagues. She herself has done some background reading on CLIL, but hasn't attended any training workshops. With regard to what the institution could / should do to prepare instructors for the task of teaching in the target language, she suggests that there should be a workshop to explain what is involved in CLIL to raise awareness of the issues involved, which should be offered to new colleagues as well as for those already engaged in L2-medium teaching. (Interview Instructor B, pp. 3-4)

Instructor D doubts the value of a training regime prescribed by the institution. He considers any departmental pressure to acquire internal or external accreditation, for example by requiring all teaching staff to hold a PGCE or HEA fellowship status, to be manipulative and not conducive to developing genuine interest in pedagogical-methodological issues. For him peer observation and mentoring by more experienced colleagues are the most effective ways for new teaching staff to learn about CLIL. (Interview Instructor D, p. 7) Likewise, Instructor E feels that mandatory training would be

¹⁶⁸ "During interviews with new people, there are always questions in that direction, or the panel at least checks whether the candidates are adaptable, and that is one of the prerequisites. [...] I wasn't chosen for this job by chance, but because I fit the profile and am enthusiastic about this approach." (my translation)

counterproductive, but he suggests that all teaching staff could be required to complete a certain number of peer reviews (Interview Instructor E, p. 6).

Judging by these instructor comments, the situation at Aston seems no different from European practices with regard to staff training. The institution itself offers no CLIL-specific pedagogical-methodological support apart from individual arrangements with line managers or mentors. Even if there were training available, most of the participants are against making it mandatory for all teaching staff; instead, they advocate the value of peer observation as an effective way to learn about good practice.

8.2.10 Assessment and feedback

Assessment is a difficult topic in any teaching environment; choosing the appropriate type of assessment to evaluate the students' learning requires careful thought and has to take into account the knowledge and skills which were set as the learning outcomes for a specific module. Traditionally, summative feedback which "makes a judgment on the capability of the learner at that point in time" (Coyle et al. 2010: 112) accounted for the majority of assessment in university contexts (e.g. the essay which made up 100% of the final mark for a module). However, especially in language learning, formative forms of assessment are important indicators for development, as they are "directly diagnostic with a few to immediately impacting on the learner's next steps" (ibid.) and inform the teacher's lesson planning in case remedial action is required.

In CLIL contexts, assessment is an especially difficult topic because of the integrated nature of the knowledge and skills to be tested, and teachers sometimes worry about the fairness of assessment which is designed to test both the knowledge gained and developed over the course of the module and evaluate the learner's language development. However, an additional complication arises because "the marker must consider to what extent the language demand *enables* or *disables* the candidate's ability to demonstrate his/her understanding of the question" (Ball / Lindsay 2012: 56, their emphasis).

This difficulty of assessing content knowledge and language development through the L2 which is, at the same time, the medium through which knowledge is developed and, at least to some degree, the object of instruction is reflected in some of the open-question answers provided by participants in the online survey of UK German departments (see Chapter 7). Respondent #4, for example, expresses concerns about possible limitations to the "depth of material and quality of class discussion that can take place"; their solution is to introduce L2 teaching slowly and in stages, and carrying out assessment in both German and English.

At Aston, all assessment is carried out in the target language from Year 1. A wide range of different assessment types are used to test language skills and subject knowledge. For the modules chosen for this study, assessment methods range from individual and group oral presentations, end-of-year essays (from 1000 words in Year 1 to 3000 words in Year F) and exams (short bullet-point answers or longer, essay-type written responses) to group debates in class, short written reports (500 words) submitted throughout the year and study skills portfolios (marked on a pass/fail basis).¹⁶⁹

Marking criteria and feedback procedures are structured according to language level and harmonised across the languages.



Figure 17: LTS marking criteria for written production in content modules, Year F

¹⁶⁹ One external examiner for German has repeatedly remarked favourable on “the range of assessment methods used for oral and written word” which give “students the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities across a range of skills”. (internal document “External Examiner Report 2011-12”)



Figure 18: Marking criteria for L2 oral production

The student questionnaire for Years 2 and F included a question which asked students to state whether they thought that exam results in previous years would have been better if more English had been used in class.

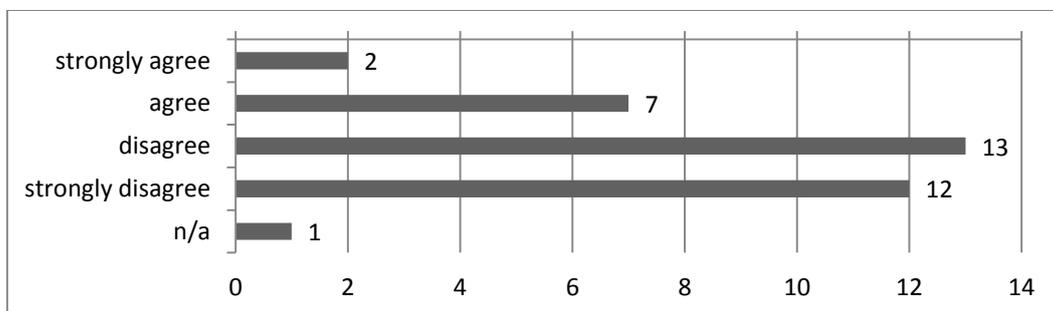


Figure 19: D28. I believe that my exam results in Y1 (and 2) would have been better if more English had been used in class. (n=35)

The result is interesting in that the majority of students disagree with this statement (71%). This indicates that most students see little correlation between the amount of English used in class and their exam results.

Attitudes among instructors about assessment are varied. They all agree that a wide range of different types of assessment are used, and they generally agree that assessment in the target language is key. There are some reservations, however. Instructor F, for example, thinks that more L1 assessment should be considered, even though “of course it’s a bit difficult to switch between teaching in one context and then examining in another context”. She feels that if all teaching is mediated through the L2, but parts of the assessment are in English, this “kind of trivialises the mother tongue competence that they

are lacking”, as they have not been given the chance to acquire the necessary L1 terminology and syntax, etc. (Interview Instructor F, p. 4) Instructor D also thinks that some content assessment should be in English, especially in Year 1, where the students’ language proficiency is usually not advanced enough to produce a written assignment or essay which would really allow them to express what they have learned on the content side, which “ist ja das einzige, um das es mir geht in der First Year German History [Vorlesung]”¹⁷⁰. (Interview Instructor D, p. 11)

Instructor B, on the other hand, is sceptical about introducing more assessment in the L1. She explains that, of the 12 modules students take each year, not all will be taught in the target language. As we saw earlier, depending on the programme combination, students receive between 40 and 80 of 120 credits through the target language. To make up their full credits, Year 1 Single Honours students, for example, take an introductory module to language and communication, and a module on communication and culture in Year 2, both of which are taught and assessed in English. In addition, we have already mentioned a newly-introduced cross-language Year 1 film module which is partly taught and assessed through English, with supplementary tutorials and project supervision in the respective L2. Those who choose to combine a language with a non-linguistic discipline receive even less L2-medium instruction, therefore “ist das meiner Ansicht nach gar nicht das große Thema, weil da genug Assessment insgesamt auf Englisch sind”¹⁷¹ (Interview Instruction B, 10).

In general, Instructor C states that in her content modules, language development is closely linked to different types of continuous assessment where students submit written tasks regularly during the term and receive formative feedback which in turn prepares them for the summative assessment at the end of term. If many students exhibit problems with a specific grammatical feature, she builds remedial grammar work into the module. (Interview Instructor C, p. 3) On the other hand, C is open to introducing some English-language assessment, specifically with longer essay assignments, because “komplexere Inhalte, das fällt den Studenten doch schwer, und dann kommen Ergebnisse dabei raus, die schlechter sind, als sie es sonst wären”¹⁷².

With regard to feedback, Instructor A explains that he tends to use English to provide feedback and comments on written work to weaker students. According to A, this has been a topic of discussion within the ASG, prompted by an External’s comments some years

¹⁷⁰ “is really the only thing I am interested in the Year 1 German History lecture” (my translation)

¹⁷¹ “that isn’t really an important issue, I think, because overall, enough assessment is conducted in English” (my translation)

¹⁷² “more complex content, the students find that difficult, and then they achieve results which are worse than they could be” (my translation)

ago that it would be better to provide written feedback in English. (Interview Instructor A, p. 6) Such a comment was found in the External Examiner Report for German from 2009-10 which states that the examiner was “not sure whether comments in the target language are optimally beneficial for weaker candidates whose performance already shows they struggle with comprehension problems” and indeed recommended the use of English to provide feedback. (External Examiner Report for German 2009-10)

Interestingly, this also came up during a number of focus groups which were conducted as part of an LTS working group on feedback. Groups of final year students from all three languages were asked to discuss what they understood by feedback, what types of feedback they had experienced during their years at Aston and which they considered to be more effective than others, and to comment on the ASG’s marking criteria and feedback grid. Regarding the question which language should be used to provide feedback, the students were quite insistent that feedback in the target language had never been an issue. Quite the contrary, in fact: One student, for example, insisted that feedback should be in French: “People shouldn’t do a language degree if they say ‘Why is [the feedback] in French?’” Another student added that, if the assessment is in the L2, then feedback should be in that L2 as well. Similar comments were made by Spanish students who felt that feedback is much more accurate if the lecturer speaks in their native tongue, and if the feedback is not clear they can always book an appointment with the lecturer to clarify what’s not understood.¹⁷³ It is quite clear from these comments that students actually consider feedback in the target language to be another kind of learning opportunity.

8.3 External voices

So far, we have mainly reported on student and staff opinions and experiences with regard to target-language teaching. Both groups are, by nature, closely involved in the process and provide a valuable source of information on the practical implementation of the approach and its impact on teaching and learning. However, it is also important to investigate what external observers who are not directly involved have to say about Aston’s approach to content teaching. Their perspective might give an indication as to how teaching practices in LTS compare to similar higher education settings in the UK.

¹⁷³ Internal document, LTS Working Group on Feedback 2013-14: “What feedback do LTS students want?”

8.3.1 LTS Five Year Review

For the present case, two external documents supplied comments on Aston's practice of teaching content in the target language. In December 2010, the latest LTS Five Year Review was carried out; the review panel included representatives from the three other schools besides LSS at Aston University and a number of external reviewers from other British universities. In their final report (LTS Five Year Review, December 2010), three items referred directly to Aston's CLIL approach. During the interviews with German teaching staff, they were asked to comment on these three statements.

The first statement (2.4) briefly describes Aston's approach to L2 content teaching and summarizes opinions expressed during the panel sessions with students and staff.

Paragraph 2.4: Aston has a strong commitment to teaching in the target language. Subjects such as French history or German cinema are taught in the language concerned. Students recognised that this meant classes were more difficult for them but also felt the standard of language they achieve is much higher because of it. They reported that employers value teaching in the target language highly and felt this gave them an advantage when employers were aware of it. Staff said that the approach works well. [...]

Instructor A concurs with this statement and comments that, in one-on-one conversations, students often state that the Aston approach to content teaching makes things more difficult, but that they enjoy it nonetheless. (Interview Instructor A, p. 12) Instructor B also confirms that students tend to realise that classes will probably be more difficult in this context. However, she expresses certain reservations with regard to the higher standards students think they achieve this way. She thinks that this is largely down to the individual student and depends on the "Engagement des Studenten, [...] der Bereitschaft, sich zu involvieren, zu arbeiten, sich auch mal eine Blöße zu geben"¹⁷⁴. This kind of attitude, she adds, would lead to success in any system, but that doesn't mean that she doubts the validity of the approach. On the contrary, she finds it interesting and more fun than "dieses Auf-Englisch-Über-Deutsch-Unterrichten", or teaching in English about German. (Interview Instructor B, p. 11) Instructor C also concurs with this impression of how students see the degree, reiterating her earlier point that the students' main goal is to gain advanced language proficiency and that they are willing to face the challenges of the degree to ensure that outcome. (Interview Instructor C, p. 10)

Instructor F generally agrees with the student opinions that are included in the Review comment. However, she is sceptical with regard to the last sentence, commenting that "I know what a review panel is. Of course you say that the approach works well." She finds the statement too sweeping and mentions having also heard more negative opinions, partly from students "who give up, and partly [from] the students who do less well than

¹⁷⁴ "engagement of the student, their readiness to get involved, to work, to risk lowering their guard now and then" (my translation)

they could have done”. According to F, some students on combination degree programmes especially are frustrated by the disparity between the high marks they achieve in anything that isn’t taught and assessed in the L2, “and then the German side of the section condemns them as, ‘Oh, they are not really any good’, whereas, in fact they are extremely intelligent people.” (Interview Instructor F, p. 8)

Instructor D comments rather harshly about the assumption that simply teaching in German from day 1 will mean that both sides will complement and facilitate each other and lead to great achievements so that “unsere Studenten am Ende so toll sind, [das ist] absoluter Humbug und verlogen [...]”¹⁷⁵. For him, the decisive criterion is the Year Abroad which is where students really develop their language, gain communication skills and develop genuine interests in their field of study, and where they finally realise “was wir theoretisch wissen, aber praktisch doch kaum vermitteln können, dass eben Sprache und Kultur nur zusammen begriffen und erfahren werden können, oder sich eben potenzieren, wenn beides zusammenkommt”¹⁷⁶. (Interview Instructor D, p. 11)

Statement 2.5 is concerned with the way student performance is assessed. The panel expressed concern that student achievement was not sufficiently recognised, given the relatively small number of 1st and 2.1 degrees.

Paragraph 2.5: The panel asked whether the achievement of students is sufficiently recognised. A relatively small proportion of students gain 1st or 2.1 degrees in spite of the excellence of the programme and the high standard of student qualifications on intake. [...]

Instructor A expresses similar concerns and remarks that the topic of assessment had recently been discussed among section heads who felt that there should be clearer differentiation between ‘very good’ and ‘weak’ and that good students should in fact be awarded First and high First degrees. (Interview Instructor A, p. 12) Along the same lines, Instructor D claims that he had “immer schon argumentiert, dass wir aufgrund der Hürde, die CLIL automatisch bedeutet, automatisch auch die Fairness haben sollten, mehr bessere Noten zu geben”¹⁷⁷. On the other hand, he is unwilling to add to what he perceives to be a general trend towards grade inflation. Still, “wenn alle das machen, können wir es auch machen”¹⁷⁸. (Interview Instructor D, p. 15)

Instructor E agrees with the impression that the marks LTS awards are not high enough, “[d]ass wire in bisschen zu streng sind, vielleicht ein bisschen zu deutsch geprägt aus dem

¹⁷⁵ “our students are all that great at the end, that is complete humbug and dishonest” (my translation)

¹⁷⁶ “what we know in theory but hardly manage to impart in practice, namely that language and culture can only be understood and experienced together, or that they boost each other exponentially when they coincide” (my translation)

¹⁷⁷ “long argued that, because of the challenge CLIL automatically poses, we should automatically award higher grades for reasons of fairness” (my translation)

¹⁷⁸ “if everybody does it, so can we” (my translation)

deutschen oder österreichischen Universitätskontext“¹⁷⁹. He feels that British markers are typically more generous. (Interview Instructor E, p. 10)

Instructor F also comments on whether the marks accurately reflect the achievement of the student. She feels that given the fact that (roughly) half the mark is awarded for content and the other for language, “sometimes they completely cancel each other out [because] some [colleagues] really do mark down according to problems with the language. Few people seem to mark up, it seems to me.” (Interview Instructor F, p. 4) Instructor C also comments that the issue of assessment is a difficult one, because so many different aspects are assessed simultaneously: “Also im Grunde muss ja ein guter Aufsatz, der muss natürlich gut struktuiert sein, der muss natürlich gut inhaltlich sein, der muss gleichzeitig aber auch gut mit Literatur umgegangen haben, und er muss eben auch gutes Deutsch haben.”¹⁸⁰ It is often difficult for students to achieve all that, which naturally brings down overall scores. For C, the main problem with that is that she doubts that employers are aware of how difficult it actually is with such an approach to achieve the high degree classifications they look for. (Interview Instructor C, p. 10)

Statement 2.6 ties in very closely with the previous quote and concerns the comparability of Aston degrees with those from other institutions.

Paragraph 2.6: The panel questioned whether standard [sic] of an Aston 2.1 degree, taught almost entirely in the target language, may be higher than those offered by other institutions. [...] The question is not a simple one, if it was shown that there is a demonstrable disparity of achievement then LTS would be prepared to take steps to address that. [...]

Given the wide range of German programme structures (see Chapter 8.1.1), it is notoriously difficult to compare achievement levels and degree classifications awarded by different universities. Apart from anecdotal evidence, the only indication are comments made by external examiners which regularly confirm that “[i]n general the academic standards are comparable with those at other institutions in the UK” (Internal document, External Examiner Report for German, 2013-14). However, Instructor D refers to previous external examiners and how most of them had been of the opinion that grades should be higher to recognize the challenge of CLIL. (Interview Instructor D, p. 15)

Instructor A comments that the problem is related to the tension between ‘dumbing down’ and market position: “Natürlich würden wir höher klettern in den Tabellen, wenn jeder nur eins oder zwei nach oben gehen würde, also dann Studenten teilweise in eine höhere Classification kämen.”¹⁸¹ A himself has taught at three other British German departments

¹⁷⁹ “that we are maybe a little too strict, maybe too heavily influenced by the German or Austrian university context” (my translation)

¹⁸⁰ “Well, basically a good essay has to be well-structured, present good content, but must also show good engagement with the literature and be written in good German.” (my translation)

¹⁸¹ “Of course we would climb higher in the tables if everyone would go up by just one or two [points] and if some students would move up to a higher classification.” (my translation)

and confirms that comparing them is almost impossible, as the different student cohorts come in with different A-level entry requirements and the programme profiles and learning objectives are completely different. For him, the most important factor of success is how much students improve over the course of the degree, and from that perspective, he is impressed with what some students achieve. (Interview Instructor A, p. 12)

Instructor F considers this to be part of “a much bigger political issue of how you want to value degrees, and that language degrees are harder than other degrees. I don’t think that’s just a thing for Aston.” Still, she thinks that average marks at Aston are not much lower than at similar departments such as Manchester or Nottingham. However, for her, the way languages are taught and assessed at Aston puts it in the “skills group of degrees” because

of the teaching style, it’s actually awarding grades according to skill and not according to intellectual achievement. But at the same time it’s competing with other German degrees which are assessed in a very different way. I think that is a real problem. The easier way out would be not to use the teaching in German because it would make it easier to compare with the universities which are the natural peers of Aston.

(Interview Instructor F, p. 9)

She feels that, in economic terms, this move away from L2-medium teaching would make it easier for Aston to compete in the continuously shrinking MFL tertiary market, and that, to her knowledge, no clear policy decision with regard to what exactly LTS wants to achieve in its programmes has ever been made; “there isn’t an overarching target, there are a lot of assumptions”. (ibid., p. 10)

With regard to comparability of the Aston degree with other MFL degrees, Instructor C states that while AU students may slightly lag behind those from competitor institutions in academic content, they make up for that with other skills they have acquired in the process. She doesn’t think that one degree is necessarily better than the other, but they certainly have different qualities and put different demands on the students. (Interview Instructor C, p.10-11)

Instructor E is convinced that the standard of an Aston degree is comparable to other institutions and notes that “selbst, wenn jemand jetzt eine schlechte Note bekommt am Ende von seinem Degree, müssen wir nicht annehmen, dass die Person unbedingt eine viel bessere Note bekommen hätte in einer anderen Institution”¹⁸². However, he claims that we can expect that the language development was more pronounced due to Aston’s teaching approach. (Interview Instructor E, pp. 10-11)

¹⁸² “even if someone gets a lower mark at the end of their degree, we should not assume that that person would have achieved a much better result at a different institution” (my translation)

8.3.2 External Examiner Reports

The second external source to be considered here are external examiner reports from recent years which yield some information about how Aston's approach to content and language teaching is viewed from an external perspective. Generally speaking, "[e]xternal examiners are experienced higher education teachers who offer an independent assessment of academic standards and the quality of assessment to the appointing institution" (HEA 2012: 5). As such, they play an important part in the quality assurance processes implemented across the sector under the auspices of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). Once appointed, the "external examiner will identify strengths, weaknesses and good practice of the provision and play a role in quality enhancement" (ibid.).

External examiners are usually selected and appointed by the academic section for a period of three years. They are given access to all assessment-related documentation, learning outcomes, marking criteria and feedback arrangements. They read and comment on exam papers and other assessments before they are administered and can suggest changes if necessary. After the internal marking process is completed, they receive representative samples of the marked work for approval or comment. At Aston, it is customary for them to visit the university to attend the viva voce examinations for final year research dissertations and sit in on exam boards where they are invited to comment on the assessment process.

The current external examiner for the German section at Aston has come to the end of her three-year appointment. Over the years, she has commented favourable on the ASG's approach to content and language integration. In the report for the academic year 2012-13, she writes that

[e]very year so far I have made the point, and will make it again, that I am impressed by the fact that teaching through the medium of German does not go hand in hand with lower demands regarding content. Clearly no compromises are made regarding what students are expected to achieve in terms of subject knowledge, analytical skills, etc. and students seem to respond positively to this challenge.

(External Examiner Report for German 2012-2013)

A previous external examiner commented on student achievement without reference to Aston's specific approach to L2 teaching, stating that "[a]t the top end of the spectrum of exam performances, the students' achievements in both the linguistic and cultural modules were very impressive and certainly compare with the best nationally" (External Examiner Report for German 2007-08).

Given that the function of the external examiner is to ensure that the academic standards at the institution they are appointed to evaluate are comparable with those at other British universities, this comment can be taken as confirmation that the didactic approach taken

by Aston has no detrimental consequences for the quality of the work produced by German students. A brief analysis of the external examiners' reports for the academic year 2013-14 for Spanish and French confirms that the other language sections produce comparable results. However, neither report mentions Aston's commitment to teaching through the target language. (External Examiner Report for French 2013-14; External Examiner Report for Spanish 2013-14).

Finally, while not directly mentioning the fact that teaching at Aston is through the medium of the target language, the external examiner appointed to evaluate French and German IBML modules comments - referring to a final year content module - that "[t]he highest scoring students demonstrate the deepest understanding of the issues at stake and a superior linguistic ability" (External Examiner Report for IBML French and German 2013-14).

Overall, these external evaluations of the programme suggest that the CLIL approach embedded in Aston's MFL programmes works, despite its challenges and the worries about loss of depth and intellectual engagement voiced by some instructors at Aston as well as by researchers in the field.

8.4 Summary

Chapter 8 has presented the findings of the case study at the heart of this project, investigating how one German department at a British university implements the school's CLIL approach. The analysis was based on qualitative and quantitative data gathered from instructors and students, as well as from internal documents. Throughout, links were drawn between findings from research investigating similar CLIL contexts across Europe and the particular experiences of the participants and the institutional parameters underlying the implementation of the Integrated Approach.

With regard to the institutional context in which the German section in question is situated, Aston's MFL programmes are characterised by a strong area studies approach, with a clear focus on contemporary society, politics and culture in the German-speaking world. The students come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds, and the language proficiency of Year 1 students varies quite dramatically. One likely reason for this could be the fact that some of them have spent considerable time in German-speaking countries – some even identify as bilingual – and that they reported a quite varied degree of target-language use in their German language classes in secondary schools; in fact, 60% of them stated that only half, or even less, of their classroom interactions were conducted in the target language. This raises important questions with regard to the type and degree of additional support the Year 1 students need to transition to higher education successfully.

In general, the questionnaire data from Aston University shows that German students in all year groups perceive clear advantages in the university's approach to CLIL. German students generally consider German-taught content classes both challenging and beneficial for their language development and generally seem willing to engage in the CLIL process. It did take many of them some time to get used to the L2-medium environment, and they are aware that the cognitive, linguistic and academic demands of the CLIL programme will require much effort and active engagement. It appears that in many ways, the trepidation many students feel when they first encounter CLIL in the classroom appears to lessen once they adapt to the situation. Overall, second-year students feel better prepared for their sandwich year abroad because of their prolonged exposure to the target language, and those students who return from German placements feel that their Year Abroad was more successful because of it. The student data also shows that many students are unaware of the Integrated Approach when they join Aston University, but that the majority of students who knew about it considered it an important factor when making the decision to join Aston. It may be useful to communicate information about the CLIL approach more clearly to prospective students, not only to make sure they know what to expect, but also because CLIL seems to be an attractive marketing tool for the University - an important consideration in today's difficult climate for Modern Foreign Languages in the UK.

The interviews with six German instructors also yielded some interesting data with regard to the benefits, challenges, limitations and pedagogical implications of Aston's CLIL approach. Overall, they see the potential benefit of L2-medium teaching, but they are well aware of some of the problems it can entail. Some of the key challenges are a lack of adequate teaching materials, the linguistic limitations of the students which require carefully calibrated linguistic and academic support, mainly in the form of scaffolding, and the general question of how best to integrate content and language learning without a) sacrificing academic rigor, and b) overwhelming students with too much input which is too complex for them to process in the target language. Opinions are split about how exclusively they use the L2 in the classroom; generally, they all try to use a little English as possible, but some speak English when discussing organisational and assessment-related issues, and those who work with First Year students generally tend to use English more extensively, yet purposefully, as a way to ensure comprehension and to alleviate apprehension among students about having to use German almost exclusively. One instructor is somewhat conflicted about the consequences of CLIL for the development of academic language skills in the students' L1 which, she feels, are largely neglected. On the content side, some instructors feel that the linguistic demands of L2 content teaching sometimes prevent the students from reaching their full academic potential, but overall, they feel that what is lost with regard to breadth and depth of content is made up for by

the linguistic development the approach engenders in the students whose main motivation for studying German appears to be an interest in the language and culture and how their language skills can enhance their employability rather than purely academic aspirations.

The staff interviews also yielded some interesting parallels to findings from other European HE CLIL settings, especially with regard to teacher training. There appears to be a general lack of pedagogical-methodological training opportunities at many European universities, paired with little interest in such training even if it is provided. Aston staff are in a similar position, in that the only advice available to new (and existing) members of staff on how to implement CLIL in the classroom are peer observations and working with line managers and peers. Like many European CLIL practitioners, Aston staff are opposed to mandatory training, but are aware that some guidance is necessary to make sure that their L2-medium teaching is effective and in line with the ASG's policies and expectations.

Finally, an analysis of comments made during a 2010 review of LTS programmes and by external examiners over recent years shows that most external examiners fail to mention Aston's teaching approach, but they all confirm that teaching and assessment meet the expected standards for both academic and linguistic achievement. The 2010 review included some recommendations regarding a possible need to investigate whether the fact that teaching and assessment are carried out in the target language has a detrimental effect on the range of marks awarded and whether Aston degrees may be undervalued in comparison with competitor institutions.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

This study set out to answer two overarching research questions concerning the role of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), a genuinely European approach to bilingual education, in the context of German Studies in UK Higher Education. It investigated both the micro- and the macro-context of CLIL in German undergraduate programmes. Research Question 2 focussed on the micro-level and asked how students and instructors at AU perceive L2-medium content instruction and whether their experiences align with or differ from findings from similar European setting. The methodological approach chosen for this investigation was a mixed-method case study defined as the German section in AU's School of Languages and Social Sciences. This case study combined quantitative and qualitative data collected from two different sources, the undergraduate students enrolled on German programmes and the academic staff who are responsible for content instruction through the medium of German. The main findings of the case study are briefly summarized in and form the basis of the recommendations formulated in Chapter 9.2.

In order to embed this specific case in the wider context of German Studies in the UK, Research Question 1 concerned the extent of L2-taught content provision in German UG Programmes and how certain institutional parameters determine the introduction of such CLIL-type provision in UK Higher Education. This macro-context was analysed by means of an online survey which asked Heads of German departments in UK universities to provide information about CLIL practices at their institution in order to determine factors which may influence a German department's decision to integrate content and language teaching in their thematic modules. At the same time, the analysis of the macro-context also provided an overview of recent developments in the UK modern languages landscape in general which has been characterised by a rather alarming decline in language uptake in secondary education since taking a foreign language past GCSE level became optional in 2004. In the ten years since that decision, the conditions for Modern Languages departments have changed drastically. The knock-on effect of the reduced number of students who pursue languages to A-level has meant that many MFL departments are struggling to recruit sufficient student numbers to remain financially viable. This added pressure is one factor which has led to changes in the range and type of content modules offered in order to enable more cross-departmental and interdisciplinary teaching to boost student numbers.

This has already had an effect at Aston, where a number of modules have been created or re-designed to cater to students from across the three main languages French, German and Spanish, and some modules have been opened to non-linguist students from the School of Languages and Social Sciences. In addition, more and more members of staff

from the language sections who up until now have exclusively worked with MFL students and taught their content modules in the target language are now offering English-taught modules in the other academic subject groups in the School, e.g. Sociology or International Politics, in order to make up for the work load reductions due to fewer German students. This cross-departmental teaching is one of a number of recent trends in British MFL undergraduate education, along with, for example, a power shift away from dedicated language classes for MFL students towards language instruction offered by an on-campus language centre or institution-wide language programme (Coleman 2004; Worton 2009). The online survey of British Heads of German departments confirmed that many departments feel under pressure, and two respondents actually mentioned that L2-medium content teaching had been discontinued at their institution to allow students from other Schools to sign up for modules put on by the German section. On the other hand, some MFL departments are actually expanding their L2-medium content provision, either at the request of their students or because they appreciate the potential benefits that can be garnered. On the whole, however, there seems to be little incentive to implement an L2-oriented approach, given that such an innovation is likely to require additional resources which are scarcely available in the current climate.

Still, the data from the online survey suggests that content teaching in the target language is actually more common than previously assumed, based on the lack of research interest in this field, as more than two thirds of the informants state that there is some degree of L2-medium content instruction at their institutions. However, the lack of research could indicate that the CLIL practice in these institutions is somewhat incidental and left up to the individual, without a concerted effort to implement L2 content teaching in a structured and long-term way. When asked if they were familiar with any other British universities with a similar approach to L2-medium content instruction, most instructors knew of one or two individuals who have taught their modules in the target language, but none of them were able to name an institution where a CLIL approach is implemented in the same way as it is at Aston.

The online survey also showed that younger universities - like Aston - are more likely to employ CLIL, compared to Ancient and Red Brick institutions where L2-medium teaching is rarer and starts at a later stage in the programme. The findings could indicate that younger universities, with their stronger focus on practical skills and contemporary culture and area studies, consider CLIL to be an important tool to develop language and intercultural skills and prepare students for their year abroad. It could also mean that older universities are more cautious and wait until later in the programme to introduce L2-content. Overall, CLIL provision clearly increases with each year of the UG programme.

9.1 L2-medium content teaching at AU

One aspect of interest in this investigation of CLIL practice in German UG programmes in the UK was how the example of AU at the heart of the case study compares to and differs from similar contexts across Europe, where L2-medium content teaching is growing exponentially and has been the focus of much research. How can AU's approach be described and can it actually be characterized as CLIL?

There are a number of differences between European CLIL settings and AU. For example, in European contexts, the student body is often very heterogeneous and comes from many different linguistic backgrounds so that the vehicular language English is the only shared language (Smit 2010), which makes the use of the L1 impossible. In comparison, AU also has quite an international student body, with less than two thirds of students giving English as their L1. However, the fact that the L2 (or L3) speakers of English (EU and international students) are embedded in English campus life does give them the option of using English as their shared language rather than the L2 of the German classroom. This has implications for language use, since in many European contexts English is the de-facto *lingua academica* not only for educational reasons, but out of practical necessity, whereas AU students do not need to use the L2 unless convinced (or made) by their instructors.

One of the major differences between the UK context and many European English-medium programmes lies in the fact that the latter often appear not to be interested in developing the language proficiency of their students, judging by the lack of explicit language objectives in course descriptions, and if there are concrete provisions for language development, these generally occur in bachelor rather than master or doctoral programmes. In contrast, AU instructor comments confirm that there is a strong emphasis on setting language as well as content outcomes for content modules, although some of the instructors doubt the degree to which these language objectives are actually pursued during class in order to ensure progression and prepare students for the L2-language assessment.

If we insist that one of the central tenets of CLIL is the dual goal of developing subject knowledge and linguistic proficiency simultaneously (even though its language-learning goals are the defining feature of CLIL in EU policy documents), we must question whether most of the European contexts surveyed here can in fact be called CLIL rather than, for example, ICL, EMI, EAP or ESP. Like CLIL, these terms are difficult to pin down and are used for a wide range of language activities, but among their defining features are that they are (almost) exclusive to tertiary education and that they very clearly lean towards one or the other extreme on the content-language continuum, whereas CLIL aims to develop both subject knowledge and language proficiency in equal measure over time, if not always simultaneously. This also concerns, for example, issues such as assessment

(What is assessed? How is it assessed? In which language?), whether instructors are trained language or subject experts (rarely both), the position of L2-medium modules in the curriculum and whether it is set alongside mainstream language classes or takes their place, or whether L2-medium instruction is introduced without additional language support, as is the case in many European HE settings.

As Chapter 8 has shown, the case is not as clear-cut as one would hope when it comes to CLIL practice at AU. On the one hand, there is, at least in theory, a clear emphasis on both subject and language development; thematic modules have clearly stated learning objectives concerning subject knowledge and language proficiency. Assessment is largely carried out in the target language: In content modules, the content mark carries a weighting of 60% and the language mark attracts 40% of the final mark, and vice versa in language modules. Additionally, LTS has developed marking criteria which are structured according to language level and harmonised across the languages, and they clearly outline levels of achievement for subject knowledge (including discipline-specific academic practices) and language skills (including academic writing). On the other hand, some of the instructors have clearly stated that their main focus is fostering their students' language proficiency, critical and transferable skills, whereas the development of solid discipline expertise appears to be secondary. Still, instructors report that they provide scaffolding in the form of glossaries, short L1 summaries, L1 supplementary reading, etc. in order to ensure understanding and support subject development in the L1 which, again, is a key aspect of CLIL.

We have seen that in CLIL/ICL settings, non-native subject specialists are usually responsible for developing both content and language knowledge in the L2-mediated environment, unlike ESP where L1-speaker instructors focus mainly on developing linguistic tools in L2-speaker subject specialists. AU presents a mix of both these generalities, in that the instructors are mainly L1 speakers of the vehicular language who develop both the subject-specific knowledge and the related linguistic material necessary to work in the discipline. In addition, there is evidence that CLIL instructors who are L2 speakers of the target language and are entirely confident when talking about their specialist discipline in English experience difficulties in more social, informal situations. In the case of AU, the problem is the other way around: Some staff informants mentioned that one of the things that often causes them to switch to English in class is when they want to use humour, which they consider to be an integral part of British culture, but difficult to convey in the learners' L2.

Finally, a key difference between AU and other European HE CLIL contexts that have been investigated is that, if we believe the research literature, CLIL in Europe only occurs in non-linguistic disciplines such as Engineering, Physics or Business, whereas at AU, the

discipline is Modern Foreign Language programmes with a clear focus on applied language study and Area Studies which includes thematic modules on sociolinguistics, modern history, cultural history and popular culture. The close relationship between the target language and the cultures and communities of its speakers makes it a perfect fit for CLIL. This is confirmed by both staff and students which makes it all the more surprising that there has been hardly any research evidence that it exists in the UK or in Europe.

One source of information on CLIL in HE which might help position Aston on the CLIL map is the LLAS Subject Centre's project *LanQua – Language Quality Assurance*. In a subproject on CLIL in HE, an international team of researcher-practitioners conducted a number of international case studies looking at various CLIL projects implemented in tertiary education across Europe. They summarized their findings in the following graph which outlines the parameters they arrived at to describe different approaches to CLIL in HE. It offers a clear outline of what constitutes CLIL and provides parameters to describe the aims, main actors, pedagogical approaches, learning outcomes for both language and content, and assessment structures which underpin each of these approaches.



Figure 20: LanQua map of L2-medium provision (source: Greere / Räsänen 2008: 6)

If we compare their descriptors with the Aston example, AU appears to be sitting somewhere between the Adjunct-CLIL and full CLIL models: L2-medium instruction at AU shows many, but not all, the features that characterise CLIL 'proper', such as a dual focus on content and language, clearly defined learning objectives, criteria and outcomes for both, and assessment in the target language that takes into account both subject knowledge development and language proficiency. However, L2 language instruction and support is provided simultaneously by language experts, whereas L2 content teaching is

usually carried out by subject experts with no evidence of team teaching by subject and language experts. However, this fact is mitigated by the fact that four of the six instructors involved in this study have teaching qualifications for German at secondary level (if not GFL) and years of previous experience as DAAD lecturers which does give them a strong grounding in pedagogy. In addition, there is clear evidence that a degree of cooperation exists between those who teach thematic modules and language module instructors. Based on the evidence collected here, and in view of the characteristics of CLIL outlined in Chapter 3, the AU setting can indeed be considered an example of CLIL.

However, the case study has brought to light a number of issues that can and in some cases do have a detrimental effect on the continued success of L2-medium teaching at AU. The following subchapter offers a number of recommendations based on the analysis in previous chapters. The hope is that they will spark a discussion about teaching and learning processes and practice at AU and will, in time, strengthen the department's commitment to CLIL.

9.2 Recommendations for CLIL practice at AU

Establish a clearer profile to manage student expectations. The study has shown that many students are unaware of the Integrated Approach when they join AU, but that the majority of students who knew about it considered it an important factor when making the decision to join AU. A first step would be to commit to the terminology and, by drawing on existing research and knowledge about CLIL, to communicate more clearly to students information about AU's CLIL approach, not only to make sure they know what to expect, but also because it seems to be an attractive marketing tool for the University - an important consideration in today's difficult climate for Modern Foreign Languages in the UK. Another reason why it is important to make sure that students know what to expect is to avoid a situation where they are thrust into the L2-only teaching environment without ever having experienced something similar before. Once at Aston, students should be involved in strategic decisions about CLIL, such as curriculum design, for example through regular focus groups.

Develop a cohesive approach to managing the transition from A-level. One of the most surprising - and more than slightly worrying - results that came out of the first part of the student survey was that, when asked how much L2 they had actually be exposed to in secondary school, 60% of students stated that half or less of their classroom interaction had been conducted in the target language. As a consequence, the transition to university - already a difficult process for most students - is made even more daunting for students following a L2-taught programme who may feel overwhelmed, even more so if, like two thirds of their peers, they were not aware of it. There should be clear support mechanisms

in place to ensure that students are able to manage the transition. These include: A shared understanding of what students are expected to contribute to the learning process and how LTS will help them (for example by adding clear and detailed information about the CLIL approach to the student handbook, the VLE or on the website); additional support tailored to Year 1 students, e.g. how and who to ask for help, dedicated office hours, tutorials by teaching assistants. As we have seen, Year 1 students often require more extensive use of English to ensure comprehension and to alleviate apprehension among students about having to use German almost exclusively.

Develop clear learning outcomes and cohesive curriculum maps. In order for L2-medium instruction to be effective, thematic and language modules need to be integrated more closely, for example by establishing a forum where content and language instructors can discuss student and instructor needs regarding language support, curriculum development, etc. Given the dual focus of CLIL, every thematic module should have clearly stated learning objectives and outcomes for both subject learning and language progression. In the latter case, an improvement in both receptive and productive proficiency must be a desired outcome. However, the term ‘near-native ability’ should be avoided and realistic language performance parameters need to be set. As we have seen, the continued development of the learners’ L1 is a key concern in CLIL, thus making it a clearly heteroglossic approach to bilingual education. In order to ensure parallel L1 development in L2 medium instruction, Coyle et al. (2010) recommend, for example, the planned and purposeful use of translanguaging and the introduction of additional materials in the L1. This falls in the wider context of scaffolding and can be achieved by, e.g., providing short L1 summaries and glossaries to ensure understanding and equipping students with the necessary linguistic tools to engage with the subject-specific content in both L1 and L2.

Take into account pedagogical principles of CLIL. An essential element of CLIL instruction is encouraging language production, language practice and the “creative use of spontaneous language by learners” (Coyle et al. 2010: 59). To do so, learners need to be provided with, firstly, content-related input which is cognitively and linguistically challenging enough to motivate the learners’ active engagement with the material without being too demanding to be accessible. After careful analysis of the linguistic demands of a specific thematic unit or task, teachers should employ support strategies such as scaffolding to ensure that students have the tools to function effectively. Secondly, learners need to be given ample opportunity to use the L2 in meaningful, creative ways, to practice newly acquired language material and integrate it with existing L2 elements, that is, to produce comprehensive output, and to receive constructive feedback and opportunities to learn from it.

Provide access to teacher training tailored to CLIL requirements. One of the most obvious parallels between CLIL in continental Europe and at Aston is the lack of training opportunities for instructors provided by their institutions, and if they do exist, uptake is often disappointing. In many European contexts, academics seem reluctant to invest time in pedagogical training to help them manage their CLIL practice. Very often, academics - expected to teach, fulfil administrative responsibilities and carry out research - have no time to attend pedagogical training courses specifically tailored to CLIL, even if they existed. One way to avoid putting on expensive staff training courses is to develop a CLIL training kit which can be accessed by all staff and which introduces the key pedagogical aspects of CLIL, points to useful examples of good practice, includes links to online resources, etc. In addition, a mentoring system for new colleagues should specifically include an introduction to CLIL practice at AU, including a certain number of peer observations and consultations with more experienced colleagues.

Provide teaching staff with resources to develop teaching materials. It is often difficult to find appropriate teaching materials which can be used in the classroom without extensive adaptation. Given the linguistic limitations of the students, the instructors are required to provide extensive language and academic support, mainly in the form of scaffolding, glossaries, annotations, supplementary reading. The adaptation process naturally extends preparation time which should be taken into account when allocating teaching hours.

Make a clear institutional commitment to CLIL. If AU wants to retain CLIL as one of the key features that set its UG MFL programmes apart from those at competitor institutions, there has to be clear institutional commitment in terms of a) a clear language policy which outlines what exactly CLIL at Aston entails for both staff and students and b) providing the resources required for implementing an approach which, as we have seen, puts added pressure on teaching staff who are already feeling pulled in too many different directions. Regardless of the difficulties, German staff are almost unanimous in their support for the preservation of L2-medium content teaching despite the compromises and pressures that have already led to losses in L2 contact time in some thematic modules which have been opened to students from all languages and sometimes even from other ASGs. In addition, more and more members of staff from the language sections who up until now have exclusively worked with MFL students and taught their content modules in the target language are now offering English-taught modules in the other academic subject groups in the School, e.g. Sociology, English or Politics, in order to make up for the work load reductions due to fewer German students. The further instructors drift into other disciplines, the more difficult it becomes to provide the necessary L2-taught credits and a cohesive suit of programmes. Once the number of credits taught through the L2 decreases to less than half or at least a third of the required credits, CLIL can no longer be called the

pedagogical principle underpinning AU's MFL programmes. However, if, as Instructor F thinks, a move away from L2-medium teaching would make it easier for AU to compete in the current shrinking MFL tertiary market, then there has to be a clear decision-making process which includes all stakeholders, including teaching staff, and considerations regarding pedagogy and curriculum planning should be given the same weight as economic arguments, especially given how highly AU management ranks aspects such as employability and global citizenship.

9.3 Contribution to CLIL research and Outlook

This study is understood as a contribution to European research on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). As we have seen, there are numerous studies investigating tertiary settings where an L2 is used to teach subject-specific content; in most of these, the medium of instruction is English and the context is a non-linguistic discipline. The present thesis aims to enrich the field by directing research focus to a) the British context - which is under-represented in CLIL research, at least with regard to HE -, b) a university setting where a language other than English is used as the instructional language, and c) the use of CLIL in Modern Foreign Language undergraduate teaching as opposed to non-linguistic disciplines such as engineering or business.

This investigation of instances of L2-medium content teaching in UK German undergraduate education and the case study which introduces one particular institution's experience with CLIL has shed light on the conditions under which content teaching through a foreign language takes place in Britain and has highlighted some features, challenges and benefits it shares with similar setups in other European countries. However, the case study has also examined some of the conditions which make the British context unique. The data from the online survey suggests, for example, that content teaching in the target language is actually more common at British universities than might be assumed based on the lack of research interest in this field. However, the lack of research could indicate that the CLIL practice in these institutions is somewhat incidental and left up to the individual, without a concerted effort to implement L2 content teaching in a structured and long-term way. The hope is that the recommendations formulated in this thesis will help strengthen L2-medium content instruction at AU despite the adverse conditions that currently prevail in the UK MFL landscape. Beyond that, these findings will hopefully incite 'casual practitioners' to reflect on their existing practice and encourage more stakeholders in MFL education in UK HE to take the leap and invest - in terms of both human and financial capital - in the concerted implementation of CLIL.

It is the nature of a case study that it only investigates one particular context and does not lend itself to generalization. Especially in educational research, the specific settings that

are investigated are bound to the particular conditions, environment and people that inhabit the case under consideration. Still, by situating the specific case in its wider context, by making connections to the economic, political and socio-cultural conditions which exert influence over it, and by drawing comparisons with similar settings, this case study has taken a first step towards a better understanding of the challenges that face modern foreign language education in Britain today. It is the author's hope that other researchers will develop an interest in the educational approach examined here and will build on the work presented here, for example by carrying out similar studies at other British institutions in order to further fill the gap in the research concerning target-language content teaching in British Higher Education.

Chapter 10: Bibliography

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Chapter 11: Appendices

Appendix 1: Online survey

Introductory remarks:

My name is Elisabeth Wielander. I am currently investigating Content and Language Integrated Learning in UK Higher Education, specifically in German Studies, as part of my PhD project (supervisor: Prof Gertrud Reershemius).

With your help, I hope to analyse the extent to which the target language German is used to teach subject-related content at UK universities.

I would be grateful if you took 5-10 minutes to complete this survey. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please rest assured that your contributions will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used for any purpose other than research, conference and other academic publications.

Thank you very much in advance for participating in this survey.

Kind regards,

Elisabeth Wielander

Elisabeth Wielander is a postgraduate research student (supervisor: Prof Gertrud Reershemius) in the School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University.

You may contact her if you have further questions by sending an e-mail to e.wielander@aston.ac.uk or calling 0121-204-3754.

NB: Questions 5-10 concern target-language teaching in content settings, that is, outside the dedicated language classes

1. What is the name of your university?

2. How would you describe your university¹⁸³?

- Ancient university (founded before 1800)
- Red Brick university (chartered before WW1)
- Plate Glass university (chartered after 1966)
- New university (post-1992)
- Recently created university (granted university status since 2005)
- other: _____

3. Where is German positioned within the university?

- individual School / Department of German Studies
- German group within Modern Foreign Languages Department
- German group within department of MFL combined with Politics, Social Sciences, etc.

¹⁸³ http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/wiki/Types_of_University

4. Does the German programme include a mandatory Year Abroad?
 - Yes
 - No
5. Are any of the content modules in your German programmes taught in German?
 - Yes - please go to question 7.
 - No - please go to question 6.
6. If no: Are there any plans to introduce content modules taught in the target language (German)?
 - Yes. Please describe:

 - No
7. Please indicate at which programme level target-language content instruction takes place:
 - first year of undergraduate study
 - second year of undergraduate study
 - final year of undergraduate study
8. Which types of modules are taught in the target language?
 - area studies
 - economics
 - film
 - history
 - linguistics
 - literature
 - politics and society
 - other:

9. Who teaches content modules in the target language (German)?
 - Language assistants
 - Teaching fellows
 - DAAD / OAD Lektoren
 - Lecturers
 - Senior Lecturers
 - Readers
 - Professors
10. The colleagues who teach content modules in the target language (German) are:
 - native speakers of German
 - native speakers of English
 - other:

Appendix 2: Instructor questionnaire - general background

Dear colleague,

The following questionnaire will accompany the interview you have agreed to take part in as part of my doctoral research project entitled: *CLIL in UK Higher Education – Content and Language Integrated Learning in Modern Language Teaching, based on a case study in German at Aston University*.

In this questionnaire, you are asked to answer general questions about your educational background, your experience of teaching language and of teaching in higher education and other educational settings. This will allow us to use our interview time to focus on pedagogical issues.

Your answers are very valuable for this project, and I would appreciate it if you answered all questions. However, please do not feel obliged to answer a question if you do not wish to. Please rest assured that your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose.

Note: Where applicable, please answer the following questions **in German or English**.

Questionnaire:

A: General background

1. Name:

(for researcher only, will be anonymised elsewhere)

2. Age:

3. Gender: female male

4. Current post:

B: Educational background

1. Undergraduate degree (incl. specific field and Alma Mater):

2. Postgraduate degree (if applicable; incl. specific field and Alma Mater):

3. Fields of research (if research-active):

C: Pedagogical qualifications

1. Describe your general pedagogical qualifications:

2. Describe your language pedagogical qualifications:

3. Describe your qualifications in teaching German as a Foreign Language:

D: Teaching experience

1. General teaching experience outside Great Britain: yes no

If yes:

Months / years of general teaching experience:

Educational setting(s) (e.g. primary/secondary/tertiary):

Subject(s) taught:

2. Language teaching experience outside Great Britain: yes no

If yes:

Months / years of language teaching experience:

Educational setting(s) (e.g. primary/secondary/tertiary):

Language(s) taught:

3. Teaching experience in Great Britain Higher Education:

Years of teaching experience:

Before joining Aston University (please give place / university and post held):

Year you joined Aston University:

Current post at Aston:

Subject(s) taught at Aston (past and present):

Appendix 3: Guide for interviews with teaching staff (including supplements)

Preliminary remarks:

Thank you for taking the time to do this interview.

Of course, anything you say will be completely anonymous and your responses will be treated with complete confidentiality.

In my research project, I am investigating how modern foreign languages are taught at Aston, what experience staff and students have with the teaching approach and what the institutional framework is like.

1. How would you describe the Integrated Approach, what is your definition of this method?
2. Did you yourself - as a learner - experience this approach to MFL teaching?
3. Do you know other universities in England / UK that use this method? To what extent?
4. Do you think that the CLIL approach played a role in the students' decision which university to attend?
5. Do you think that Aston does enough to advertise its CLIL approach, or does so efficiently?
6. Do you think that the CLIL approach can help motivate more students to learn languages?
7. In your opinion, what motivates students to study German?
8. What are the advantages / disadvantages of the CLIL method? What do you think are the challenges?
9. How is content teaching in the target language different from content teaching in the L1 / primary language?
10. What does it mean for you as a teacher and for the students?
11. Did you ever look into the pedagogical theory behind CLIL?
12. What does LTS do to prepare instructors for CLIL, or is that the individual instructor's responsibility?
13. One significant factor in CLIL is that learning objectives are set for both the content and for language acquisition. How is this done at Aston?
14. Did you see yourself as a subject specialist who also taught language, or as a language instructor who also taught a subject?
15. How did you make sure that students were able to process the subject content, the central concepts both intellectually and linguistically?

16. What was more important for you, that students acquired content knowledge or that they improved their language proficiency?
17. In your content teaching, was there room for explicit German language instruction? If so, how did that work?
18. Was there any coordination between subject modules and core language modules? How *should* that work?
19. How did you deal with heterogeneous learner groups in CLIL classes?
20. Do you think it is easier for native speakers of the target language to teach CLIL?
21. What, if any, is the role of the primary language / shared working language English in CLIL classes?
22. Did you sometimes use the learners' L1 on purpose? Examples? How much in %?
23. Did you talk to your students about CLIL? Do you discuss expectations with regard to the language used in class? What are those expectations?
24. Did you set rules for the use of L1 and L2?
25. How did you deal with student questions in English? Did you respond in German?
26. When did students use English during class? Choose the 3 most common reasons (see Supplement 1, question 1).
27. When did you use English in class? Choose the 3 most common reasons (see Supplement 1, question 2).
28. What about assessment? Were you happy with the assessment structures or would you have wanted to change certain things?
29. Could you imagine doing certain types / items of assessment in English? Why?
30. Do you think there is enough institutional support for students?
31. What else could be done to make CLIL teaching more effective / efficient?
32. Finally, please comment on the following three quotations from the LTS Five Year Review from December 2010. Please read each paragraph and describe your reaction (see Supplement 2).
33. Is there anything you would like to add before we finish up?

Supplement 1:

Question 1: When do students use English in class? Please choose the 3 most common reasons:

- a) to communicate their needs
- b) to receive information about class times, office hours, etc.
- c) to receive information about class content, topics, materials, etc.
- d) to receive information about assessment content and structure
- e) to ask and talk about the meaning of words
- f) to ask and talk about grammatical structures
- g) to ask and talk about cultural concepts
- h) to compare how words/grammar/concepts work differently in English and German
- i) when they want to say something but don't know how to express it in German
- j) when they want to make sure they have understood correctly
- k) when it is quicker to say it in English
- l) when they don't feel comfortable speaking in German
- m) when other students have used English as well
- n) when they want to defend themselves
- o) when they want to make a joke

Question 2: When do / did you use English in class? Please choose the 3 most common reasons:

- a) to give information about class times, office hours, etc.
- b) to give information about class content, topics, materials, etc.
- c) to give information about assessment content and structure
- d) to explain and talk about the meaning of words
- e) to explain and talk about grammatical structures
- f) to explain and talk about cultural concepts
- g) to compare how words/grammar/concepts work differently in English and German
- h) to make sure the students have understood correctly

- i) when it is quicker to say it in English
- j) when the students have used English as well
- k) to enforce discipline in class

Supplement 2:

Paragraph 2.4: Aston has a strong commitment to teaching in the target language. Subjects such as French history or German cinema are taught in the language concerned. Students recognised that this meant classes were more difficult for them but also felt the standard of language they achieve is much higher because of it. They reported that employers value teaching in the target language highly and felt this gave them an advantage when employers were aware of it. Staff said that the approach works well. [...]

Paragraph 2.5: The panel asked whether the achievement of students is sufficiently recognised. A relatively small proportion of students gain 1st or 2.1 degrees in spite of the excellence of the programme and the high standard of student qualifications on intake. [...]

Paragraph 2.6: The panel questioned whether standard [sic] of an Aston 2.1 degree, taught almost entirely in the target language, may be higher than those offered by other institutions. [...] The question is not a simple one, if it was shown that there is a demonstrable disparity of achievement then LTS would be prepared to take steps to address that. [...]

Appendix 4: Sample interview transcript

Interview mit Instructor G, 16 August, 2012 (length: 00:40:07)

EW: Thank you for taking the time to do this interview with me. Of course, everything will be treated anonymously and with utter confidentiality. You know what my research project is about, at least roughly. It's about how modern languages are taught at Aston University, what the staff and student experience is, how they experience the teaching method, and what the institutional framework is for that. Now, I know that you are no longer a member of staff at Aston, but you have a considerable number of years' experience, and you are an interesting case because you were the only non-native speaker of German in the department, so thank you very much for agreeing to answer my questions.

To start off, there are many different terms used to describe this teaching approach. We call it Integrated Approach in Aston, the European term for it is Content and Language Integrated Learning, or CLIL. How would you describe it? Or how would you define the Integrated Approach, or CLIL?

G: As far as I know? Most of my teaching wasn't done in German, but most of the teaching that students otherwise had in the German half of their degree [Translation Studies], which is about 50% or maybe slightly less of their degree, is just carried out in German, so that's not language classes as such, but content classes taught in German and examined in German.

EW: Did you ever, as a learner, experience this type of teaching, teaching content in the foreign language? When you did your German degree, for example.

G: No, except that I did a year abroad, so obviously, at the German exchange university, that was all in German, so then I did, yes. But in Sussex, where I did my first degree, there was no teaching in German.

EW: Do you know of any universities in Britain, or in England, that use a similar approach to Aston?

G: No, I don't off hand. I'm not saying that it doesn't, I just don't happen to know, I've never looked into it.

EW: Because some people have worked at other institutions and have experienced it in some way, or know of colleagues that work in other universities...

G: Well, it's partly because I've never been completely embedded in a German department, so I'm not very well up on these things.

EW: Do you think that the CLIL approach as practiced at Aston plays a role in the decision of students to come to this university?

G: I think it might do. It's certainly something that is highlighted during the Open Days. Whether they have any concept of what it really means I think is unlikely. I think it sounds to them kind of like a magical state that they'll reach over night when they get there, and

they'll be able to do it. I'm sure it sounds glamorous to them, and they think it will teach them a lot.

EW: So do you think that it's advertised strongly enough, or efficiently enough, by the university?

G: I think it could be advertised more, especially in the written material. I don't think it says anything related to that, that I can remember, in the prospectus. At the Open Days it is mentioned, but possibly at an earlier stage it needs to be said.

EW: Do you think it can motivate students to take up a foreign language, or to continue studying a foreign language?

G: I think that could go either way, because I think if they think about it they realise that it's going to be much harder, so it depends on how motivated they are. So for good students, and highly motivated students, they'll see that the rewards are very large, but the majority may well just think, "That's a bit above my head." Whether you want that or not, possibly that's exactly what you want, I don't know.

EW: Well, I think it very much depends on how informed they are. And even the weaker students, I think, take it as a challenge and aren't necessarily scared off by it. They may be a bit taken aback in the beginning if they weren't fully aware. At least that's what comes out of the...

G: Maybe it also depends on how their language teaching took place. I said before I hadn't had teaching in German during my own studies, but at school, yes, German classes and French classes were held in the foreign language. I don't know if that's true anymore. Even that is a big difference, it's good preparation.

EW: If you think back to the students you taught at Aston, what do you think motivated them to study German in the first place?

G: If anything...

EW: Well, that's an answer, too.

G: I think it's very, very varied. Because I think some think 'I was good at German, so I'm going to do it, because it will be easy', some just enjoyed German or their other languages, some have got German family or friends. I can't think that there are any who found it difficult but decided to stick with it, thinking that it was a good challenge. I think they all have a feeling that they can succeed with it. That's what comes across when they drop out in the first year, that they thought it was going to be easier than it is, so they must have had that image in the first place, from school, or from outside school, families and so on.

EW: What, for you, are the advantages and the disadvantages of the CLIL approach? The challenges for you as a teacher, and maybe for the students as well.

G: Well, as I say, I hardly did any teaching in German, but I saw a lot of students, especially third year. And of course I think the advantage is a language practice one. In principle it should be an advantage that they get to know a different way of approaching the topics,

however, I'm not sure whether they get to that stage. I think there is a certain problematic aspect of it, and that is that the classes can't take place at such a high intellectual level as they would be able to if you bypass the language question. So I think that the kind of discussions that I've had in the classes that I have taught in German, they would have been more sophisticated and they would have pushed students intellectually further if they had been in English because I would have been able to challenge them in a different way, and they would have been able to say more carefully what they mean. So in terms of language learning I think it is definitely a positive point. In terms of the content, I think it may be a negative point. And socially, there's also a problem in that the German native speakers in the class have such a massive head start that they will always be underchallenged and they will always be making difficulties for the other ones. But also within the non-German natives, it will tend to be divided according to grammar rather than according to intellectual capacities. So I think there are a few problems with it in terms of the social make-up of the class.

EW: That's an interesting question. How do you deal with heterogeneous, linguistically able groups? Have you developed strategies? How did you approach that issue?

G: No, because as I say, because I didn't have to deal with that particular problem. In general, there are always mixed groups anyway, so I always try to put small groups together in useful ways. And the one class that I used to teach, which was LSP translation, that was a small group, so that worked reasonably well, there wasn't much direct teaching. So I don't know, I'm not the person to ask about that. I think it's a problem, and maybe it's something where you have to have streaming within the class, where you have some groups that work faster than others and push themselves more.

EW: I think, yes, it does pose a pedagogical challenge. As you say, you didn't necessarily teach that much in German, but are you aware of the theory behind the approach, or did you ever look at how language learning in the target language could be achieved from a theoretical basis?

G: No. I have to confess, I didn't.

EW: Well, you're not the only one.

[both laugh]

G: I'm an English teacher at heart.

EW: Well, I'm sure there you taught content in English, in your own language. So, the strategies are basically the same. It doesn't matter which language it is.

G: Yes. The difference is there, because English is a globally dominant language, you don't have to make any concessions.

EW: Really, do you think so?

G: Yes. Because the ones that want to know about content are generally at such a higher level than our students will ever be. Almost all our students will not be at that level, I think.

EW: That's true to a degree. Although I have to admit, when I did my English modules in my undergraduate degree, there were people in there who were no more intellectually or linguistically stimulated than our students. But yes, of course, the level tends to be higher. How do you think content teaching in the target language differs from content teaching in the students' mother language, or primary language?

G: Well, a lot of it will depend on the individual teacher, of course. But I think, normally, the understanding of the subject, the disciplinary context will differ according to the cultural background of the teacher, and they might not feel that they need to adapt to the English-language conventions when they are teaching in German. That's one of the good things about it, but also one of the difficulties that students have. And then, as I said before, you can get to a more sophisticated level of thinking in your language, because thinking happens through speaking, and so if somebody is, basically, handicapped with their speech, it will certainly slow down the amount of thinking effort they can put in. That is certainly true with essays, I think, you notice it, where they tend to be rather crude a lot of them, which they wouldn't have to be. So that's different. I suppose it makes them concentrate more, but especially weaker ones may be focussing a lot on trying to keep up with the language input and not have any spare time to think about the other side. I mean, I always think it's the weak ones that suffer but maybe also the good students, because they are so much better on the technical side, maybe they just sit back and think, 'Well, I know what the person is saying, that's good enough for me'. So maybe it's not just the weak ones that are slightly [unintelligible] by it.

On the other hand, I do think it's obviously better for them to speak in German about something that has real substance, clearly that's a good way of using language. It forces them to engage in a different way with language. That's a massive advantage, and it enriches the process in that sense.

EW: Going back to the level of intellectual engagement with the material, with the content. Do you think that that would call for implementing or introducing, for example, assessment elements in English rather than German. Can you imagine a context where that would be helpful?

G: I think it might be possible to mix and match more. I don't think it's necessarily the best thing to only have one thing. But of course it's a bit difficult to switch between teaching in one context and then examining in another context. That's a little bit unfair. Because with the students, in order to get those good essays that you wish you had, part of that is the classroom discussion and then using the terminology in English and the syntax in English which they need, which is what they don't have. So I don't know if that helps just to assess it because that kind of trivialises the mother tongue competence that they are lacking. It's not just a matter of, 'It's easier'.

EW: One important element of CLIL is that learning objectives are set for both the content and for language acquisition. How is that done in Aston? Did you think that learning objectives were set clearly for both of these elements or was there an imbalance there?

G: I think there is a lot of disagreement on assessment on that, I must say. I don't know if there is a way of getting round it, I think we just all did have different feelings about it. There was supposed to be half and half, wasn't it, officially.

EW: It still is in German.

G: Now, if you do that you come up with grades which don't fit the achievement of the student because sometimes they completely cancel each other out, or in most cases, you would just give 50% for everybody. Through co-marking, second marking, you see different people's styles, and some really do mark down according to problems with the language. Few people seem to mark up, it seems to me. It seems to be more of a negative mark, in fact. And some just ignore the language completely. So I don't think there is necessarily parity between the different systems of marking. Having said that, overall, everybody fudges the marks anyway, so it's just that some are a tiny bit stricter than others, maybe they are going to be 5 percent points down. Some are more unpredictable than others - we won't name any names - because they are not applying any system at all, just impressionistic. I think it's very difficult because what do you want the students to come out with in the degree, what is it you want your finished student to be? And if you demand that their German is really, really good but you don't care whether they can't think or research, then you have to mark differently from if your main thing is, you want them to be ready to work and ready to think. I think for me, that was a problem which I never quite got to grips with.

EW: Do you think there is enough co-ordination between content modules and language modules? Because assuming that there are language objectives set for content classes - the module description says: This student will be able to talk about the topic in the target language, will be able to use academic language, etc. That's in the module descriptions, and that's what's assessed. But, is that taught?

G: I don't think... In my experience, there wasn't any co-ordination at all, and that's definitely a problem because it means that the situation in the content classes is exacerbated when it's already difficult. But I don't know because I was in a special niche in the language side. Maybe in other parts there is more co-ordination.

EW: Did you see yourself as a subject specialist also teaching language or as a language teacher also teaching a subject?

G: Well, I was a skills teacher, really, I didn't quite fit into either of the things. No, I was a subject specialist, and the only language teaching I did per se was part of this LG2002 [core language module Year 2] and part of LG3003 [core language module Year F], and that was all working with passive language skills. And I think I saw that as partly being working on their English. So language, yes, but not necessarily German language.

EW: The same rules apply, basically.

G: Well yes, sure, but it wasn't integrated in the same way.

EW: Do you think it is easier for a native speaker of the target language to teach CLIL?

G: Yes, in a very practical way, definitely, because it's quite hard work. I remember N. [former colleague], she always used to say, 'God I spent hours before class checking genders' of the words she was going to use. Luckily I had hardly any teaching [in German], so I didn't do too much of that. It is certainly more effort, and I also think it's problematic in one way because you know that you are not giving a perfect model. But then I always thought it's also a good example to them in a more social way, that people switch. I am

always in favour of switching, however you can get switching in, that's what I always try to have.

EW: Which leads me to my new topic, which is the use of the learners' L1. Well, in your case, since most of your teaching was in English or in passive German language skills, I assume most of that was in English, so the learners' L1 played a big role.

G: Yes.

EW: Did you set rules in class about which language to use, at certain points, maybe?

G: Yes, but often 'English only' was my rule because there was one class I had with a lot of Erasmus students, and they would tend to club together and speak German because they just wanted the path of least resistance. So that was an English-only rule. And in the LSP classes I did have a German-only rule. Well, if it was an individual word... But actually, it's the same in my English classes, I never speak German in my English classes, ever, now in adult education. All I will do is, they have to give me a German word and I'll say 'Yes, that's right'. I'll elicit the German word from them, that usually works. Or maybe one word I might give them, but as a rule, no.

EW: So your rule was, when you taught in German you would only speak German. What about students, though? If they said something in English?

G: Yes, that's part of the same rule.

EW: So you would say, 'This is a German class and we are not using English'.

G: Yes. But I have to add to that, final year class, a short class, it was only half a class, the rest was tutorials, so I didn't have to go into confrontation about that. I think it's a very different matter if you work with first years. It's not a value judgement, it's just how it worked out. And with teaching English it works well at all levels.

EW: Do you think there's a role for the native language, even in a target-language only environment?

G: I think because it is teaching translation, this comparative side is really key to it, and that works excellently well, I find. So I don't think it is that you should immerse yourself and never speak English. The only thing is that if you don't watch out, then the weaker students, if they have the option of not speaking the hard way, they'll quickly switch to the easy way, and then you get a split within the class where you have different rules for different people. That's what I'm saying about trying to keep to one set of rules. But as for intellectually, I find the comparative approach very, very useful indeed and very effective.

EW: I have a list of reasons here why students use English in class [see Beiblatt 1]. Thinking back to your German-taught modules, can you give me the three most common reasons for students to use their native language in the target-language class?

G: I could also think about the Erasmus students in the German to English [translation class]. Definitely j) when they want to make sure that they have understood correctly, and i) when they want to say something but don't know how to express it in German, and

m) when other students have used English as well

EW: And the second set here, when did you use English in class? You said you used in very rarely when teaching in German, but were there instances where you would, consciously or subconsciously, switch?

G: Do you mean actually using the language or saying individual words?

EW: Could be either.

G: Saying individual words, then definitely with

g) to compare how words/grammar/concepts work differently in English and German

h) to make sure the students have understood correctly

and then all of these, explaining and talking about, so

d) to explain and talk about the meaning of words

e) to explain and talk about grammatical structures

f) to explain and talk about cultural concepts

they are all kind of one thing.

When I'm teaching English, I definitely don't do it for any of these information things [a-c], there is no need for that, that's a waste of time. But the other things, there could be times where you need to use it.

EW: But was there never a case where students would say, 'I want to hear this in my mother language so I can make sure I understand it'? The technical classroom maintenance? Because very often that is an argument that is used.

G: But that is when the students use it, and then do you say it again to them in English?

But usually I just say it again in the same language, but in a different way. But in an

emergency, sure. But I prefer to use individual words, I don't mind using that. But I prefer

to keep them in the vibe. When I'm teaching English, I really don't do that, I don't say it

again in German, I really don't. I'll say it again in English in a different way, maybe one

word in German, draw a picture, whatever. I don't find any need in that. But I can see

them saying it in their own mind, and that's ok for me.

EW: You can't turn that off anyway.

G: No, and you can normally see what's going on in their minds.

EW: Do you think there's enough institutional support for students? Or could it be made easier for them to deal with this approach?

G: Well, they always need more basic language teaching, but whenever you offer it, they

don't take it up. There were these grammar clinics, this would really, really help a lot, but

they don't do it, so I don't know which it is that needs to change, but something needs to

change about the way they approach the task. Some of the, I think, are just hypnotised

by how hard it is and feel completely incapable of it, and then they just shut down or run

away. I don't know how to deal with that.

EW: Did you find that that was very prevalent?

G: In the first year, yes. Because I spoke to all the students who gave up, the drop-out generation. And that was one of their main reasons, just feeling that they couldn't keep up with the course. Or getting such bad grades that they were thrown out. So I'm talking about first years that I wasn't teaching myself, but I was listening to their narrative of why they were leaving.

EW: And did they ever say that there wasn't enough support, or did they feel that it was more their personal...

G: They knew it was their personal... I think that what they felt was that the classroom situation was totally - these are the weaker students - was completely outside their capacity. They felt absolutely intimidated and frozen with fear because of the good students. Not the teachers, I think that was not the problem, but the better students intimidated them to death, without meaning to, no doubt. Well, some did mean to. That horrified them, then they couldn't take up... It was difficult to discuss with them what they could do to overcome that. Some students, you could discuss that with them, and then they did go on to overcome it. But the ones that were just rabbits in the headlights.

EW: We had a case last year, actually, she is now in her second year, finished the second year. Lovely student, but she was completely terrified in her first year, and she thought she was the worst of the bad lot. She was very close to giving up, but she rallied, and she's doing fine now.

G: Some do. I don't know what the difference is, I think that's a psychological question, the difference between the ones that make it and the ones that don't.

EW: Ok. I have here three quotes from the last LTS 5-year Review [see Beiblatt 2], from December 2010. If I could just ask you to read paragraph 2.4 and to describe your reaction, whether that has also been your experience or not.

G: Yes, it does reflect my experience, except the last sentence, 'Staff said that the approach works well'. I know what a review panel is. Of course you say that the approach works well. I don't know. I don't know how well the approach works. I think it works; whether it works well is a good question. But I think that all the other things are definitely true, that the students who do manage to do it, they do get a lot of benefit, and they get benefit from employers. 'Staff said that the approach works well.' - That's a very sweeping statement.

EW: It is a little general. But, do you have other experiences? I mean, people talk and people share experiences. Can you remember?

G: Yes, I've hear various, more negative things than that. Partly the students who give up, and partly the students who do less well than they could have done, and students who sometimes manage to get a good grade because they are very good at anything which isn't in German, and then the German side of the section condemns them as, 'Oh, they are not really any good', whereas, in fact, they are extremely intelligent people. And those are the people I cry about a little bit, the ones that never quite made it with the endings, but you really, really got a good brain in their head. That was a problem. And then, sometimes, I think that staff are very frustrated about not being able to put across the points they want to across, and not having a dialogue with students because they are

just sitting there, silent, or just saying two-word sentences. And other staff, I think, give up and speak English, possibly in a way which is unpredictable for the students, which I don't think is helpful. If it's predictable, it's different, isn't it. So I think there's a lot of problems, but I still think, overall, if you had to sum it up in one way, which you do for a review...

EW: What about paragraph 2.5?

G: Well, that's true. But then, that's a much bigger political issue of how you want to value degrees, and that language degrees are harder than other degrees. I don't think that's just a thing for Aston.

EW: So you don't think that CLIL is the aspect that makes it harder to achieve a good degree, it's the fact that it's a language degree, and they are generally more difficult to achieve.

G: Yes, I do think that. Although I am sure there are language degrees where you can get a better grade. But I think on our kind of level of similar departments, I don't think we probably have a much lower average mark than places like Manchester or Nottingham, which are our peers. We surely have a different average grade from Wolverhampton. Depends on which way you want to go. I think in many cases it's a real shame. Someone who would have got a 2.1 on a different programme has got a 2.2, ok. But they chose to do that programme.

EW: And the last paragraph here, 2.6?

G: I think that's very difficult to say. Just because... this is what I was saying at the very beginning. Because a person has to struggle hard to actually say anything, then they may not say such an interesting thing as they would have done in their mother tongue. So do you say, 'It wasn't such an interesting thing', which is true, and you may never know because it might have been different. You can't just say, 'Oh, they would have said something really brilliant', you don't know that. Or are you going to say you give them extra brownie points for having said it in German. I don't know. I think that's a very philosophical question.

EW: That's a very fundamental decision you have to make as a department, I think.

G: Yes, and as a university. Because then you are putting yourself in the skills group of degrees. You're saying it's like pharmacy or the ophthalmology degree where you have to get the skill, and then that's what you want the students to come out with. And I suppose that Aston is a bit between the stools on that. Because of the teaching style, it's actually awarding grades according to skill and not according to intellectual achievement. But at the same time it's competing with other German degrees which are assessed in a very different way. I think that is a real problem. The easier way out would be not to use the teaching in German because it would make it easier to compare with the universities which are the natural peers of Aston.

EW: It would maybe make it easier to compare, but...

G: To compete. I mean that very economically. I think there is a genuine problem with - I think it comes back to the question you asked in the beginning about what are you assessing. I don't think that's very clear, and I think it's a very big question about what a German degree is and what it should be.

EW: What do you think the main objective of, say, the German department or LTS is when it comes to learning outcome, overall learning outcome?

G: That's exactly what I mean, what I don't know the answer to. Because I think LTS tries to do two things at the same time, and I'm not sure how easy they are to combine. It tries to have typical humanities graduates, in other words, people who can think fast, express themselves very well in their mother tongue, write well, be flexible, etc. At the same time, it wants to deliver people who speak very good German or French or Spanish. And those two things, I don't know how easy they are to combine. And I don't think a policy decision has ever been made, to my knowledge, about what we want to achieve. And that's maybe the reason for these debates.

EW: That sort of falls in the area of institutional framework, I think, about how aware individual members of staff, for example, are of the overarching target.

G: But is there an overarching target?

EW: Is there discussion about it? Is that even a topic?

G: In my view, there isn't an overarching target, there are a lot of assumptions, and this is why there are always vicious arguments around Finals time because everyone has their different view of what should be the product. And so people who get good marks, some of them are praised and some of them are condemned. I definitely think there's no consensus about it, and how would there be because it's never been discussed, I think.

EW: I think it has changed a little bit since you left, because at least now there is an effort to harmonise at least marking criteria, which is a big step forward, because when I started, there were no clear guidelines of what makes a 2.1 or what makes a First, or what are the intellectual, academic requirements and the linguistic requirements.

G: The intellectual requirements have always been there, the marking criteria, because they are for the whole university. And they work until you start then halving them and putting the other 50% for completely different things.

EW: Ok, is there anything you want to mention, when you look back, as the only non-German speaker in the group?

G: Actually yes, there is something burning on my tongue, and that is: On the side of the graduates that we want to produce, the side of the classic humanities graduate, I feel that Aston sometimes falls down, and that disappointed me in many ways. Or that was what my little personal aim was, simply because I feel like they just never had enough practice in writing skills, speaking skills, in English. In the final year, there were words they had never heard of which should be part of their heritage as educated people. And I think that shocked me again and again. How they will say, 'What do you mean, sustained. What does that mean, sustained?' Final years, English-native speakers. And I

think that is a big problem, it was for me. Within the German section, that was not considered to be a worthwhile aspect of education at all. And I'm not quite sure why. Maybe it's the desperation that came from not being able to get even to a sometimes *this* level of German, sometimes horrible. The very good students, they had been to private schools, they come from middle-class families, they speak very beautiful English, and they can write well. And then there are a few that are naturally gifted. And the majority of them just are missing out on what should be their birthright, and so I'm very disappointed about that, I think. I don't know how you can solve it, but for me, that one hour a week that they had in Year 2 and Year F, one hour of working on their English, I thought that was really vital, and they also really appreciated it. Just basic punctuation and things like this.

EW: I think that's a very basic assumption about the material of students we get in, or you get at university level. Because in CLIL on primary and secondary level, it's a very clear aim to work on both the language side in the target language, but also to make sure that they progress in their own language, because they are still learning their own language in the subject matter.

G: At 19-21 years old, they are definitely still learning. They come using an 18-year-old's language, and they should leave using a graduate's language. That's not necessarily happening.

EW: Thank you very much.

Appendix 5: Student questionnaire, round 1

Introductory text:

Dear student,

Today, I would like to ask for your help in my research project entitled “Learning in the Target Language”. In this project, I want to look at how the foreign language German is used in the language classroom. I am interested in the challenges of and the attitude towards learning and teaching in the foreign language from both the instructors’ and the students’ point of view.

One of the things that set the undergraduate language degrees at Aston University’s School of Languages and Social Sciences apart from other modern language programmes is the fact that they apply an “integrated approach” to language teaching and learning. This means that both language and content modules are taught in the foreign language from the very beginning of Year 1, providing students with maximum exposure to the foreign language and enhancing the learning experience.

For this purpose, the following questionnaire was designed to answer some general questions about your language background and to find out how you feel about the use of English in the foreign language classroom. I would appreciate your answering these questions as the information you provide will be very useful in order to draw a clear picture of what goes on in the foreign language classroom.

Your answers are very valuable for this project, and I would appreciate it if you answered all questions. However, please do not feel obliged to answer a question if you do not wish to. Please rest assured that your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your time!

Elisabeth Wielander

Basic questionnaire (39 items, administered to all students):

Questionnaire

As a point of reference, please mark this questionnaire with the **initials** of your **first name**, your **last name** and your **place of birth**. (Example: E/W/Z – Elisabeth Wielander, Zwettl)

Reference: ____/____/____

A - General background

Please write your answer or mark the appropriate option.

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: female male
3. Year of study: 1 2 F

B - Language background

Please add your answer or mark the appropriate option.

1. What is the language that was/is primarily spoken at home? _____
2. Do you consider yourself multilingual? I.e., did you grow up in a family where two or more languages were spoken regularly, if not to the same extent? yes no
2. a) If yes, what were the languages?

3. Which languages, apart from German, did you study in primary and/or secondary school? Please indicate:
French Spanish Chinese Arabic
other(s): _____
4. How many years did you study German before attending university? _____
5. Up to A-levels, how much classroom interaction was in German?
Please mark as appropriate.
 100%-75% 50%-25% 75%-50% 25%-0%

6. How often have you had contact with German native speakers outside the classroom?

- frequently occasionally hardly ever

7. Have you visited any of the German speaking countries? yes no

7. a) If yes: What was the purpose of this visit / these visits?

Please mark the appropriate answer(s).

- visiting family visiting friends
 visiting tourist or other sights attending language classes
 working school exchange

7. b) If yes: How much time have you spent in German speaking countries in total?

C - University background

Please write your answer or mark the appropriate option.

1. Why did you decide to study German?

Please mark one or more answer(s) as appropriate.

- because I am interested in the language and its culture(s)
 because I didn't know what else to study
 because I have a German/Austrian/Swiss family background
 because it will help me in my professional career
 because I had good A-level results in German

other: _____

2. Why did you decide to study German at this university?

Please mark one or more answer(s) as appropriate.

- because it is close to home
- because I like Birmingham
- because I visited the university during an Open Day and liked the campus
- because I researched different degree programmes and liked this one best
- because it has a good reputation
- because I knew that this degree would increase my chances in the job market
- because friends and/or relatives of mine study/studied here
- because I was accepted

other: _____

3. Did you come across the concept of the “integrated approach” when you investigated this university as a potential university? yes no

4. Did the Integrated Approach used at this university play a part in your decision to come to this institution? yes no n/a

5. I find learning German...

- very difficult rather difficult a little difficult not difficult at all

6. I would rate my level of overall motivation to learn German as ...

- very high moderate weak very weak

D - Use of English in the German classroom

For questions 1-7, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4
1. I feel well-prepared for attending classes in German.				
2. My instructor makes his/her expectations about the use of German in class clear.				
3. I would like it if the instructor used more English in class.				
4. I find it easier to use German with fellow students than with my instructor.				
5. The fact that German is spoken throughout all classes makes it easier for me to communicate in German.				
6. I find it easier to use German with my instructor than with fellow students.				
7. My instructor also makes an effort to speak German with me outside the classroom.				

For question 8, please indicate how often you use English to do the following things:

(1 = very often, 2 = regularly, 3 = occasionally, 4 = hardly ever)

8. I use English with my instructor ...

	1	2	3	4
a) to communicate my needs				
b) to receive information about class times, office hours, etc.				
c) to receive information about class content, topics, materials, etc.				
d) to receive information about assessment content and structure				
e) to ask and talk about the meaning of words				
f) to ask and talk about grammatical structures				
g) to ask and talk about cultural concepts				

- h) to compare how words/grammar/concepts work differently in English and German
- i) when I want to say something but don't know how to express it in German
- j) when I want to make sure I have understood correctly
- k) when it is quicker to say it in English
- l) when I don't feel comfortable speaking in German
- m) when other students have used English as well
- n) when I want to defend myself
- o) when I want to make a joke

For question 9, please indicate how often your instructor uses English to do the following things:

(1 = very often, 2 = regularly, 3 = occasionally, 4 = hardly ever)

9. My instructor uses English...

- a) to give information about class times, office hours, etc.
- b) to give information about class content, topics, materials, etc.
- c) to give information about assessment content and structure
- d) to explain and talk about the meaning of words
- e) to explain and talk about grammatical structures
- f) to explain and talk about cultural concepts
- g) to compare how words/grammar/concepts work differently in English and German
- h) to make sure we have understood correctly
- i) when it is quicker to say it in English
- j) when I or other students have used English as well
- k) to enforce discipline in class

	1	2	3	4

For question 10, please indicate how often you use English with your fellow students to do the following things: (1 = *very often*, 2 = *regularly*, 3 = *occasionally*, 4 = *hardly ever*)

10. I use English with my fellow students ...

	1	2	3	4
a) to communicate my needs				
b) to exchange information about class times, office hours, etc.				
c) to exchange information about class content, topics, materials, etc.				
d) to exchange information about assessment content and structure				
e) to talk about the meaning of words				
f) to talk about grammatical structures				
g) to talk about cultural concepts				
h) to compare how words/grammar/concepts work differently in English and German				
i) when I want to say something but don't know how to express it in German				
j) when I want to make sure I have understood correctly				
k) when it is quicker to say it in English				
l) when I don't feel comfortable speaking in German				
m) when other students have used English as well				
n) when I want to defend myself				
o) when I want to make a joke				

For questions 11-23, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *disagree*, 4 = *strongly disagree*)

	1	2	3	4
11. I believe the more German I use in class the better I will be able to communicate in German.				

12. I believe that I must use as much German as possible in class in order to become proficient in German.

--	--	--	--

13. I believe that instructor and students should only use German to discuss module information and other administrative issues.

--	--	--	--

14. I believe that, even if students use English occasionally, the instructor should always use German only.

--	--	--	--

15. I believe that instructor and students should always use German to discuss grammar and usage of German.

--	--	--	--

16. I believe that sometimes it makes things easier to use English, even if it would be more beneficial to use German all the time.

--	--	--	--

17. I believe that if I *have* to use German, I become more anxious about my German abilities.

--	--	--	--

18. I believe that I would retain more information if I was taught in English.

--	--	--	--

19. I believe that if I *have* to use German, I become more confident about my German abilities.

--	--	--	--

20. I consider using German to communicate in class a beneficial and rewarding challenge.

--	--	--	--

21. I look forward to a time when I don't want or need to use English in class.

--	--	--	--

22. I believe that my instructor uses English only when it is absolutely necessary.

--	--	--	--

23. I believe that my instructor uses English very effectively and purposefully.

--	--	--	--

Additional questions for students in their 2nd year of study

For questions 24-31, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

1	2	3	4

24. In Year 1, I had a hard time getting used to the exclusive use of German in the classroom.

25. In Year 1, my proficiency in German increased significantly because I had to use German in class a lot.

--	--	--	--

26. I believe that, without the Integrated Approach, my language skills would not have improved as significantly as they have.

--	--	--	--

27. I believe that sometimes it would have been better to use English.

--	--	--	--

28. I believe that my exam results in Year 1 would have been better if more English had been used in class.

--	--	--	--

29. I believe that the exclusive use of German in class will help prepare me for my Year Abroad.

--	--	--	--

30. I feel more comfortable about going abroad next year because I have got used to using German to communicate in and out of class.

--	--	--	--

31. I believe that I will use even more German in class this year.

--	--	--	--

Additional questions for students in their final year of study

For questions 24-32, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

24. In Years 1 and 2, I had a hard time getting used to the exclusive use of German in the classroom.

1	2	3	4

25. In Years 1 and 2, my proficiency in German increased significantly because I had to use German in class a lot.

--	--	--	--

26. I believe that, without the Integrated Approach, my language skills would not have improved as significantly as they have.

--	--	--	--

27. I believe that sometimes it would have been better to use English.

--	--	--	--

28. I believe that my exam results in Years 1 and 2 would have been better if more English had been used in class.

--	--	--	--

29. I believe that the exclusive use of German in class helped prepare me well for my Year Abroad.

--	--	--	--

30. I believe that my Year Abroad was more beneficial and successful because I had been taught exclusively in German in Years 1 and 2.

--	--	--	--

31. I believe my Year Abroad would have been more difficult if our content modules had been taught in English.

--	--	--	--

32. I believe that, after my Year Abroad, I will be able to communicate exclusively in German in all modules this year.

--	--	--	--

Appendix 6: Student questionnaire, round 2

Introductory text:

Dear student,

I would like to ask for your help in my research project entitled “Learning in the Target Language” one final time. In this project, I want to look at how the foreign language German is used in the language classroom. I am interested in the challenges of and the attitude towards learning and teaching in the foreign language from both the instructors’ and the students’ point of view.

The following questionnaire was designed to find out how you feel about the use of English in the foreign language classroom after having experienced this past term / year at this university.

Your answers are very valuable for this project, and I would appreciate it if you answered all questions. However, please do not feel obliged to answer a question if you do not wish to. Please rest assured that your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your time!

Elisabeth Wielander

Basic questionnaire (29 items, administered to all students):

Questionnaire

As a point of reference, please mark this questionnaire with the **initials** of your **first name**, your **last name** and your **place of birth**. (Example: E/W/Z – Elisabeth Wielander, Zwettl)

Reference: ____/____/____

A - General background

Please add your answer or mark the appropriate option.

1. Age: _____

2. Gender: female male

3. Year of study: 1 2 F

B - University background

1. Did you come across the concept of the “integrated approach” when you investigated this university as a potential university? yes no

1.a If yes: How would you define the “integrated approach”? What does it mean?

1.b If no: Had you known about the “integrated approach”, would it have made a difference in your decision to choose this university? yes no

2. Did the Integrated Approach used at this university play a part in your decision to come to this institution? yes no n/a

3. Do you believe that the Integrated Approach should be advertised more strongly to promote Aston University? yes no

3.a If yes, why is it important that Aston advertise the Integrated Approach more strongly?

3.b If yes, how should Aston advertise the Integrated Approach?

D - Use of English in the German classroom

For questions 1-7, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

- 1. I enjoyed attending classes taught exclusively in German.
- 2. My instructor enforced the use of German in the language classroom throughout the term.

1	2	3	4

3. I would have preferred it if my instructor had used more English in class.

4. I used more German with fellow students than with my instructor.

5. The fact that German is spoken throughout all classes has made it easier for me to communicate in German.

6. I used more German with my instructor than with fellow students.

7. My instructor always made an effort to speak German with me outside the classroom.

8. Please explain when you used English in the German classroom.

I used English with my instructor to...

9. Please explain for what purpose your instructor used English in the German classroom:

My instructor used English to ...

10. Please explain for what purpose you used English with your fellow students in the German classroom:

I used English with my fellow students to...

For questions 11-23, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4
11. I believe the fact that I had to use German in class has improved my ability to communicate in German.				
12. I believe that I must use as much German as possible in class in order to become proficient in German.				
13. I believe that it helped that instructor and students only used German to discuss module information and other administrative issues.				
14. I believe that, even if students use English occasionally, the instructor should always use German only.				
15. I believe that it helped that instructor and students always used German to discuss grammar and/or usage of German.				
16. I believe that sometimes it makes things easier to use English, even if it would be more beneficial to use German all the time.				
17. I believe that, because I <i>had</i> to use German, I became more anxious about my German abilities.				
18. I believe that I would retain more information if I was taught in English.				
19. I believe that, because I <i>had</i> to use German in class, I became more confident about my German abilities.				
20. I consider using German to communicate in class a beneficial and rewarding challenge.				
21. I have now reached a point where I don't want or need to use English in class.				
22. I believe that my instructor used English only when it is absolutely necessary.				
23. I believe that my instructor used English very effectively and purposefully.				

Additional questions for students in their 2nd year of study:

For questions 24-31, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4
24. During my years at uni, I have had a hard time getting used to the exclusive use of German in the classroom.				
25. During my years at uni, my proficiency in German has increased significantly because I have had to use German in class a lot.				
26. I believe that, without the Integrated Approach, my language skills would not have improved as significantly as they have.				
27. I believe that sometimes it would have been better to use English.				

27.a If yes, when would it have been better to use English? Please list

28. I believe that my exam results in Years 1 would have been better if more English had been used in class.				
29. I believe that the exclusive use of German in class is helping to prepare me for my Year Abroad.				
30. I feel more comfortable about going abroad next year because I have got used to using German to communicate in and out of class.				
31. I believe that I am using more German in class this year.				

Additional questions for students in their final year of study:

For questions 24-29, please mark the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4
24. During my years at uni, I had a hard time getting used to the exclusive use of German in the classroom.				
25. During my years at uni, my proficiency in German increased significantly because I had to use German in class a lot.				
26. I believe that, without the Integrated Approach, my language skills would not have improved as significantly as they have.				
27. I believe that sometimes it would have been better to use English.				

27.a If yes, when would it have been better to use English? Please list

28. I believe that my exam results in Years 1 and 2 would have been better if more English had been used in class.				
29. After my Year Abroad, I have been able to communicate exclusively in German in all modules this year.				

Appendix 7: Consent form - students

CONSENT FORM

Background

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “Learning in the Target Language” conducted by Elisabeth Wielander.

Elisabeth Wielander is a postgraduate research student in the School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University and you may contact her if you have further questions by sending an e-mail to e.wielander@aston.ac.uk or calling 0121-204-3754.

In my research project, I want to look at how German is taught at Aston University. I am interested in the challenges of and the attitude towards learning and teaching in the foreign language from both the instructors’ and the students’ point of view.

For this purpose, I use classroom observation and questionnaires to answer questions about students’ language background and to find out how students feel about the use of German and English in the foreign language classroom.

If you agree to participate in my study, your participation would include allowing me to use information gathered by means of classroom observation (audio-recordings will be used to complement systematic observation in class) or written questionnaires. Any data collected is always anonymized, which means that no participant’s name will ever be released. Please rest assured that your contributions will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used for any purpose other than research, conference and other academic publications.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time, and any data you have provided up to that point will be removed from the study.

If you are happy for me to include your data in my study, please sign the following agreement:

Agreement:

I hereby agree to participate in the research project outlined above by participating in observed classes and/or filling in the questionnaire provided at the end of each class. The anonymised data can be used for research, conference and other academic publications by Elisabeth Wielander.

NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

MODULE