



Johnson Anton, Seppä Waldo

Expert perceptions on the need and actualisation of CLIL in Finnish municipalities /
Asiantuntijoiden käsityksiä CLIL:n tarpeesta ja toteutuksesta suomalaisissa kunnissa

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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on yleinen kaksikielisen opetuksen muoto Suomessa. CLIL:ssä integroidaan sisältö ja kieli opettamalla oppiainesisältöjä vieraan kielen kautta. Kaksikielisen opetuksen kysyntä on nousussa, sillä yhä useampi kunta haluaa tarjota vieraskielistä opetusta osana kunnan koulutuspalvelua. Länsimaissa kehitettyjä kaksikielisen opetuksen malleja ja metodeja on hyödynnetty Suomessa osana opetuksen kehittämistä.

CLIL käsitteenä ei erottele eri kaksikielisen opetuksen malleja. CLIL on laajalti synonyyminen kaksikielisen opetuksen kanssa. Opetusalan ammattilaiset seuraavat perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman (OPS 2014) tavoitteita kaksikieliseen opetukseen liittyen. OPS:ssa eritellään kaksikielinen opetus laajaan ja suppeaan kaksikieliseen opetukseen sekä kielikylpyopetukseen kotimaisilla kielillä. CLIL:iä voidaan hyödyntää kaikissa edellämainituissa kaksikielisen opetuksen kategorioissa tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi.

Tässä tutkimuksessa pyrimme tutkimaan asiantuntijoiden käsityksiä CLIL:stä ja kuinka CLIL:iä tarjotaan ja toteutetaan eri kunnissa. Haastattelimme viittä CLIL-asiantuntijaa kolmelta eri tasolta: koulun, kunnan ja valtion tasoilta. Kaikilla asiantuntijoilla on yhteys CLIL-opetukseen tai kaksikieliseen opetukseen Suomessa ja heidän työskentelevät niiden parissa. Käytimme kvalitatiivisen tutkimuksen metodeja analysoidaksemme haastatteluista saamaamme dataa. Käytimme datan analysoinnissa induktiivisen koodauksen menetelmiä, temaattista sisältöanalyysia sekä fenomenografisen tutkimusotteen elementtejä.

Tutkimuksen myötä opimme, että CLIL:iä käytetään synonyymina kaksikielisen opetuksen kanssa. CLIL:n toteutus Suomessa perustuu OPS:ssa eriteltyihin tavoitteisiin, jotka eroavat laajan ja suppeamman kaksikielisen opetuksen sekä kielikylpyopetuksen osalta. CLIL on tehokas metodi ja lähestymistapa, jonka avulla opetetaan kieltä oppiainesisältöjen kautta. CLIL tarjoaa kunnille myös kilpailuedun, sillä sen kautta tarjotaan vastataan paikallisten ja kansainvälisten asukkaiden tarpeisiin. Ajoittain CLIL:iä käytetään pelkkänä muotisanaa, mutta tutkimuksemme myötä selvisi, että CLIL on enemmän kuin muotisana ja oikeastaan se on varsin suosittu menetelmä edistää monikielisyyttä ja kansainvälisyyttä.

Avainsanat: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), kaksikielinen opetus, asiantuntijakäsitykset, Suomi, muotisana (buzzword)

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Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has emerged as a common bilingual education model in Finland. It integrates content and language, by teaching content through the medium of a foreign language. The demand for bilingual education is rising, as more municipalities begin to offer specialised linguistic education as a part of their educational services. Educators in Finland have looked to various Western bilingual education models to improve existing language teaching practices.

The definition for CLIL does not differentiate between different models of bilingual education. CLIL in Finland is largely synonymous with bilingual education. Teachers and educators in Finland must follow the goals listed in the National Core Curriculum (NCC 2014) for Education, which specifies targets for bilingual education. In Finland, and in the NCC, bilingual education is divided into large-scale and small-scale bilingual education, as well as language immersion, all of which CLIL can be used for.

In this study, it was our aim to investigate the perception of CLIL in Finland, and to understand how CLIL is implemented across different municipalities. We interviewed five experts in CLIL across three dimensions of influence – the school level, the municipal level, and the national level. All experts have a connection to CLIL or bilingual education in Finland, relevant to the current positions they hold. We employed qualitative research methods to analyse the data collected from these interviews, using inductive coding, thematic content analysis, as well as elements of phenomenography.

From our research we have learned that CLIL is synonymous with bilingual education in Finland. That its implementation follows the structures of large-scale, small-scale, and immersion. CLIL is an effective method and approach to adding foreign language teaching into content lessons. It is believed that offering CLIL education in a municipality improves competitiveness while catering to local and international needs. While CLIL at times, is described as a buzzword, in these contexts we have learned that CLIL is more than merely a buzzword, and is in fact a popular choice for teachers and educational leaders interested in promoting multilingualism and internationalisation.

Keywords: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), bilingual education, expert perceptions, Finland, buzzword

Contents

1. Prologue	6
2. Introduction	8
3. Theoretical framework	9
3.1 Defining bilingual education – moving towards the Finnish context	9
3.1.1 <i>What is bilingual education?</i>	10
3.2 Bilingual education models	10
3.2.1 <i>Transitional bilingual education</i>	13
3.2.2 <i>The Language Maintenance Oriented Model</i>	14
3.2.3 <i>The Enrichment Model</i>	15
3.3 Immersion programs	16
3.3.1 <i>Immersion bilingual education in Finland</i>	17
3.3.2 <i>Sámi language immersion and language nests</i>	17
3.4 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).....	18
3.4.1 <i>CLIL as an approach</i>	19
3.4.2 <i>CLIL as a method</i>	20
3.4.3 <i>Second language acquisition</i>	22
3.4.4 <i>CLIL as a buzzword</i>	24
3.5 Benefits of bilingual education and CLIL.....	25
3.5.1 <i>Second language learning</i>	26
3.5.2 <i>Naturalistic language learning</i>	26
3.5.3 <i>Content learning</i>	27
3.5.4 <i>Motivation for learning</i>	28
3.5.5 <i>Code-switching</i>	28
3.5.6 <i>Cognitive performance</i>	29
3.5.7 <i>Socioeconomic benefits</i>	31
3.6 Challenges of CLIL.....	32
3.7 Bilingual education in the Finnish National Core Curriculum (2014).....	34
3.7.1 <i>Large-scale bilingual education</i>	35
3.7.2 <i>Small-scale bilingual education</i>	35
3.7.3 <i>Role of CLIL in NCC</i>	35
3.8 CLIL-programs in Finland.....	36
4. Procedure and analysis plan	38
4.1 Context	38
4.2 Participants.....	38
4.3 Research questions.....	39
4.4 Phenomenography.....	39

4.5	Thematic content analysis.....	40
4.6	Ethics	40
4.7	Reliability	41
5.	Data analysis and results	42
5.1	Benefits	42
5.1.1	<i>Direct benefits</i>	43
5.1.2	<i>Indirect benefits</i>	44
5.1.3	<i>Expectations</i>	46
5.2	Challenges	47
5.2.1	<i>Direct challenges</i>	48
5.2.2	<i>Indirect challenges</i>	49
5.2.3	<i>Persuasion</i>	50
5.3	Perception	51
5.3.1	<i>Method</i>	51
5.3.2	<i>Approach</i>	52
5.3.3	<i>Buzzword</i>	53
5.4	Implementation	55
5.4.1	<i>The school level</i>	55
5.4.2	<i>The municipal level</i>	56
5.4.3	<i>The national level</i>	57
6.	Discussion.....	60
7.	Conclusion	63
8.	References.....	64

1. Prologue

A famous joke begins with the line “two men walk into a bar.” Our process of how we joined forces to write this master’s thesis together began in a comparable way but replacing the bar with the university class the first day we started our studies. Over the years, we have shared many good conversations, and quickly found that we have a similar work ethic, and many common thoughts. We separately wrote our bachelor's theses about bilingual education and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and therefore we realised it only made sense for us to combine forces to embark on this mission of delving deeper into the world of CLIL and ask the experts the real questions that existing research could not provide.

Both of us are third culture kids coming from bilingual and multilingual families, respectively. We have both gone through schooling in different languages and even CLIL. We have both substituted CLIL classes and have an interest in teaching bilingually in the future. As a result, both of us are interested in developing a deeper understanding of CLIL, and especially understanding how CLIL is actualised in Finland. It is our hope that this thesis can be used in the future as an academic guide for upcoming stakeholders in Finland, that have an interest in CLIL and are considering the implications that would affect its implementation.

We began our studies at the University of Oulu in the fall of 2017 in the English-language Intercultural Teacher Education-program (ITE). Our program focuses on bridging cultures, languages, and worldviews through education. Graduates of the ITE-program receive qualifications to teach grades 1-6 and due to the program being taught in English, many graduates are employed in the English-medium bilingual schools and CLIL-classes of Finland and around the world, as well as varying institutes related to education or interculturalism. Many of these bilingual schools are in bigger cities, but as of late, bilingual education is being offered in the form of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in monolingual, smaller municipalities.

This is where our common interest in CLIL as a phenomenon began. Anton was interested in this: why are smaller municipalities offering CLIL? What perceived benefits does CLIL have to smaller, monolingual communities? Whereas Waldo was interested in pro-CLIL and anti-CLIL narratives, as well as understanding the deeper implications of why CLIL is chosen as a method of instruction. As we discussed doing our master’s thesis together, our focus narrowed

down on understanding the need behind implementing CLIL in smaller, monolingual municipalities or even Finland as a whole.

In educational research, we try to find the best methods to make teaching more effective. Continuous research is therefore required to observe phenomena, and to revisit old theories, applying them to current situations and standards. Language studies are in the spotlight in today's globalised society, as we are teaching languages either to learn new ones or keep old ones alive (Jalkanen, 2017).

2. Introduction

This thesis explores the concepts of bilingual education, and specifically looks at the concept of CLIL. As we have both previously explored this concept in our bachelor's theses, now we expand on that research. Anton has explored the various Western bilingual education models and their influence on Finland, whereas Waldo looked at the arguments for and against CLIL. This thesis will then take the theoretical framework of bilingual education models and CLIL and will look at the place that CLIL has within bilingual education in the Finnish context.

As Waldo noted in his bachelor's thesis, the definition of CLIL does not specify or differentiate between different forms of implementation. Indeed, CLIL is often synonymous with bilingual education in Europe, while CLIL is used as an umbrella term to describe varying degrees of foreign language use in bilingual education under the concept of the "many faces of CLIL" (Peltoniemi, Skinnari, Mård-Miettinen, Sjöberg, 2017; Mehisto, Marsh, Frigols, 2008). Due to the inconsistencies observed in our experience with CLIL, we therefore wanted to investigate the perceptions and implementations of CLIL in Finland.

Bilingual education programs are becoming increasingly common in Europe, in an attempt to address the political need for increased language learning (Järvinen, 2006, Peltoniemi et al., 2017). In this regard Finland is no different as recent studies have indicated that there will be an increase in demand for English medium bilingual education in Finnish municipalities (Kangsvieri, Miettinen, Palviainen, Saarinen, Ala-Vähälä, 2012; Rubin, Linturi, 2011).

To investigate our research question regarding the perceptions on the need and actualisation of CLIL in Finnish municipalities, we conducted a series of semi-structured expert interviews at three distinct levels within the educational institution: the school level, municipal level, and national level. Our study used qualitative research methodologies, utilising elements of phenomenography to investigate the perceptions around the concept of CLIL, while employing the methods of inductive coding and thematic content analysis to conceptualise the responses obtained from our participating experts. In this study we have shown that the demand for bilingual education is in line with the experiences of our experts, and highlights the varying degrees in which CLIL is implemented in Finnish schools.

3. Theoretical framework

When attempting to create a theoretical framework for this master's thesis, it's important to create a working definition to define the central terms and core concepts used in this thesis: bilingual education and its models, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), bilingualism, and immersion.

According to Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty (2008), defining concepts is important since words and concepts frame and construct the phenomena under discussion. Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty (2008) continue by saying that words and concepts also have the power of making some people or groups visible or invisible, some the unmarked norm, others marked and negative. Even the choice of language in education can minoritize or distort some individuals, groups, and relations (Skutnabb-Kangas, McCarty, 2008).

Concepts and terms develop and evolve over time and across various contexts; therefore, the same concept may have several definitions (Skutnabb-Kangas, McCarty, 2008). With regards to this thesis, CLIL is defined in several ways due to this reason. Bilingual education itself is regarded as a contested arena, where the definition of concepts and use of words play a defining role in the outcome of education (Skutnabb-Kangas, McCarty, 2008).

3.1 Defining bilingual education – moving towards the Finnish context

As our focus is on Finland, the Finnish context will be discussed while making parallels to other contexts around the European Union. To better understand the bilingual education models in Finland, namely CLIL and immersion, one must examine the literature and history concerning these bilingual education models. Especially the English-medium bilingual education found in Finland has its roots in bilingual education models originating from North America and Europe (Jalkanen, 2017). These models operate with different intentions, objectives, and aims. Since the intentions, objectives, and aims differ within these models, researchers, linguists, and educators have sought to identify and classify bilingual education models into identifiable groups. CLIL, due to having many faces, according to Mehisto, Marsh, and Frigols (2008), would also fall within these same models of bilingual education. Within the Finnish context, CLIL is synonymous with bilingual education. This can be observed in the fact that CLIL is not mentioned in the National Core Curriculum (2014).

3.1.1 What is bilingual education?

Bilingual education is not a 20th century phenomenon (Baker, 2001). It has existed for more than 5000 years in one form or another; bilingualism and multilingualism have been early characteristics of human societies for many millennia (Baker, 2001). On the other hand, monolingualism has been a limitation in societies induced by social change, as well as cultural and ethnocentric developments (Baker, 2001). Mackey (1978) elaborates on the history of bilingual education by saying that children in Ancient Mesopotamia were taught to read and write in Eblaite and Sumerian, dating 4000-5000 years back. Mehisto et al. (2008) go on to use the term CLIL when referring to the education in Ancient Akkadian communities where Sumerian was used as a medium of instruction when teaching academic subjects. In this regard, the intention of bilingual education in Ancient Mesopotamia was to enrich students, (Garcia, 2009). However, it has been argued that education was only accessible for students from higher socio-economic statuses, therefore bilingual education was not egalitarian in nature (Farrell, 2011).

It is also noteworthy to mention, that bilingual education can be “elective (optional) or obligatory (enforced)”, depending on the socio-cultural context (Garcia, 2009, p. 63). If bilingual education is elective, often higher socio-economic parents opt to put their children into such classes (Bruton, 2013; Jalkanen, 2017). Enforced bilingual education can be found in societies where minorities are assimilated into the mainstream language and society (Garcia, 2009; Baker 2011; Jalkanen, 2017).

3.2 Bilingual education models

When researchers seek to simply define bilingual education, they may define it as “education through the medium of more than one language” (Garcia, 2009, p. 5-6), or as an educational system in which information is presented to students in two languages (Baker, 2011). One of the earlier and more cited bilingual education models was created by Fishman (1982 pp. 26-28), where he divided bilingual education into three models:

1. The Transitional Model
2. The Language Maintenance Oriented Model
3. The Enrichment Model

Fishman's (1982) bilingual education models have since been adapted and elaborated by researchers such as Hornberger (1991), Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty (2008), Baker (2011), and Jalkanen (2017).

Hornberger (1991) adds a larger conceptual framework to Fishman's (1982) models:

Transitional model	Maintenance model	Enrichment model
Language shift	Language maintenance	Language development
Cultural assimilation	Strengthened cultural identity	Cultural pluralism
Social incorporation	Civil rights affirmation	Social autonomy

Table 1. Adapted from Hornberger (1991, p. 223).

Jalkanen (2017, p. 47) compares Fishman's (1982) and Baker's (2011) forms of bilingual education with the following table:

Fishman's Models of Bilingual Education	Baker's Forms of Bilingual Education
The Transitional Model	Monolingual Forms of Education for Bilinguals
The Language Maintenance Oriented Model	Weak Forms of Bilingual Education for Bilinguals
The Enrichment Model	Strong Forms of Bilingual Education for Bilingualism and Biliteracy

Table 2. Comparison of models and forms of bilingual education, adapted from Jalkanen (2017, p. 47).

Ferguson, Houghton, and Wells (1977) have identified multiple examples of the aims of bilingual education which encompass the bilingual education models, of which some can be identified when bilingual education models are further discussed:

1. To assimilate individuals or groups into the mainstream of society; to socialize people for full participation in the community.
2. To enable people to communicate with the outside world.
3. To provide language skills which are marketable, aiding employment and status.
4. To preserve ethnic and religious identity.

5. To spread the use of a colonial language, socializing an entire population to a colonial existence.
6. To strengthen elite groups and preserve their position in society.
7. To deepen understanding of language and culture.

(Ferguson, Houghton, and Wells, 1977, as cited in Baker, 2001, p. 193).

Many of these respective aims can be categorized as traits of optional or obligatory bilingual education. For example, assimilation can be seen as an aim of an obligatory bilingual education model, whereas deepening the understanding of a language and culture can be seen as an aim of an optional bilingual education model (Garcia, 2009). For example, enabling Finnish children to communicate with the outside world has been identified as one of the main benefits of English-medium bilingual education (Jalkanen, 2017).

Bilingual education, especially when using English or any other world language as the target language, has been perceived to aid employment and provide marketable language skills and better once status in society (Virtala, 2002; Lasagabaster, 2008; Jalkanen, 2017). Ethnic identities can be revitalized and supported through bilingual education, as it is the case with, for instance, Hawaiï-language immersion (Grenoble and Whaley, 2006) or in Sami language immersion (Äärelä, 2015). However, through bilingual education, a colonial language can be intentionally spread to minority populations with the aim of socializing them into a colonial existence. This can lead to linguistic genocide, as Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) implies. An example of the spreading of a colonial language can be found in New Zealand, where the indigenous Māori people were colonized, their language was stripped and banned, resulting in a near extinction of the Māori language (Stiles, 1997). In Finland, the Sami people were colonized by the Finns, resulting in near extinction of Sámi languages (Keskitalo, Määttä and Uusiautti, 2014). Elite groups can be strengthened and preserved through bilingual education. Elite bilinguals are people from middle or upper classes, who voluntarily or freely choose to become bilingual (Baker, 2011). Finally, bilingual education can facilitate wider cultural or linguistic awareness, CLIL can contribute towards intercultural awareness and understanding (Marsh, 2013; Jalkanen, 2017).

3.2.1 Transitional bilingual education

Transitional bilingual education is used in contexts where the education provider wants students from minority backgrounds to assimilate into the mainstream culture and switch to the majority language (Hornberger, 1991; Freeman, 1998; Jalkanen, 2017). Here, the majority language refers to the official language of the national society, whereas students from minority backgrounds are students whose native language is not the official language of the national society (Freeman, 1998).

Transitional bilingual education seeks to gradually transition the language of instruction from the minority language to the majority language during the schooling of minority students. Baker (2001) identifies two main types of transitional bilingual education: early exit and late exit. Early exit allows the use of the mother tongue of minority students in school as a means of help, for a maximum of two years, whereas late exit allows around 40% of mother tongue in classroom teaching until the 6th grade. (Baker, 2001).

Garcia & Homonoff Woodley (2014) provide an example of transitional bilingual education when they discuss the US education system of the 1950s. In their example, they tell how children from Spanish-speaking or Navajo backgrounds underwent basic education. These children were taught in their mother tongue for the first years of school, simultaneously being taught increasingly in English until they developed a sufficient English proficiency. This resulted in a situation where the home language was abandoned as a medium of instruction. (Garcia & Homonoff Woodley, 2014).

Traits of transitional bilingual education in Finland

The Finnish education system does not look pious either: Linkola-Aikio, Paksuniemi and Keskitalo (2018) show that similar elements and traits of transitional bilingual education, portrayed by Fishman (1982) and Hornberger (1991), can be found in the history of Sami education. Hornberger's (1991) characteristics of transitional bilingual education: language shift, cultural assimilation, and social incorporation are seen in how Sami education was conducted in Finland.

During the nationalistic period in Finland, dating back from the 1800s until the 1950s, the slogan of Finland was "one language, one mind" (Linkola-Aikio et al, 2018). This meant that during that time people who were not ethnic Finns, such as the Sami people, were assimilated into mainstream Finnish culture and language through the education system (see Paksuniemi,

2009). Finnish people sought to ‘civilize’ the ‘savage and pagan’ Sami people (Paksuniemi, 2009).

Assimilation of the Sami people into Finnish society was carried out through the offices of the church and school (Äärelä, 2015). Linkola-Aikio et al. (2018) explain how the Finnish government suppressed the use of Sami languages in schools. Sami children were sent to boarding schools far away from their families, homes, and familiar surroundings. Sami languages, namely Skolt Sami, Northern Sami, or Inari Sami, were not recognized nor were they permitted in schools. (Linkola-Aikio et al, 2018). Subsequently, Sami children lost their language and identity (Rasmus, 2008). Therefore, Hornberger’s (1991) characteristics of transitional bilingual education are identified in the history of Sami education in Finland:

1. Language shift from L1 (Sami language) to L2 (Finnish or Swedish)
2. Cultural assimilation from Sami culture to Finnish culture
3. Social incorporation from Sami setting to Finnish setting

A similar phenomenon of assimilating indigenous people into the mainstream culture and majority language through education can be found from Canada. Residential schools throughout Canada sought to ‘civilize’ the ‘savage’ First Nations people (Hanson, Gamez and Manuel, 2020).

3.2.2 The Language Maintenance Oriented Model

The Language Maintenance Oriented Model, also known as the maintenance model, is a bilingual education model that seeks to maintain the (minority) language, strengthen cultural identities, and affirm civil rights (Hornberger, 1991). Maintenance models encourage additive bilingualism for students from minority language backgrounds, yet they do not target minority language learning for students from majority language backgrounds (Freeman, 1998). According to Ngai (2002), a practical reason for the maintenance of a first language of a minority student is that it facilitates their acquisition of a second language (Ngai, 2002).

Maintenance models are often found in communities and areas where there is an endemic language and, therefore, a need to preserve and sustain the language (Fishman, 1982; Baker, 2001; Garcia and Homonoff Woodley, 2014). Nowadays, the Sami bilingual education in Finland shares features with maintenance bilingual education, Sami is used as a target language in bilingual education (Peltoniemi et al., 2017). This shows that there is a push to maintain and even

revitalize a minority language. However, there is a major challenge with Sami bilingual education: finding enough teachers and educators is difficult (Linkola-Aikio et al., 2018). Therefore, the assimilation of Sami people into the Finnish language and culture continues in a hidden way since there is a lack of resources in schools and preschools (Linkola-Aikio et al. 2018).

3.2.3 The Enrichment Model

The enrichment bilingual education model according to Fishman (1982, p. 8) is found in “fancy” private schools, church schools, and European schools around the world. These schools operate with the intention of adding a language to their students’ language repertoires, therefore enriching the students with an additional language (Garcia, 2009). Baker (2001) adds that enrichment bilingual education programs are for children from the language majority background who are adding a second language in school.

Garcia (2009) says that enrichment bilingual education programs are synonymous with prestigious bilingual education. Often children who attend enrichment-style bilingual education tend to come from urban, international, and higher socioeconomic backgrounds as Jalkanen (2017) studied in her dissertation. De Mejia (2002) found similarly that enrichment models are “programmes that provide bilingual education to highly educated, higher socio-economic status and majority-language speaking groups” (p. 45).

Enrichment models vary in several ways, as Baker (2001) shows. Mainstream bilingual education, immersion, dual language, and heritage language maintenance programs all have the educational aim of enrichment (Baker, 2001). Garcia (2009) elaborates that the underlying goal of these respective programs is language development and cultural pluralism.

Jalkanen (2017) asserts that all English-medium CLIL-programs found in Finland subscribe to Fishman’s (1982) enrichment bilingual education model since they promote additive bilingualism and are designed to increase the language proficiency of pupils as an optional form of education. Additionally, she adds that Finnish schools offering English-medium CLIL are not generally held as status symbols; as a means of education for the rich, or as elitist schools, but on the contrary, she found that, English-medium CLIL is seen as a means to increase international capital, comprising tolerance, multiculturalism and connecting with people from other countries (Jalkanen, 2017).

3.3 Immersion programs

Immersion bilingual education is a bilingual education model in which students are immersed in a second-language instructional environment. Language immersion is commonly understood as a language learning approach for children speaking the majority language (Äärelä, 2015). Yet, the idea of immersion is that the children do not have to be familiar with the immersion language in advance and that it is suitable for all children (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 1995; Lauren, 2000). Immersion programs became popular in Canada during the 1960s, when French immersion programs were created for elementary school students from English-speaking homes. (Baker, 2001). Geographic, demographic, and economic realities set the framework for French-Canadian immersion to come into existence (Mehisto et al., 2008). English-speaking parents in French-speaking Quebec became worried that their children would be disadvantaged later in life if they did not achieve fluency in French. The parents believed that standard second-language teaching would not lead to fluency in French, therefore, they encouraged the local authorities to establish a language-immersion programme that would allow English-speaking children to study all their subjects in French (Mehisto et al., 2008). Canadian French immersion thus began with the aim of providing language competency in French for English-speaking Canadians, and therefore, it sought to appreciate the francophone and anglophone cultures of Canada and provide opportunities in the local job market for children from English-speaking homes. (Baker, 2001; Mehisto et al., 2008).

This French immersion program in Canada operates in a way that children enter the immersion program in kindergarten at five years old. They experience the entire school day in French even though they do not know any French at the time of entry. Usually then, around grade 3, English is gradually introduced as a subject, simultaneously keeping French as the medium of instruction for curricular content (Bialystok, Peets, and Moreno, 2014). Immersion programmes have been popular due to their naturalistic learning and idea of the critical period hypothesis enhancing language acquisition and language learning (Kangasvieri et al., 2012; Jalkanen, 2017).

Immersion education is a form of bilingual education that is implemented in many bilingual countries such as Finland and Spain. It is also common to have immersion programmes in other languages besides the country's official language, for instance, English immersion in Finland (Jalkanen, 2017). The upcoming sections of this thesis will discuss how immersion is implemented in the national languages in Finland.

3.3.1 Immersion bilingual education in Finland

As mentioned before, immersion bilingual education is offered mostly in the national languages and minority languages of Finland, but there are immersion programs also in English. The history of immersion programs begins when in 1987, the first Swedish immersion programme for Finnish-speaking students in Finland, influenced by French-Canadian immersion, was implemented in the coastal, bilingual city of Vaasa (Jalkanen, 2017). Swedish-language immersion was elective. Parents could choose whether to put their child into an immersion class (Äärelä, 2016). Language immersion in Finland exists due to parental interest and determination, as was the case with the first immersion program in Vaasa (Äärelä, 2015; Jalkanen, 2017). A distinction between CLIL and immersion was made in Finland when a national study was conducted by Lehti, Järvinen, and Suomela-Salmi in 2006. Immersion was thought to include the national languages, and all foreign-language education that did not include national languages were called CLIL (Lehti, Järvinen, and Suomela-Salmi, 2006).

Children require support as they learn a new language. Support is received from the parents but also from the school or kindergarten. Personal development programmes for immersion teachers have been developed since 1987, offering training for teachers (Jalkanen, 2017). Äärelä (2015) argues that professional development and planning are the most important aspects of language immersion programs (Äärelä, 2015). Through professional development and planning, conditions for the successful implementation of immersion are created and incorporated into the daily routines (Äärelä, 2015).

3.3.2 Sámi language immersion and language nests

All three Sami languages spoken in Finland: Skolt Sami, Inari Sami, and North Sami, are considered endangered languages and targets of urgent recovery measures (Äärelä, 2015). Therefore, Sami language revitalization is done through Sami language immersion (Äärelä, 2015). Language revitalization means re-activating and regenerating regionally lost languages (Baker, 2011; Linkola 2014; Phillipson & Skutnabb Kangas, 1995; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000 as cited in Äärelä, 2015). Additionally, language immersion is seen as a suitable method in Finland to revitalize minority languages such as Sami (Äärelä, 2015). Sami language immersion allows children to gain access to the Sami language environment and an equal right to their own language and culture (Äärelä, 2015).

Sami language immersion is based on early total immersion and is carried out in language nests, which follow the Maori language nest concept (Äärelä, 2015). This means that when teaching the language in the language nest, teachers use authentic situations just like when learning a first language. Language learning in language nests hence shares characteristics with naturalistic learning. The focus in language nests is on language learning through authentic and natural language situations, not through grammar. (Äärelä, 2015). The goal is that the child participates in immersion education during their most sensitive time so that their learning can be as easy and smooth as possible, mirroring the critical period hypothesis (Äärelä, 2015). Sami language nests are controlled by municipalities or Sami associations. The Sami language nest is the place where Sami language immersion is carried out with children under school age (Äärelä, 2015).

3.4 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), a common bilingual education model found in Finland, is one of many bilingual education models that has its roots in European, Canadian, and North American bilingual education models (Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2014). In the creation of the European Union after the Second World War, many new policies were introduced and enforced across the continent. One initiative was to promote language learning as a means of encouraging plurilingualism to foster an environment of multinationalism and stimulate unification (Marsh, 2002). An initiative was created to push this agenda of language learning. The European Union recommendation was one of 1 + 2 languages, which encouraged the learning of two additional European Languages additionally to the mother tongue (European Commission, 1995). Within traditional language classes, a shortcoming was discovered. Language classes lacked the resources to sufficiently immerse learners into the target language required to promote proficiency, whereby the term CLIL was coined and proposed (Marsh, 2002). Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010) add that CLIL answered to the need of increasing the amount of exposure to the target language, since traditional foreign language teaching was not producing desired or required outcomes (Coyle, Hood, and Marsh, 2010). CLIL would create the backdrop of teaching a new language in a more natural way by simultaneously teaching content in the mother tongue as well. Hughes and Madrid (2020) explain how CLIL focuses on two central areas: the teaching and learning of academic contents from non-linguistic areas (such as science, technology, and history) and the foreign or second language (L2) in which the non-language subject matter is imparted (Hughes and Madrid, 2020)

Cenoz, Genesee, and Gorter (2014) explain how the term CLIL was formed when a need for CLIL was identified in Europe. They continue stating that European approaches to bilingual education were described using terms borrowed from other contexts, drawing mainly from the immersion and bilingual movements from North America. As such, they highlight the desire for a distinct European frame of reference for promoting L2 competence at schools. Coyle (2008) considers CLIL to be unique and different from other bilingual education approaches such as immersion, content-based language teaching, and plurilingual education. Cenoz et al. (2014), however, point out that even though CLIL's origins in Europe may be unique, it does not make it pedagogically unique as it borrows from other existing techniques such as scaffolding, active learning, as well as learning through cross-curricular themes and projects. CLIL therefore aims to collect the best educational practices (Mehisto et al., 2008).

David Marsh (2002, p.15) defines CLIL as:

“Any dual-focused educational context in which an additional language, thus not usually the first language of the learners involved, is used as a medium in the teaching and learning of non-language content.”

3.4.1 CLIL as an approach

Mehisto et al. (2008) agree with Marsh (2002) and add detail to Marsh's (2002) definition by categorizing CLIL into different approaches. CLIL is described by Mehisto et al. (2008) as an umbrella term covering a dozen or more educational approaches, such as immersion, bilingual education, multilingual education, language showers, family stays, international projects, and enriched language programs. Cenoz et al. (2014) criticize the Mehisto et al. (2008) umbrella term by first agreeing how all these respective learning contexts are examples of opportunities to learn language through content, a cornerstone of CLIL, yet they further argue how it is difficult to identify specific characteristics of these learning environments which they all share and make them all equally and uniquely part of CLIL. Cenoz et al. (2014) criticize the Mehisto et al. (2008) umbrella term definition by saying that it is too inclusive, furthermore saying that it is “difficult to think of any teaching or learning activity in which an L2/foreign language would be used that could not be considered CLIL” (p. 246). The use of CLIL as an umbrella construct makes it difficult to pin down the exact limits of the reality that the CLIL term refers to, since as an umbrella term, it lacks a concrete quantifiable definition as a point of comparison (González, Píriz, 2010).

CLIL is heralded as a flexible approach as it synthesizes and provides a flexible way of applying the knowledge attained from the various approaches (Mehisto et al. 2008). Coyle (2010) asks if CLIL is too flexible of an approach, since CLIL is also said to not have a set formula nor methods. CLIL's many faces, allows for low- and high-intensity exposure to teaching or learning through a foreign language (Mehisto et al. 2008). The authors further add that CLIL is a tool for the teaching and learning of content and language, the essence of CLIL being integration.

The main goals of CLIL are that students studying in CLIL classes would have age-appropriate and grade-appropriate levels in content knowledge, academic achievement, and language proficiency in the first language and target language. CLIL is deemed to be successful when CLIL-students have similar or better content knowledge and academic achievement when compared with non-CLIL peers. (Mehisto et al., 2008).

3.4.2 CLIL as a method

In the classrooms, CLIL can be seen as a teaching method. The main principles of CLIL lessons have been said to be the four C's: cognition, culture (community), content, and communication (Coyle, 2008; Mehisto et al., 2008; Dalton-Puffer, 2008; Griva and Deligianni, 2017). Cognition entails thinking, which is the mental faculty of knowing. Learning builds on a student's existing knowledge, skills, attitudes, interests and experience. Cognition encompasses thinking skills, problem-solving and learning (Griva and Deligianni, 2017). Culture encompasses intercultural understanding (Griva and Deligianni, 2017). Mehisto et al. (2008) use community instead of culture as one of the four C's. Through community, students feel that they are members of a learning community, which is enriching. Teachers, students, parents and employers are partners in education, creating a community and culture for learning. Meaning-making is both a personal and social process. (Mehisto et al., 2008). Communication means that languages are used to learn and students are learning to use languages. New knowledge and skills are developed through a communicative process (Mehisto et al. 2008). Content teaching varies in different schools, with some using cross-curricular teaching with varying degrees of CLIL utilisation. Core features of CLIL methodology are said to be a safe and enriching learning environment, multiple focus, authenticity, active learning, and scaffolding (Mehisto et al., 2008). The authors further add that CLIL is a tool for the teaching and learning of content and language, the essence of CLIL being integration.

Mehisto et al. (2008) explain how integration in CLIL has a dual focus:

- 1) Language learning is included in content classes. Information is repackaged in a manner that facilitates understanding. Common CLIL strategies include charts, drawings, diagrams, hands-on experiments, and the drawing out of key concepts and terminology. Scaffolding is used.
- 2) Content from subjects is used in language-learning classes. Content teachers and language teachers work together, incorporating the vocabulary, terminology, and texts from subject class into language class and vice versa.

CLIL, is a disputed term since it has been under scrutiny of critics due to its ambiguous nature. Jalkanen (2017) prefers Content-based Language Teaching (CBLT) as a neutral term that encompasses CLIL, immersion, other bilingual, and language-medium programmes. Jalkanen (2017) continues how the field of CLIL could be seen as a continuum that involves anything from a 20-minute language shower to most subjects taught in the target language. Jalkanen (2017) adapted a figure from Met (1998) that illustrates how these bilingual programmes can be content-driven or language-driven, with total immersion being content-driven and language classes with frequent use of content for language practice being language-driven.

Mehisto et al. (2008) discuss how language and content learning is supported in CLIL-classes. Scaffolding is used as a tool for helping students access previously acquired learning, to analyse it, process new information, create new relational links and take their understanding several steps further. The authors continue by saying that language and content acquisition go hand in hand and that new language is best acquired while assessing one's current understanding and while acquiring new content knowledge in class that is used in class to achieve new levels of understanding. Language learning and content learning within CLIL have characteristics of social constructivist pedagogy, such as Vygotsky's theory on the zone of proximal development (Li and Zhang, 2020). Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) incorporates the use of scaffolding in constructing new knowledge (Äärelä, 2016). Prior knowledge is used to learn new knowledge, yet the new knowledge must be attainable and in the zone of proximal development. The existing knowledge base and current level of understanding serves as a foundation and as an anchor for new learning using relational links, both for content as well as language learning (Mehisto et al. 2008).

3.4.3 Second language acquisition

One of the two central foci of CLIL is second language acquisition. Researchers have sought to find out and create hypotheses on how a second language is acquired. Many researchers have tackled the subject of how interaction or input contributes to L2 acquisition. In this thesis, we will discuss some central hypotheses, such as the interaction hypothesis (Ellis, 1999), input hypothesis (Krashen, 1987) and output hypothesis (Swain, 1985; Alatis, 1991).

Firstly, when discussing L2 or second language acquisition, it is important to define what is meant by acquisition. Ellis (1999) discusses how acquisition can mean very different things in the literature concerning second language acquisition. There is a widespread consensus that acquisition can be intentional or incidental. Intentional language acquisition takes place when a learner approaches a task such as studying rules of grammar or memorizing vocabulary, with the deliberate attention of learning (Ellis, 1999). Incidental language acquisition, on the other hand, takes place when learning occurs incidentally, for instance when a learner treats the L2 as a tool for communicating messages in reception and production (Ellis, 1999).

A second distinction of language acquisition is made when figuring out if learning is implicit or explicit. Implicit learning takes place when the learner is not aware of what has been learned, whereas explicit learning takes place when the learner is aware of the changes taking place, thus acquisition is a conscious process (Ellis, 1999). Krashen (1985) believed that acquisition, such as language acquisition of languages in young children, is a subconscious process, whereas learning is a conscious process that results in knowing information about the language. This distinction between acquisition and learning led Krashen (1985) to establish the Monitor Hypothesis in which learned knowledge assists in monitoring acquired language knowledge.

Ellis (1999) presents how a second language is learned and acquired through interaction, thus presenting an interaction hypothesis. Comprehensible input in interactions between non-native speakers and native speakers is necessary for second language acquisition, modifications to the interactional structures of conversations help to make input comprehensible to second language learners (Ellis, 1999). Long (1983) shows that a key belief of the interaction hypothesis is that conversation constitutes an optimal context for the development of language. A central point of the interactionist approach is that grammar of the second language is learned through interaction rather than learning grammar in order to interact, which could be seen in classroom interactions between teachers and pupils as well as between pupils. Ellis (1999) distinguishes between two types of interaction. Firstly, interaction can mean the social behavior that takes place when

people communicate with each other. This communication can occur face-to-face and usually through speaking (Ellis, 1999). This is called interpersonal interaction. Secondly, Ellis (1999) shares how interaction can take place inside our minds as “private speech” as discussed by Vygotsky (1978). Different parts of the mind interact to construct an understanding or a response to some phenomenon (Ellis, 1999). This interaction that occurs within our minds is called intrapersonal interaction. Private speech transforms later into inner speech, which holds semantically dense language that is used when talking silently to oneself (Ellis, 1999).

The interaction hypothesis breaks down interaction into parts: input, feedback and output (Ellis, 1999). Ellis (1999) argues that these respective parts contribute to language acquisition by facilitating the learner's attention to new linguistic forms and by providing opportunities for learners to practice using them. Learners can negotiate language input, receive feedback and modify their output (Long, 1996; Pica, 2013). During interaction and conversation, learners face communication difficulties and must negotiate for meaning in order to achieve an acceptable level of understanding (Ibarrola and Hidalgo, 2018). Through these negotiations, learners' output is modified, thus creating a fertile ground for language learning by connecting input, internal learning capacities such as selective attention, and output in productive ways (Long, 1996).

The input hypothesis proposed by researchers such as Krashen (1987), states that learners acquire languages by understanding messages. Learners improve and progress along the natural order, in which they acquire grammatical structures naturally, in a pre-determined way. In this regard, they receive second language input, which is one step beyond their current stage of linguistic competence (Krashen, 1987). Comprehensible input ($i+1$) is deemed as the most important environmental ingredient in language acquisition. This comprehensible input is necessary for language acquisition, yet it is not sufficient since the learner must be open to the input, and their affective filter should be low (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). The input must be an aspect of language that the learner has not yet acquired, simultaneously the learner has to be ready to acquire it.

According to Swain (1985), the output hypothesis is derived from learners producing language, either spoken or written, and receive feedback with which they develop their knowledge. It is in the output of producing language that areas of improvement are identified. The learner aims to produce comprehensible speech or text, by monitoring their own output and keeping track of the feedback obtained as a result, to then use as a means of improvement. This then relates back to the input hypothesis again, where newly obtained knowledge is used as an input, to improve

existing language capabilities, creating a circular process between input and output, as language is again produced and tested (Liming, 1990; Swain, 1985).

Many researchers mention that there is a lack of research into language learning in a CLIL context from an interactionist perspective (Ibarrola and Hidalgo, 2018; Basterrechea and Mayo, 2014). However, there has been some research done in the field since Basterrechea and Mayo (2014) analyzed the interlanguage of CLIL and mainstream English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in the Basque region of Spain, regarding their negotiation routines, attention to form and corrective feedback episodes. They found that CLIL learners produced better linguistic form, while mainstream learners working in pairs with CLIL learners had significantly improved results. This study therefore shows the output and input hypotheses in practice as the mainstream learners benefitted from the comprehensible input of the CLIL learners while learning to improve their comprehensible output.

3.4.4 CLIL as a buzzword

CLIL is perceived as a mere buzzword by some skeptics and critics. A buzzword means a word or phrase that is fashionable at a particular time or in a particular context. Jalkanen (2017) says that CLIL has been painted in a very positive light when slogans such as “two for the price of one” and “the added value of CLIL” are used to promote CLIL (p. 47). Two for the price of one means that students learn subject content and a target language simultaneously. Therefore, CLIL has a dual focused objective: CLIL kills two birds (content learning and language learning) with one stone (Ball, 2002). These slogans and rosy connotations of CLIL that have been accepted as truths, have not shielded CLIL from criticism (Jalkanen, 2017). Interestingly, McDougald (2016) found that when many educational institutions who claimed to have a CLIL program were asked about why they had chosen CLIL, what it is or about the characteristics of it, they gave answers that showed that their programs were merely generic bilingual programs (McDougald, 2016). McDougald (2016), therefore, asserts that CLIL is used as a “catch-all phrase because CLIL has become a buzzword in the language-teaching community” (p. 256). Dalton-Puffer et al. (2010) mention that the term CLIL has acquired characteristics of a brand name, complete with symbolic capital of positive description of being innovative, modern, effective, efficient, and forward-looking (p. 3). This may be important in Finland, when smaller municipalities struggle with a declining population, as people move toward bigger cities. New schools therefore provide possible specialised education in order to attract families.

3.5 Benefits of bilingual education and CLIL

Marsh (2013) states that “bilingual education presupposes that the learners are, or will become, bilingual” (p. 124). A premise could be made that bilingual education leads to multilingual fluency. Garcia (2009) divides the benefits and advantages of bilingualism into two main categories: cognitive advantages and social advantages (p. 93). The cognitive advantages of bilingualism according to Garcia (2009) are metalinguistic awareness, divergent thinking, communicative sensitivity, and ability to learn multiple languages. Whereas the social advantages of bilingualism are socioeconomic benefits, maximum global interactions, maximum local interactions, potentializing acts of identities and cultural awareness (Garcia, 2009). However, many factors play a crucial part in the actualisation of the respective advantages. These factors can be social as in socioeconomic status and social hierarchy, or linguistic, as in linguistic hierarchies and thresholds (Garcia, 2009). CLIL could be said to be successful if CLIL pupils have gained comparable content knowledge to that of their non-CLIL peers, while having attained a superior language base (Dalton-Puffer, 2008). A study done by Dallinger, Jonkmann, Hollm, & Fiege (2016) supports this notion, having found CLIL pupils to outperform the non-CLIL counterparts both linguistically as well as in content knowledge.

Benefits of bilingual education and bilingualism can be accessible for all (Garcia, 2009). Bilingual education is broadly beneficial for the rich and poor, language majorities with power or language minorities without power, powerful ethnolinguistic groups, or Indigenous peoples (Garcia, 2009). Benefits of bilingualism can become a reality for individuals if the social and linguistic factors allow. If CLIL is used in many contexts using a variety of languages, then this benefit could be compounded.

In his bachelor's thesis, Waldo observed several benefits and challenges related to CLIL education. He noted that there are several reasons why CLIL is a good teaching style when applied well. There are, however, factors that contribute to the debate that CLIL does not work. When implemented properly, CLIL has been shown to significantly improve both content and language learning compared to non-CLIL classes (Dallinger et al. 2016), improve motivation for learning (Dallinger et al. 2016, Pladevall-Ballester, 2018), improve code-switching (San Isidro, Lasagabaster 2018), and even improve cognitive performance (Van de Craen et al. 2007). CLIL does, however, also come with its challenges that prevent a successful implementation. Factors such as teacher education, research, and policy frameworks, age of implementation, as well as

extracurricular language exposure all contribute to a profile that can hinder desired learning outcomes (Sylvén, 2013).

3.5.1 Second language learning

As a child learns a second language at school, they must learn two varieties of language, firstly the variety of language used among children and in informal settings with familiar adults and secondly a variety of language that is used in academic settings (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). Cummins (2000) calls these two varieties BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) and CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency). These two language skills have overlapping characteristics, yet the content discourse used between children and in formal settings differs as well as the way how information is expressed in the respective settings (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). The vocabulary needed in academic settings is more difficult for children to acquire compared to the informal language used daily in common interactions (Cummins, 2000).

3.5.2 Naturalistic language learning

One of the claimed features of CLIL education, is the ability to offer language learning to children in a more natural setting akin to how the mother tongue is acquired (Van de Craen et al. 2007). As a result, learning a new language through the CLIL approach “lead[s] to a better language proficiency in the target language compared to traditional approaches” particularly in a primary school setting, and “leads to native like listening comprehension” (Van de Craen et al. 2007, p. 71). We can observe foreign language learning strategies, such as the interactionist perspective, which states that the learner’s control grows as acquisition improves (Peregoy & Boyle 2008).

Lasagabaster (2008) asserts that younger learners profit more from programmes such as CLIL or immersion since they reflect naturalistic learning, which is more relevant to younger learners that are yet to begin formal schooling. Jalkanen (2017) suggests that the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) is a relevant factor in the inception and spread of English-medium teaching in Finland . According to Jalkanen (2017) there is a general assumption that younger learners perform better than older learners when it comes to language acquisition, though there are arguments that dispute this claim, stating that older learners attain faster foreign language proficiency due to a more developed first language capacity (Jaekel, Schurig, van Ackern, Ritter,

2022). While younger learners benefit from the advantages of gaining improved native-like fluency and pronunciation, older learners can benefit from a more advanced L1 knowledge base, as a source of knowledge in understanding structural aspects of language learning which may speed up language acquisition (Jaekel, et al. 2022, Krashen, 1981).

It is in the CPH, often referred to as the window of opportunity, during which children can attain this native-like levels of language proficiency if the second language acquisition takes place before the critical period (Ellis, 2008; Birdsong, 2006; Jalkanen, 2009; Kalisa, 2014 as cited in Jalkanen, 2017). Jaekel et al. (2022) mention how early foreign language learning takes place before middle or elementary school since there is a widespread belief that earlier is better when learning languages. Naturalistic learning takes place when students are actively involved in using the language in meaningful situations, which can be practiced as discussed before within the contexts of scaffolding as well as authentic learning, when the input is made comprehensible to students (Ellis, 2008; Jalkanen, 2009; Birdsong, 1999, 2006 as cited in Jalkanen, 2017). Children work with a new language through meaningful and communicative situations that bear a resemblance to how they learned their first language (Jalkanen, 2017). A new language is acquired in CLIL and immersion rather than studied in a formal manner through grammar and vocabulary (Jalkanen, 2017).

Since CLIL classes are taught using the target language daily in various degrees, the pupils are constantly exposed to it in many different settings. It is a simple mathematical fact that more learning can occur when one has more time to learn. Therefore, CLIL classes provide more exposure than merely having a language lesson a few times per week. CLIL, however, goes beyond that by complementing existing knowledge in the mother tongue, which makes language learning more effective (Choudhury 2017). Linguistically pupils from CLIL classes significantly outperform pupils from non-CLIL classes particularly regarding receptive skills (Dallinger et al. 2016).

3.5.3 Content learning

CLIL is often seen, in the classroom, as a method or pedagogical tool that offers an improved language learning experience. Compared to typical language learning classrooms, CLIL focuses on substance rather than form (Mehisto et al., 2008). While there are linguistic benefits to learning through CLIL, there is a strong emphasis on learning content as well, and indeed it has been shown that pupils learning content in CLIL significantly outperform their peers in

non-CLIL classes (Dallinger et al. 2016). Learning content through another language allows pupils to make deeper connections from different points of view, which in turn leads to a better understanding of the content matter.

CLIL advocates claim that CLIL is content-driven. Marsh (2008) explains how through content teaching CLIL can develop higher-order language skills since CLIL is innovative because instructional content is drawn from academic subjects or disciplines (Marsh, 2008).

3.5.4 Motivation for learning

There are many teaching strategies that teachers can apply to improve language learning. A common theme that emerges when discussing foreign language learning is learner autonomy. Autonomous learners take responsibility for their own learning without the teacher's involvement (Dang 2012). Furthermore, motivation can be used as a strategy to encourage the self-drive, that sparks the will to do something. When a learner has the motivation to do something, then there is less of a need for a teacher to exert pressure to assist the learner. This can be observed in teachers' efforts to make their classes more fun and enjoyable. In this way, effective learning can occur through learner autonomy that is driven by motivation. CLIL education has been shown to significantly improve motivation for language learning for the target language (Dallinger et al. 2016), and even the first language (Pladevall-Ballester, 2018). Students in the study done by Pladevall-Ballester (2018) have reported enjoying learning the target language through learning content, as it provides a different learning environment than a traditional language classroom.

3.5.5 Code-switching

Code-switching has often been used as a measure of how comfortable or proficient a person is with two languages (San Isidro, Lasagabaster 2018, Poplack 1980). Code-switching could also offer children the opportunity to answer questions in class despite lacking the required certain vocabulary. Fluent bilinguals tend to code-switch naturally within a sentence, compared to less fluent bilinguals, that prefer to code-switching between sentences due to the difficulties in maintaining grammatical integrity when switching between languages (Poplack 1980). Less fluent language speakers may also code-switch to use their mother tongue as a way of supporting what they are saying when there is a lack of vocabulary known to them. Using code-switching in this manner may also provide pupils with the confidence to answer in class since it is important for

them to answer and speak up in class and are not afraid of making mistakes (Gavriilidou & Psaltou-Joycey 2009).

Code-switching has been an area of study within the field of CLIL research, to highlight and quantify the improvement in language proficiency that CLIL offers. In a longitudinal study by San Isidro & Lasagabaster (2018), data shows how CLIL education has had an improved effect on the language learning of CLIL learners compared to the non-CLIL learners, as seen in the frequency and type of code-switching that the learners use in all their communication. Several types of code-switching were identified that either indicated a more natural proficient level in the target language, or a dependence on the mother tongue. The CLIL students were shown to have an increase in the positive codeswitching, compared to the non-CLIL students who more heavily relied on mother tongue dependent code-switching. The focus of the study was on how CLIL provides a better platform for language proficiency, and as such, it was noticed that the differences between content knowledge and language proficiency did not affect code-switching. The pupils were matched according to similar test results in both language and content knowledge (San Isidro, Lasagabaster 2018).

3.5.6 Cognitive performance

Bilingual education brings along multiple cognitive benefits. Cummins (2000) explains that hundreds of studies have been carried out in the last decades that show a positive correlation between additive bilingualism and the linguistic, academic, and cognitive growth of students. There have been claims, that cognitive advantages of bilingualism include higher mental processes, such as knowledge, problem-solving, thinking, conceptualization, and symbolization (Garcia, 2009). Some, however, dispute this claim, stating that they found no bilingual advantages in executive functioning (Paap, Greenberg, 2013). Jalkanen (2017) calls the cognitive benefits of bilingualism such as enhanced cognitive ability as “one of the most exciting facets of any form of bilingual education” (p. 49). The perceived cognitive benefits of bilingualism, bilingual education, and especially CLIL, are therefore of interest in this thesis.

Metalinguistic awareness and metalinguistic abilities are seen as benefits of bilingual education, when it strives for varying forms of bilingualism (Cummins, 2000; Garcia, 2009; Baker, 2001). Garcia (2009) defines metalinguistic awareness as the “ability to treat language as an object of thought” (p. 95). Essentially, metalinguistic awareness is word awareness, phonological aware-

ness, and syntactic awareness (Garcia, 2009). Bilinguals have a broader awareness of how languages operate. Bilinguals have been shown to be better in sentence production compared with monolinguals (Garcia, 2009). Baker (2001) shows that bilinguals have better control of linguistic processes compared to their monolingual counterparts.

Communication sensitivity has been determined to be a cognitive advantage for bilinguals when compared to monolinguals (Marsh, 2013; Baker, 2001). Bilinguals, for instance, have two codes that they understand and furthermore they can utilize specific linguistic choices in different contexts and situations (Garcia, 2009). Bilinguals are aware of which language to speak in specific situations (Baker, 2001). Therefore, bilinguals have more linguistic capital than monolinguals. Situations which require careful communication are situations where bilinguals excel (Baker, 2001). Increased communication sensitivity with bilinguals means that a bilingual person is more aware of the needs of the listener, which benefits a bilingual person with interpersonal relationships and social skills (Baker, 2001). Bialystok (2011) discusses how natural bilinguals of all ages have been shown to have enhanced executive control and are able to outperform their monolingual counterparts in situations which require careful selection of language and conflict resolution.

Bilinguals have also been shown to have an advantage in the ability to learn new languages. Garcia (2009) says that bilinguals are experienced language learners and therefore hold an advantage compared to monolinguals when learning new languages. Jalkanen (2017) found out that the main reason parents put their children into an English-medium class was the belief that CLIL affords their child an even better form of linguistic capital. Jalkanen (2017) mentions also that English-medium CLIL “is perceived as a means a means to increase the self-confidence of children and their ability to learn further languages” (p. 198).

It can be argued that cognitive performance improves at any stage of life when something new has been learned. Therefore, at least at a surface speculation claiming improved cognitive performance as part of CLIL education would be a redundant statement. There have, however, been studies such as the one performed by Van de Craen et al. (2007), that have studied neural patterns in the brains of children at schools. The study shows how children learning through CLIL gain cognitive added values in a process called emergence. Here, language learning is transformed from lower-order aspects to higher ones.

It has been observed that learning a new language offers the brain new ways to see the world. This can be seen in the study performed by Van de Craen et al. (2007). Using a new language

to learn new and familiar concepts allows the brain to make new neural connections, which contributes to improved neural performance. A brain scan performed indicates this improved neural activity that children learning new languages at school achieve. The brain scans were taken while children were performing a simple mathematical task, and in it we can observe that for bilinguals the task required no effort. Even school bilinguals have already benefits compared to monolinguals.

However, many researchers have shown that bilingual children in fact, do not show an advantage when compared to their monolingual counterparts in executive control (Anton, Dunabeitia, Estevez, Hernandez, Castillo, Fuentes, Davidson and Carreiras, 2014; Paap and Greenberg, 2013) or in conflict resolution (Paap and Liu, 2014). Anton et al. (2014) state how some studies that have shown bilingual advantages have done so due to uncontrolled factors or specific conditions associated with the research design and procedure. Altogether, there is overwhelming evidence from researchers using different psychological tasks such as the ANT task (Anton et al., 2014), Stroop task (Dunabeitia, Hernandez, Anton, Macizo, Estevez and Fuentes, 2014), and Simon, card sorting, and metalinguistic tasks (Gathercole, Thomas, Kennedy, Prys, Young and Vinas Guasch, 2014), that show no so-called bilingual advantage in cognitive performance in childhood. However, Anton et al. (2014) mention that they want to avoid generalizing the observed lack of a bilingual advantage to other age groups since there are some forms of bilingual advantages found in behavioral and neuroimaging tasks, as well as there being a bilingual advantage in adulthood.

3.5.7 Socioeconomic benefits

Bilingual education has many economic and social benefits. Garcia (2009) categorizes these benefits under the term socioeconomic benefits; therefore, this term is used also in this thesis. Socioeconomic benefits of bilingual education were most certainly considered and played an important part as the CLIL-program was launched in the European Union during the 1990s. Marsh (2013) provides background information as to why CLIL was launched in the EU. Marsh (2013) explains how one core idea in the launch of CLIL was that European citizens would know two European languages on top of their own mother tongue, which brings along socioeconomic benefits in the form of broader “occupational and personal opportunities in the European market” (p. 7). Knowing more languages opens work opportunities.

On a macro level, societies are the stakeholders in bilingual education, as Marsh (2013) implies: societies invest in bilingual education programs in hopes of increasing language knowledge and human capital. Education is perceived as an engine for economic growth (Marsh, 2013). Marsh (2013) mentions that many non-EU states have explored the use of CLIL to prepare for EU membership. CLIL has provided greater economic benefits, linguistic and human capital for these countries (Marsh, 2013). Municipalities benefit from providing bilingual education since it boosts their public image and service sector, thus attracting more people to live and move into the municipality (Peltoniemi et al., 2018). Bilingual education can bring a competitive edge to the competition between municipalities in the field of education (Jalkanen, 2017). For instance, if a municipality offers English-medium bilingual education, it may lower the threshold of work-related immigration into the municipality, boosting economic growth by attracting human capital. English-medium bilingual education is largely an urban phenomenon (Jalkanen, 2017). Therefore, by offering bilingual education, a smaller municipality may remain vibrant and competitive, which could help it to grow.

On a micro level of society, in families, bilingual education is seen as a medium to increase and enhance human capital. Marsh (2013) and Jalkanen (2017) show how parents have shown a desire to put their children in a bilingual school in hopes of bettering the children's economic opportunities (Marsh, 2013; Jalkanen, 2017). Garcia (2009) agrees with this notion by saying that "bilingualism is an important resource that accrues socioeconomic benefits" (Garcia, 2009).

3.6 Challenges of CLIL

There are several challenges to a successful implementation of CLIL. The definition of CLIL is vague and leaves a lot for interpretation as to what it can be considered, or how it should be implemented. Furthermore, successful implementation of CLIL is dependent on four categories, as observed in the CLIL profile of Sylvén (2013). The profile, as can be seen in the graph below, is represented by the four quadrants: Teacher education, Framework/ Research, Age/amount, and Extramural English. For successful implementation, one requires more pre- and in-service teacher training, more extensive and fully regulated research, more amounts of target language teaching at younger ages, as well as more higher amounts of and types of extramural activities

in the target language. As such, we can see that effective CLIL teaching goes beyond the classroom, both in terms of the infrastructure supporting teaching, as well as societal support for the children outside the classroom.

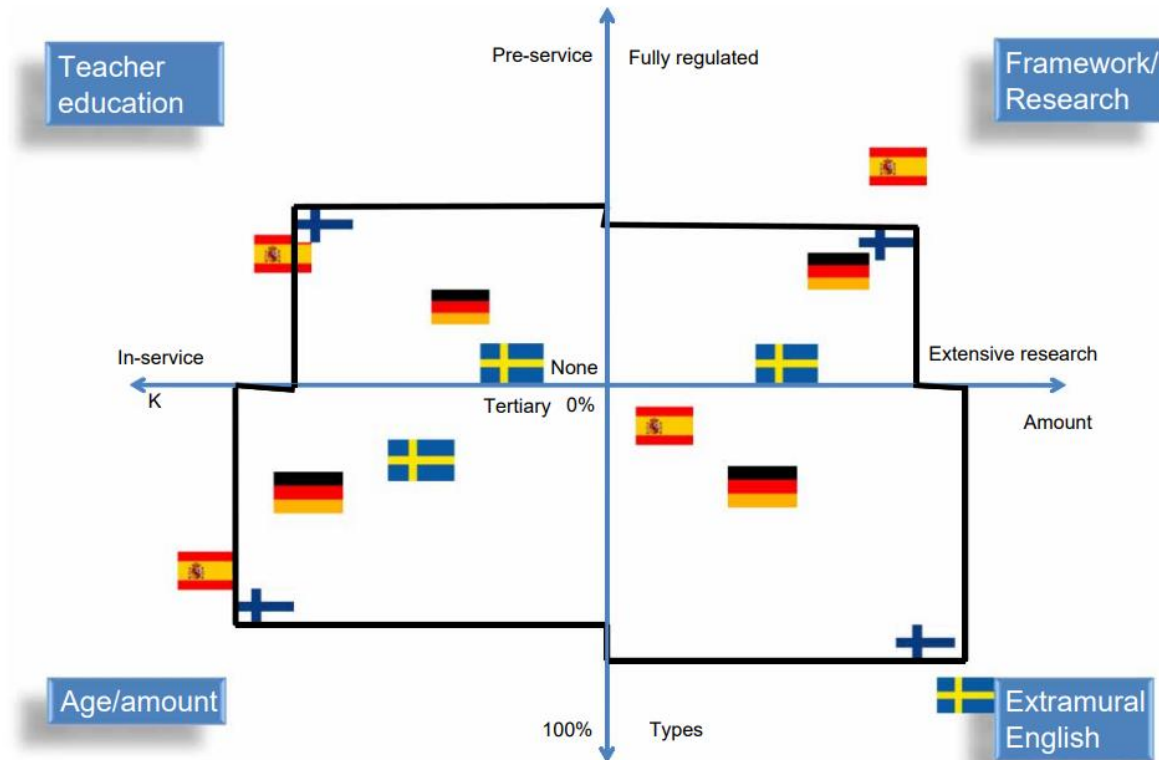


Figure 1. The Finnish CLIL profile (Sylvén, 2013)

Peltoniemi et al. (2018) discuss how there is a lack or shortage of teacher-training and finding qualified teachers for bilingual education classes. Peltoniemi et al. (2018) sent a questionnaire to Finnish municipalities about their recruitment procedures and criteria for teachers in bilingual education. Firstly, Peltoniemi et al. (2018) found out that the proper teacher qualifications were seen as the most important criterion for recruitment in throughout Finnish municipalities. Yet, proficiency in the target language was not generally seen as a very important factor in recruitment, but it was seen as an important factor while working in large-scale or small-scale bilingual education. Methodological knowledge in bilingual pedagogy was not mentioned in the recruitment process. (Peltoniemi et al., 2018). Peltoniemi et al. (2018) state that teacher education programmes designed for bilingual education are very sparse in Finland. They mention Intercultural Teacher Education from the University of Oulu as well as the Juliet-programme from the University of Jyväskylä as teacher education programmes oriented towards bilingual education (Peltoniemi et al., 2018). However, as master's students of the Intercultural

Teacher Education-programme we have noticed a lack of CLIL-courses and courses related to language acquisition and language learning in our programme. We may ask the question: “why are graduates of our programme recruited to schools as CLIL-teachers and seen as CLIL experts even though we do not receive sufficient training for CLIL in University?” Räsänen (2002) illustrates how the Intercultural Teacher Education programme has not been designed first and foremost for students who are interested in foreign language education per se but for students interested in international and multilingual education.

3.7 Bilingual education in the Finnish National Core Curriculum (2014)

The latest National Core Curriculum (NCC) of Finland was written in 2014, then published and implemented in 2016 in the grades 1-6 (Opetushallitus, 2017). The NCC creates a framework for bilingual education by dividing it into three categories: early total immersion in the national and minority languages of Finland, large-scale bilingual education, and small-scale bilingual education (National Core Curriculum, 2016). Peltoniemi et al. (2018) commend the newest national core curriculum for bringing clarity to how bilingual education is classified and categorized in Finland (Peltoniemi et al., 2018).

Early total immersion in the national languages, according to the NCC, is a programme that starts earliest at the age of three and latest in pre-primary education, continuing until the end of basic education (National Core Curriculum, 2016).

The share of instruction delivered in the immersion of early total immersion is illustrated in the following table:

Phase of early total immersion	Percentage of instruction given in immersion language
Early childhood education	100%
Pre-primary education	100%
Grades 1-2	90%
Grades 3-4	70%
Grades 5-9	50%

Table 3. NCC, 2016, p. 97.

In early total immersion classes, an effort is made to teach each subject in both the language of instruction and immersion language. Teachers in immersion groups have a monolingual role. As the language of instruction changes, so does the teacher (National Core Curriculum, 2016). Teaching materials are provided in the same language as the instruction. In language immersion education, each national language used in instruction strengthens the cultural identity of the pupil (National Core Curriculum, 2016).

3.7.1 Large-scale bilingual education

In large-scale bilingual education or broad bilingual education, one or several other languages are used in addition to the language of instruction in the school (National Core Curriculum, 2016). The target language is used to refer to the other language of instruction used in school (National Core Curriculum, 2016). According to the NCC, “large-scale bilingual education refers to education where instruction in at least 25% of the entire basic education syllabus is delivered in the target language” (National Core Curriculum, 2016, p. 98).

3.7.2 Small-scale bilingual education

Small-scale bilingual education, also known as narrow bilingual education and language-enriched education, refers to contexts where less than 25% of the subject contents are taught in a language other than the language of instruction at school (National Core Curriculum, 2016). Language showers may be used as methods of small-scale bilingual education.

3.7.3 Role of CLIL in NCC

Jalkanen (2017) points out that there is a ‘fuzzy’ terminological situation found in the NCC: the Finnish National Board of Education classifies English-medium programs as large-scale or small-scale bilingual education programs, even though they could all equally fit under CLIL. (Jalkanen, 2017). Furthermore there is no full consensus in the field of education on what CLIL, content-based instruction or immersion are or are not (Jalkanen, 2017). Regarding this lack of consensus, she also writes that “it is left to the discretion of the reader as to whether they (CLIL,

immersion, content-based instruction) can be considered as one and the same, similar, or separate entities” (Jalkanen, 2017, p. 224). Therefore, the Finnish National Board of Education may have opted to refer to CLIL programmes in terms of bilingual education (Jalkanen, 2017).

3.8 CLIL-programs in Finland

Jalkanen (2017) states that all forms of CLIL found in Finland, especially where English is the target language, are forms of enrichment and additive bilingual education. She also compiles three basic elements that form the background for the implementation of CLIL in Finland, which are as follows (Jalkanen, 2017, p. 227):

1. The egalitarian philosophy behind the flexible Finnish steering system that enabled the distribution of CLIL in mainstream education
2. The educational perspective of promoting language learning to suit a diverse range of learning needs and styles
3. A drive towards action

Finland is seen as a country which cannot be accused of having unequal education (Jalkanen, 2017). Basic education is free, provided by society for no extra cost for families, which means that structures are in place to avoid educational disadvantages between families and areas. Most schools in Finland are public schools that are funded by the local municipality and the State that follow the National Core Curriculum and Local Curricula. (Jalkanen, 2017). The steering mechanisms of basic education are in place to ensure educational equality (Jalkanen, 2017). A core principle of Finnish basic education has traditionally been that children attend the closest local or neighbourhood school in which quality education is provided (Jalkanen, 2017). However, Jalkanen (2017) illustrates how school choice became popular in the 1990s as there was a move to deregulate and decentralise education in Finland. State funding was no longer given based on accrued costs but rather per child. Also, municipalities became the organisers of education and actors in how education is provided. (Jalkanen, 2017). As a new Basic Education Act (Law 628/1998) was passed in 1998, it resulted in a fundamental change in policy regarding the local neighbourhood school (Kalalahti and Varjo, 2012). Schools became service providers, and they began to compete. Schools began constructing profiles and specialising in different areas, leading to local municipal models of selections and an abundance of opportunities for parental choice (Jalkanen, 2017). The outcome was that classes with special emphasis emerged, special emphasis being languages, music, sport, and dance, which are exempt from the principle

and ideas of the local neighbourhood school (Jalkanen, 2017). These classes, with a special emphasis, are the main avenue for parents to exercise school choice (Jalkanen, 2017). Therefore, CLIL classes also are a class with a special emphasis: language. Parents exercise school choice to get their child into a CLIL class. Jalkanen (2017) also showed that parents who chose CLIL as a form of schooling for their child tended to come from more advantageous socio-economic backgrounds (Jalkanen, 2017).

CLIL in Finland has been described as a grassroots phenomenon, which involves interest from both teachers and parents (see Nikula, 2005; Lorenzo, 2007; Dalton-Puffer, 2011). The interest is not only confined to the grassroots levels of society since CLIL inspires interest also at academic and administrative levels (Marsh et al. 2007). CLIL became even more popular as there was a push to modernisation and internationalisation, which CLIL prepares children for (Lasagabaster, 2008; Jalkanen, 2017). Such an internationalisation is possible through proficiency in foreign languages, brought by the four C's (Coyle, 2008) of cognition, culture, content, and communication. In Finland, parents of children in English-medium CLIL classes believe that their child will obtain better English skills than in mainstream education, also that English would broaden the child's worldview, tolerance, acceptance of difference and offer greater access to the wider world (Jalkanen, 2017). Future work opportunities are enhanced and increased when English-proficiency increases through CLIL, since it provides an opportunity for the children to become broad-minded, confident, and cosmopolitan communicators (Jalkanen, 2017).

4. Procedure and analysis plan

When conducting research that seeks to find out the perceptions of stakeholders in education, qualitative research methods are used. Van Audenhove and Donders (2019) and Bogner, Littig, and Menz (2009) point out that expert interviews are a valuable and legitimate empirical research method. But who are classified as experts? Bogner et al. (2009, p. 221) define an expert as “someone who is responsible in some way or another for the development, implementation or monitoring of a problem, or who has privileged access to information about people or decision processes.” Experts are generalized in the following ways in literature (Bogner et al., 2009; Bou et al., 2006; Brand-Gruwel, Wopereis & Vermetten, 2005; Chi, 2006; Littig, 2011; Willingham, 2009): they are better than novices at understanding and analysing problems, selecting relevant information, learning from intuition, transferring knowledge, and producing logically appropriate solutions.

4.1 Context

We are both students, studying in the Intercultural Teacher Education program at the University of Oulu. Both of us have ambitions in bilingual education, and are interested in its implementation in Finland. As such, it is our aim to conduct research relevant to our situations as well as our future. Therefore we conducted expert interviews across three different levels:

- School – teachers
- Municipality – principals and educational leaders
- Country/ National – educational leaders at the national board of education

By interviewing experts across these three fields, it was our aim to get an understanding into the decision making that happens in Finland regarding CLIL and bilingual education. We wanted to understand the need and actualisation of CLIL within municipalities in Finland.

4.2 Participants

We interviewed experts in the field of bilingual education in Finland. This included two teachers, a principal, a municipal head of education, as well as a national expert in bilingual education. Since the world of CLIL in Finland is quite small, care was taken in this thesis to maintain the anonymity of participants, to prevent them from being identified, either through their listed

experiences or positions. The participants are all currently involved in the implementation of CLIL through bilingual education in Finland. Participants represent a range of perspectives across various municipalities in Finland. All of the participants were fluent in English, and as such, the interviews were conducted in English.

- Expert 1 is a CLIL-teacher in a Finnish-speaking municipality in Finland.
- Expert 2 is a CLIL-teacher in a Finnish-speaking municipality in Finland.
- Expert 3 is a principal at a primary school that offers CLIL classes in a Finnish-speaking municipality in Finland.
- Expert 4 is the municipal head of education in a smaller municipality in Finland.
- Expert 5 is an expert of bilingual and foreign language education in the National Board of Education in Finland.

4.3 Research questions

We created three separate lists of questions for our interviews. These may be seen in the appendix at the end of the thesis. Questions were tailored to the different levels of our participants to ensure the suitability of contexts while maintaining a common theme across the questions to keep the information comparable. The list of questions guided the responses of our participants to ensure the relevance of their perspectives while aiming to understand the main questions of how and why CLIL is used in schools in Finland. These were guiding questions, set in a semi-structured format, which allowed us to ask follow-up questions for clarification while keeping our interviews concise and efficient. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed us to clarify questions that were unclear for participants due to them having a different L1 when required, leading to the interview being more of a dialogue between the participants and us.

4.4 Phenomenography

We were interested in conducting qualitative research to understand the perceptions and implementations of CLIL in Finland. Phenomenography is an empirical research tradition designed to answer questions about teaching and learning, especially in the context of educational research (Orgill, 2012). It therefore looks at the subjective perceptions of individuals that try to explain a phenomenon. We chose elements of phenomenography as our research approach

since Marton (1994) explains how its central aim is to view the different ways that phenomena are perceived and conceptualised, which is in line with our aim in this thesis.

Phenomenographic studies are often conducted through interviews or texts written by participants in response to specific questions (Kettunen and Paakkari, 2017). Phenomenography utilises a wide-ranging group of interviewees to observe the phenomenon from many perspectives with the aim to understand it as well as possible. Therefore, phenomenography could set us out on the journey of researching how CLIL is understood, perceived, and conceptualized by experts in the field of CLIL in Finland.

4.5 Thematic content analysis

In analysing the data that we obtained from our interviews, we were interested in observing the themes that appeared, rather than comparing categories of descriptions. In this regard thematic content analysis, is “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun, Clarke, 2006, p. 79). As part of thematic content analysis, we hope to study the phenomenon of CLIL, using inductive coding to identify different themes, that emerged from the interviews. We aimed to build a profile that adequately describes how CLIL is perceived, as well as why and how it is implemented across municipalities in Finland.

Due to our previous research as was laid out in the theoretical framework, as well as previous discussions that we have had both with each other and other colleagues, we had a few preconceptions of what answers we were expecting to receive. We did not want our bias to lead or affect our analysing of the data. Using inductive coding, we allowed ourselves to identify any themes that were identified rather than only looking for specific predefined concepts.

4.6 Ethics

As part of any research conducted, questions of ethics always arise. In educational research, special care needs to be taken when conducting research or interviews with minors. As part of our research, we only conducted interviews with adults. As such, we have obtained permission from the university board of ethics, as well as provided a confidentiality agreement for our interview participants. No names or recognising features have been mentioned in this thesis that would allow any of our participants to be recognised, even though the CLIL community is rather small in Finland. We made audio recordings of our interviews, after which the interviews

were transcribed. All data and transcriptions will subsequently be deleted after this thesis is published according to the guidelines of the University of Oulu.

4.7 Reliability

Vilkka (2021) states that in qualitative research, the reliability of the research lies in its interpretation and repeatability of generalisations. It is important to note that qualitative research relies on the interpretation of data. Interpretation is a combination of the dialogue between the data, theory, and research (Vilkka, 2021). Whitemore, Chase, and Mandle (2001) add how in qualitative research, we need to consider the following validation criteria:

- Credibility – are the results of the research an accurate interpretation of the participants’ meaning?
- Authenticity – are different voices heard during the research?
- Criticality – is there a critical appraisal of all aspects of the research?
- Integrity – are the investigators self-critical?

As there are two of us working together on this thesis, it allows us a second layer of credibility in the interpretation of our results since we could discuss the data, compare alternate viewpoints, and critique each other's perspectives. We sought to interpret the participants’ answers as accurately as possible. When writing the theoretical framework, we attempted to include different voices and perspectives when discussing CLIL, to represent a holistic perspective of bilingual education in Finland, while maintaining credibility, authenticity, criticality, and integrity.

5. Data analysis and results

In analysing the data, we aimed to examine the perceptions that experts in Finland have on CLIL; to understand the concept, how it is defined and implemented. By interviewing at three levels, we hoped to get a broader understanding of the phenomenon and how each level affects its implementation. We then focused on thematic content analysis, by identifying broader common themes that arose from the interviews. In compiling the data, we developed the following table below, which identifies the key concepts that influence the actualisation of CLIL in Finland.

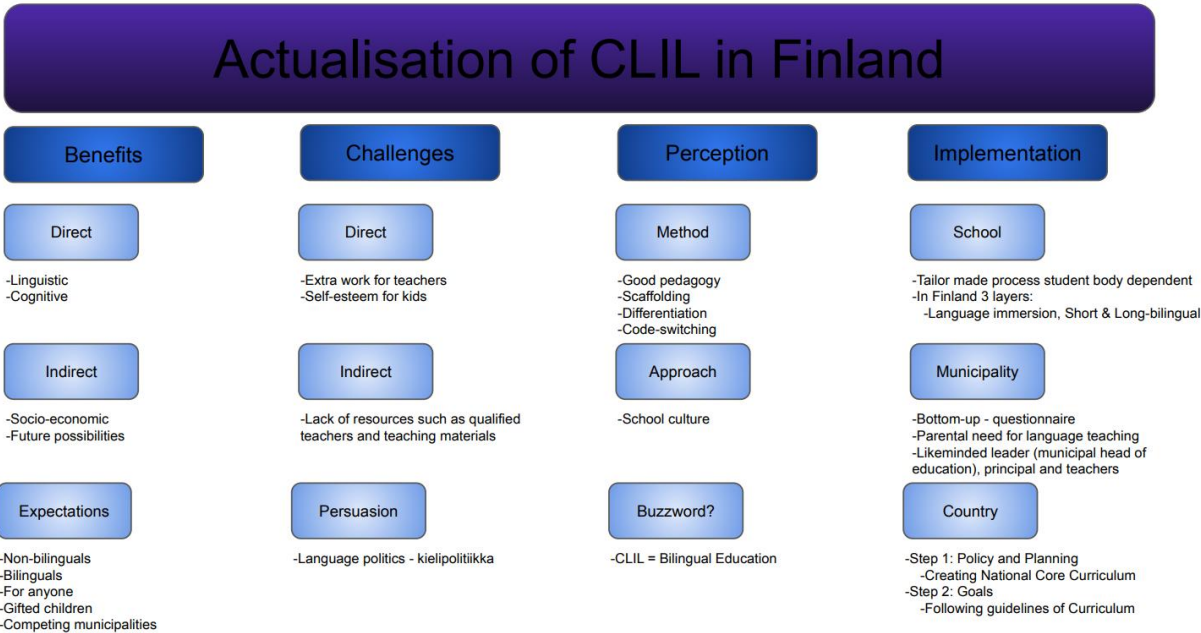


Figure 2. Actualisation of CLIL in Finland.

In analysing the data on the actualisation of CLIL in Finland, we have identified four main themes. These include the benefits of CLIL, the challenges of CLIL, the perceptions of CLIL, and the implementation of CLIL, within the Finnish context. All the data was collected from the three levels and is displayed together in Figure 2, to create one holistic picture that aims at describing the phenomenon of CLIL in Finland.

5.1 Benefits

The first theme titled “benefits” looks at all the positive comments the interviewees listed in discussing CLIL. The interviewees identified many benefits regarding CLIL that fall into three

distinct sub-categories, which we have labelled as direct benefits, indirect benefits, and expectations to benefit.

5.1.1 Direct benefits

The direct benefits of CLIL are the ones that affect the children. We have categorised this benefit as the primary benefit, because CLIL, in the classroom, is a teaching method, that is taught to children at schools across Finland. Therefore, the primary benefactors are the children receiving this form of education. As Expert 4 states, “*CLIL would be the best one if you really want to give the children good linguistic skills, but also cultural skills.*” This is in line with Coyle (2008), as she described the linguistic and cultural advantages of CLIL.

Expert 1 mentioned that students learn the language in a way that resembles mother tongue learning which has been demonstrated by Lasagabaster (2008), who described the naturalistic language learning process of CLIL. Students engage in meaningful situations requiring the use of the target language (Ellis, 2008; Birdsong, 1999, 2006; Kalisa, 2014; Jalkanen, 2017). Expert 1 confirms this, stating that “*pupils learn a foreign language in a way that resembles how they have learned their mother tongue.*”

Expert 5 goes on to explain how CLIL offers a form of language teaching with more depth, that would benefit the pupils more compared to traditional language teaching:

“[You need CLIL] to get better proficiency in the target language or in the immersion language. Because of course, when you study [the target language], the [number] of lessons is very small. Your language proficiency won't be as good as it will be after you have studied [the target language] as an immersion language. That's why we need language immersion, CLIL education in all bilingual education in Finland.”

From the quotes, we can observe how CLIL provides the platform for a more natural way for pupils to learn a new language. Teaching the language in this way gives them a lot more exposure to the target language that they would otherwise not get as easily. This is also in line with the research that CLIL education provides a better platform for language learning (Kangasvieri et al., 2012; Lasagabaster, 2008; Äärelä, 2015). They have more exposure to a wider variety of situations when learning the target language in this way compared to a traditional classroom. In this regard, pupils are exposed to a higher quantity and quality of the target language.

Further direct benefits can be seen in cognitive benefits as part of learning content through another language. Giving pupils the possibility of learning content through another language, helps them internalise the information better, and develop new neural pathways (Van de Craen et al. 2007). By learning both linguistic information as well as content from subject learning, the brain learns to use multiple parts of the brain as it is acquiring added information. This is highlighted in the views of Expert 1, who stated that

“Much of this information [is not] new to the kids [...] when you use the mother language. But then I'm explaining all this in [the target language], and the brain is very active [suddenly], because there is so much new [information] that is coming. They do not understand some of the words [...] so that the brain like makes those connections and the brain has this natural tendency to try to figure out what it is that is happening in the environment.”

Expert 1 furthermore gives an example of how pupils develop cognitive connections by drawing on existing knowledge they have in the L1: *“They go like, “Ah! Menee horrokseen?” (hibernate), and you see the excitement that they figured it out that this “hibernate” must mean this. So, it's a way of also engaging them.”* The pupils can be familiar with terms and concepts in the mother tongue since they have already learned about many concepts even before they begin formal education in primary school but going through concepts in a different language stimulates them to also think in new different ways.

From the data we have observed that CLIL, in Finland, is seen in a favourable light due to the direct benefits, such as these cognitive aspects. As Expert 3 states:

“[CLIL] is better pedagogy and better pedagogy is created for learning better [...] it teases the brain, it makes new connections in the brain when you are learning through two languages. It challenges your thinking, and it opens up new connections, because you have to make connections all the time with two or more languages, it creates better capital in your head”

5.1.2 Indirect benefits

The next theme analysed includes the indirect benefits. These we have categorised as the benefits that may be obtained by introducing CLIL education. Where the direct benefits relate to

those received by the pupils as part of the learning process in the classroom, the indirect benefits are those that transcend beyond the classroom.

The primary most notable aspect of indirect benefits was realised and categorised as socio-economic benefits. There is a common consensus that is often viewed, that introducing CLIL in education is adapting to the modern needs of globalisation. Whether it comes to attracting new businesses into a municipality, or offering bilingual education to pupils from international companies, municipalities have adapted to the need to offer education, not only in the dominant national language of Finnish, but also in other languages – notably English and Swedish. Since most schools, including CLIL schools, are public schools, theoretically, anyone should have access to a CLIL education.

Furthermore, it has been noted that offering bilingual education to children offers future possibilities to work abroad or that having better language proficiencies can offer future opportunities in Finland(?). In this regard, it was suggested that offering CLIL education to children is the best way for them to improve their linguistic repertoire and better education for their future. As Expert 1 argues: *“It opens opportunities. If we look for example in their future, I think it opens more opportunities professionally for them, it opens up new worlds.”* Expert 3 also confirms this by stating: *“It's an opportunity for those who are interested in learning the language and opening their worldview. Because it's not only about the language but it's about the culture.”*

Expert 4 mentioned how municipalities compete amongst each other on what services they provide, especially in the education sector, as municipalities have the full responsibility of providing education. Municipalities try to attract people to move there. They stated that:

“We know that there are businesses that are spreading even towards this municipality, and nearby, so, there were people who needed tuition through English. So, there's always the whole society, it's not only what the Department of Education is thinking. They have to serve the municipality”

and continued,

“It's also some kind of sign or some kind of a label or quality, a stamp for the municipality if there are more options for different kinds of families to move in.

So, it attracts people to move to the municipality. Municipalities compete in Finland, what kind of services they have, and especially now, when the education is fully the responsibility of the municipality.”

Expert 2 summarises the indirect benefits of CLIL by reasoning that:

“the whole purpose behind [CLIL] was twofold [...] to increase younger students’ chances of internationalization and making their life easier to go out into the world and the other one was actually to encourage international people to come here [...] every municipality probably has two or three industries that attract outside professionals. But professionals with children [wonder] where can my kid go to school? [CLIL has a] dual focus, really, we really wanted to open up doorways for students, but we were looking down the road to the future and thinking, as more and more people come to our city, what would be available for them?”

This notion is shared in literature and research. Municipalities see bilingual education as boosting their public image and increasing their range of services for inhabitants while strengthening the municipality’s identity and publicity (Peltoniemi et al., 2017).

Answers given by participants are in line with literature and research on the socioeconomic benefits of CLIL and bilingual education. As seen in the respective answers of the participants, bilingual education brings along socioeconomic benefits. An obvious benefit of bilingual education is some form of bilingualism and the enhanced language and cognitive benefits associated with it (Jalkanen, 2017). Through proficiency in an additional language, such as English, social and international benefits are reaped (Jalkanen, 2017). Marsh’s (2013) assessment of the benefits of CLIL shows that it benefits students by providing broader occupational and personal opportunities (Marsh, 2013).

5.1.3 Expectations

The last theme falling under the heading of benefits is that of expectations. In this section, we look at what the participants described as expectations for who would benefit from CLIL education. As listed in Figure 2, there were several claims that were made. Monolinguals were highlighted that since they have only one language spoken at home, they would be ideal candidates for CLIL education, as it would provide a possibility for increased language exposure that they otherwise lack. Expert 1 argues that: *“maybe [CLIL] is more of a benefit for those children*

that come from monolingual families compared to children that anyways come from a bilingual family and anyways acquire two languages effortlessly as they are just growing up.”

There were, however, also claims that this education is ideal for bilingual and foreign children. In this regard, bilingual children can get instruction at school in both their home languages, while foreign pupils learn both the language they speak at home as well as the dominant language of the country. In this regard, it has been mentioned that CLIL education exists in Finland in several languages, including, but not limited to, English, Swedish, Russian, French, and German as the target language and Finnish as the primary language.

A different approach was mentioned as CLIL would be ideal for gifted children as a form of differentiation. Some children, it has been suggested, require higher degrees of differentiation, and for them offering, for example, math completely in English gives them an added challenge. As expert 3 stated: *“It's also a differentiation for those who are talented.”* In this regard, CLIL was highlighted as a form of differentiation rather than exclusively being used as a method of differentiation, which takes account of the individual needs of all pupils. It does, however, highlight the need for further study and a critical perspective, to investigate the requirements that children have to get accepted into such programs, even if they are public schools accessible to anyone.

It has also been suggested that CLIL is something that everyone could benefit from, as Expert 3 argued: *“It's a good pedagogy, and it belongs to all, not only in bilingual schools [...] CLIL [should] be applied in every institution that teaches kids or youngsters.”* Ranging from a great method as part of any teacher's toolbox to an opportunity that every child could benefit from, CLIL has been claimed to be all-inclusive. The interviewees suggested that CLIL is not merely an educational addition for certain children but instead that it is something anyone could benefit from. Expert 1 added: *“I considered [CLIL] a great benefit [for] my profession, the space for my own professional growth and development and also getting to see sides of the pupils that otherwise I would have missed.”*

5.2 Challenges

As part of the challenges that are involved with CLIL in Finland, we have identified again a set of direct and indirect challenges, as well as the theme we call here persuasion. Similarly, as seen in the section regarding benefits, direct challenges are observed in those that are directly

giving or receiving CLIL education, namely the pupils and teachers, while the indirect challenges are those that are affecting the successful implementation of CLIL in the classroom. The keyword persuasion in this regard refers to the challenges of implementing or starting a CLIL class/school.

5.2.1 Direct challenges

Commonly mentioned direct challenges concerned the challenges that teachers face as part of the planning process, as well as access to qualified teachers and teaching materials. When a teacher instructs in two languages, it does provide more work for the teacher in preparation, as well as mental focus to make the bilingual instruction beneficial and not overwhelming or confusing for the pupils. This is especially important in finding the balance between how well the pupil understands or speaks either language. Expert 1 described this:

“I think one challenge is that sometimes the pupil will be quite excellent otherwise, in the content, especially if they have also had access to that content in their mother tongue. They master the content of the subject, but then when it comes to assessing the content, for example, in English, they do not perform as well.”

There has even been raised a concern that self-esteem may suffer for those pupils who are less proficient in the target language and therefore may compare themselves to more capable peers due to a lack of linguistic proficiency that may otherwise not have been present in a mainstream classroom, making them feel insecure and, as a result, less likely to answer or participate in class. Expert 1 explained that: *“Had they been in a non-CLIL class, they would have had this impression of themselves that they are brilliant, and now because of being in the CLIL class, they don't have that impression of themselves”*, and furthermore,

“[the pupils] do notice that their classmates are all the time answering and [that] they remember [the words in English], and they notice that “why don't I remember, why don't these words stay in my mind, like they stay in my classmates' mind?” So, it might be at times discouraging and demotivating.”

5.2.2 Indirect challenges

The indirect challenges are those that prevent or hinder CLIL teaching. The most mentioned challenges were that schools do not have enough qualified teachers or teaching materials available. When principals or municipalities aim to start a CLIL class, they need to ensure that there are teachers and teaching materials available. This is in line with research that shows that a lack of qualified teachers as well as teaching material are deemed as the primary challenges in Finnish bilingual education (Peltoniemi et al. 2017).

Qualified CLIL teachers are required to have proficiency in the languages of instruction, the qualifications to teach in those languages, as well as sufficient content knowledge to teach subjects. As a result, there is not an abundance of teachers available willing or able to teach CLIL. Language teachers are more likely to be subject teachers at and above the lower secondary level. Therefore, primary school teachers also require the qualification of being a language teacher in addition to being a classroom teacher. Since English is currently the de facto global lingua franca, it is more common to find teachers with both Finnish and English qualifications. Furthermore, since Swedish has a national language status in Finland, this makes it easier to find qualified CLIL teachers for either Finnish-Swedish, or Finnish-English CLIL classes. When Expert 3 was asked: *“Is there then a possibility that CLIL might be offered in other languages than English and Finnish [in] the future?”* they responded stating: *“Yes, but the cold fact is that there won't be staff that can deliver that. So, that's the problem, even in English language to get qualified and skilled teachers to certain municipalities to do it.”*

The second commonly mentioned challenge was that of teaching materials. Since Finnish is a language that has a national status only in Finland, it makes it harder to obtain teaching materials in this language. Textbook publishers will only be focused on Finland and Finnish needs. For this reason, in Finland, it is hard to get teaching materials that are not in either Finnish or Swedish, making it a lot harder for teachers to get appropriate teaching materials in Finnish and the target language. Mostly, teachers and schools obtain teaching materials for the target language from abroad. Expert 2 mentioned: *“there's lots of challenges, and you'll hear them from many teachers, things like sourcing materials is always something that comes up, sourcing authentic materials.”* Expert 3 confirms this stating that: *“We create our own teaching materials, so, it requires a lot from the teacher”*, and continues again highlighting that:

“The biggest issue in Finland is to find good teaching materials that apply the Finnish National Curriculum. That's the main thing that all the CLIL schools

struggle with, except the Swedish speaking schools, because Swedish has a different status in Finland than all the other languages [...] a publisher provides them materials. So, this is a challenge in English and in the other languages.”

5.2.3 Persuasion

The third theme identified, regarded the creation of CLIL classes/schools. The challenges regarding CLIL in Finland go beyond the classroom and the school. Municipalities find it at times difficult to garner support for the creation of a CLIL school or class. For this reason, we have coined the key word persuasion since there can be difficulties in persuading people to support CLIL education.

It had been stated that suggesting and pursuing CLIL education had encountered political opposition, as some were less keen on bilingual ideals. At municipal and national levels, the term “kielipolitiikka” (language policy) was mentioned, highlighting that there is still, at times, opposition to foreign languages of instruction, as Expert 4 states,

“There can be difficulties [...] when you work at [the decision making] level. There are also the political people who [affect] what happens in the municipality [...] who were not happy at all, when I started to promote bilingual education.”

According to Expert 3, despite “kielipolitiikka” translating to “language policy” they argue that this in fact is more of a political statement, saying *“the National Curriculum [...] guarantees Finnish or Swedish status. So, it's politics. It's not policy, “Kielipolitiikka” [...] It doesn't talk about English or other target languages.”*

Language policy guides decision-making in the field of education. The response from the national level expert concerning language politics or “kielipolitiikka” in Finland is in line with what is written in literature. Finland has officially been a bilingual country since 1922, with Finnish and Swedish being the official languages (Law 148, 1922). This means that bilingualism at the national level of organisation is called societal bilingualism, which in turn refers to the official language situation in Finnish society (Jalkanen, 2017). Individual bilingualism, on the other hand, occurs at the individual or immediate family level (Jalkanen, 2017). Furthermore, Jalkanen (2017), referring to Clyne's (1997), makes a distinction between official bilingualism and de facto bilingualism that takes place within individual bilingualism. Official bilingualism is the official recognition of Finnish and Swedish leading to bilingualism in Finland,

which is separate from de facto bilingualism as in the actual languages used and in use by social actors in Finnish society (Jalkanen, 2017). Sámi, while not mentioned in this regard, is also regionally recognised, particularly in Northern regions of Finland. Nikula, Saarinen, Pöyhönen and Kangasvieri (2012) show how political discourse in Finland has tended to focus on Finland's official bilingualism and a range of foreign languages, rather than multilingualism (Nikula, Saarinen, Pöyhönen and Kangasvieri, 2012). Therefore, there is a distinction made between the status of Finnish and Swedish compared to foreign languages. This differentiation is present in the NCC 2014, when it restricts the use of immersion to education in Finnish and Swedish, whereas large-scale and small-scale bilingual education is used with any other language (Jalkanen, 2017). Therefore, our participant highlights how the status of Finnish and Swedish are "guaranteed" through the National Core Curriculum, whereas English and other target languages are not included in the National Core Curriculum.

Opposition towards CLIL can be found in municipalities. One of our participants mentioned how they faced political opposition when CLIL was brought into the municipality. From literature, we may find some reasons for opposition. Jalkanen (2017) asked questions from parents in Finland about the negative consequences of English-medium CLIL. Some people may be worried that CLIL may pose a risk to the children's own mother tongue and language (Jalkanen, 2017). A main worry among parents may be that children would lack terminology in Finnish in subjects such as maths and science when learning through the medium of English (Jalkanen, 2017).

5.3 Perception

We defined the third theme as perception. In this case we observe the perceptions that were identified in the implementation of CLIL in Finland. In this branch we observed primarily how CLIL is seen or defined in Finland. The themes that we will look at include CLIL as a method, approach, and buzzword.

5.3.1 Method

CLIL was often defined by the interviewees as a method. CLIL was described as a tool that can be used in the classroom to teach bilingual education more effectively. Keywords such as pedagogy, scaffolding, differentiation, and code-switching were mentioned. Words such as these all point toward CLIL being a method that is applied in the classroom.

As a method, CLIL utilises strategies aimed at making learning more effective. These methods bridge the gap between language and content learning, aiming to make both content and language learning more effective than they would have otherwise been independently. Expert 3 described CLIL as: “*good pedagogy,*” and that “*it should be a certain tool that the teacher uses in teaching [...] using visual tools opening up the concepts [...] scaffolding the student's knowledge and language awareness.*” Expert 1, furthermore supports describing CLIL within the framework of a method by stating that “*there is a lot of this translanguaging and code switching,*” and that “*code switching is also something that we very much allow in our context, and I also encourage it.*”

These concepts show how CLIL, within the context of the classroom, is a concrete method. A method with direct applications such as through scaffolding or code-switching. Code-switching, as discussed in the theoretical framework, allows students to use their full language repertoire in class. Therefore, CLIL is a method of instruction that aims to maximise the potential for learning.

Expert 5 summarises CLIL, stating that

“CLIL encompasses more than bilingualism. [Bilingual education] focuses a little bit on perfection, whereas CLIL doesn't, it is not about perfection. CLIL is about: make the mistakes, but just use the language, and jump back speak think English; if you want to, jump back and forward, but just try and be brave and get involved. [...] The CLIL lesson should be about trying to create, like I say, an atmosphere, almost like a non-classroom atmosphere or something like “oh, you're dropped in the middle of London or Paris, and you have to use English to communicate and you want to complain about a menu, how do you do that in English?”, and whereas direct bilingual learning almost could be a silent lesson, where they're completing worksheets in English and tasks in English, and then handing them to the teacher and the teacher assesses them and hands them back.”

5.3.2 Approach

CLIL can be said to be a culture. In the classroom it's a method, but it needs to go beyond the classroom, to reach the pupils outside the construct of organised teaching. CLIL is visible within the school culture, and should also go as far as extracurricular activities, providing language

exposure within the lives of the pupils. Here, when one of the interviewees was asked to differentiate between CLIL being a method and approach, they highlighted the importance of seeing CLIL as both, stating that CLIL needs to be more than a method. They stressed the importance of school culture as part of the National Core Curriculum goals, and how CLIL needs to be seen outside the classroom to effectively incorporate bilingual education into mainstream education.

Expert 4 emphasised this, stating that “[CLIL is] an approach to implement bilingual education”, they continued to stress that “[CLIL is more than] a method. It's not enough [...] an approach for the whole way of how to do for example bilingual education. When we talk about school culture, “toimintakulttuuri”, it's very important in the Finnish curriculum.”

Sylvén (2013) suggested four pillars of influence for a successful implementation of CLIL. In this profile, as seen in Figure 1, Sylvén highlights the importance of teacher education – which ensures the quality of teachers and their ability to handle both aspects of content and language teaching, research and policy framework – which underlies the support for CLIL socially, economically, and academically, age of implementation – which indicates that CLIL is more effective the earlier it is implemented, and finally, extra-curricular activities – which stresses the need for language exposure to occur outside the classroom as well. Through these pillars, we observe that CLIL needs to transcend beyond the method used in the classroom, to wider society, as was stressed by our interviewees.

5.3.3 Buzzword

As our last question in the interviews, we gauged our participants opinion on “why CLIL is more than just a buzzword”. Some were a bit confused by the meaning of the word, and so we explained that we have come across CLIL sometimes being referred to, as merely a buzzword – a fancy term that is “thrown” on top of bilingual education to make it seem more “fancy,” or “special”. Here, our participants highlighted how CLIL is a more effective way of teaching bilingual education, and that therefore, CLIL brings with it an approach, that has been chosen as a better pedagogy, that they can offer to children.

Expert 3 eagerly responded saying “*this is a key question, the most important question that you could ask in your research because CLIL should belong to every teacher's teaching bag. It is better pedagogy and better pedagogy is created for learning better.*” Expert 4 furthermore supported this statement claiming

“because there's a lot of theory behind CLIL [...], there's much theory and practice behind CLIL. It's not just a word and I have noticed now that we have started to train also our preschool teachers. So, they are very enthusiastic about CLIL. Now, when they know how many things are behind this short word CLIL or this acronym, when you know that there is a lot of research and years of practice, and people have been studying CLIL, and trying to make it better [...] So, it's not only a word, but the whole world behind CLIL in the global sense.”

There still exists a fierce debate in the academic community as to the efficacy of CLIL education (Cañado 2015). This makes this question of CLIL being a “buzzword” even more important. CLIL has been called a buzzword within the context of it becoming more popular as a method of language instruction, particularly in what has been called a “deficiency of language standards” within Europe (Cañado 2015). That is why one of our interviewees strongly highlighted the importance of CLIL as a teaching tool, and why it is indeed, more than just a buzzword to be used synonymously with bilingual education.

However, Expert 2 explicitly called CLIL a buzzword even before we asked our final question regarding why CLIL is more than merely a buzzword. The participant was referring to CLIL as a buzzword in the context of getting funding and in-service training.

“You go back maybe seven or eight years ago, CLIL was a real buzzword. I think if you applied to organizations like Erasmus for funding, all you had to do was mention CLIL and you got the funding to go on a course or to go on a job shadowing experience or something like that.”

The same participant, when asked the buzzword question, replied that “education is all about buzzwords.” and continued by saying how “the term (CLIL) itself might be a buzzword, but the way it's implemented it's not a gimmick, it's something that the teachers who get involved with it and they really want to develop students' learning in a different way.”

This teacher elaborated by saying that “I think that if they changed what it was called, it wouldn't change the way it's implemented, it wouldn't change the methodology, you could come up with something like, oh, let's call it active language learning something like that.”

5.4 Implementation

The final pillar in our branches of influence looks at implementation. Since we interviewed experts across the three dimensions of school, municipality, and the national level, we also looked at how the phenomenon of CLIL is perceived and actualised within each of these contexts. Naturally, a teacher has different responsibilities in implementing CLIL than a member of the board of education, but all three layers play a vital part in the complete implementation. Here we will look at the key points that have been raised when implementing CLIL in Finland.

5.4.1 The school level

As part of our main research focus, we tried to find out from our interviewees how CLIL is implemented and actualised in Finland. At this level, we have observed that many CLIL classrooms look vastly different from each other, with varying degrees of use of the target language. Here CLIL implementation has been described as a “tailor-made-process,” where every class needs to be adjusted according to the needs of the student body. As Expert 3 highlighted:

“you should always start from the student body that you have in the school, that's the basis and you create the bilingual program using CLIL method to them considering their needs and their skills and that's why we for example, have some kind of “soveltuvuuskartoitus” (suitability mapping).”

In this regard, teachers and principals need to be aware of the individual capabilities of the pupils. Pupils need to go through a screening process to ensure that they meet the required standards compared to their peers. Some classes may use more of the target language than those of different schools or within the same school, and it is therefore important to match the pupils according to their own capabilities to prevent pupils from either being too far removed in their capabilities, further stretching the differentiation divide.

Since CLIL, as we learned from the interviews, is mostly synonymous with bilingual education, as Expert 5 answered when asked about CLIL “so, yes, I want to use the term bilingual education, which we use in the National Core Curriculum 2014. But it's divided into CLIL, and then language immersion”, we have observed that often CLIL education is not outright mentioned in the National Core Curriculum (2016), even though bilingual education often follows the same principles. Instead, bilingual education in Finland, Expert 5 mentions, follows the three-

tiered structure of “language immersion”, “short-bilingual education”, and “long-bilingual education”. Each subsequent level utilises bigger amounts of the target language.

Language immersion in these cases is comparable to language showers, in which the pupils are exposed to the target language through often repeated routines and phrases. According to Expert 5, short-bilingual education has a maximum of 25% of content instructed in the target language, while long-bilingual education has a minimum of 20% contented instruction in the target language. This structure leaves a lot of room adjustment has decided upon by individual schools or classes, depending on the student body, as well as the goals outlined by the municipality.

CLIL implementation in Finland follows a typical definition of CLIL, which states that content is taught through a foreign language. Expert 1 describes CLIL implementation stating

“we learn about a topic that is new to students in the language that is foreign to students. So, at the same time, our students are learning English and subject content [...] who study about 50% in Finnish and 50% in English on a weekly basis. There is some variation roughly.”

The definition does not specify what percentages the target language and mother tongue need to have. As such, Finland has given the guideline through these three stages (large-scale or small-scale bilingual education or immersion), and schools, therefore, choose which education they will provide. Principals then offer guidelines and CLIL-specific in-service training for teachers, as they use the tools and methodology guided by CLIL to fulfill the goals of implementing bilingual education.

5.4.2 The municipal level

The second level which affects the implementation of CLIL is the municipal level. Members of the municipal board of education affect the creation of new schools or programmes and are the direct point of contact for principals. We aimed to understand the processes involved at this level, that lead to municipalities choosing to offer CLIL education.

At this level, the most important aspect was identified as using a “bottom-up” approach. Our interviewees highlighted that suggesting big changes in education cannot be suggested by decision-makers. It is important that parents first voice their opinions as to what kind of education they wish for their children. As Expert 3 highlighted: *“We created a language program that was based on the questionnaire that was given to the inhabitants of this municipality [...] they*

said that, okay, we need these languages.” In one municipality, this parental need was identified through a questionnaire that was sent around the municipality, which collected the data indicating the need for increased language education. This process indicates a successful example of CLIL implementation in which the “need” was first identified, which municipal decision-makers could respond to by offering increased language education.

Following this, decision-makers in the municipal government team up with like-minded principals. The principal then has the responsibility of ensuring that qualified teachers are found who can teach the content in the specified target language. Expert 4 stressed this process saying:

“it must happen from bottom up [...] it's very difficult to try to pour it over the schools and say “next autumn, we will start with CLIL in this municipality!” So, you will have to talk a lot with people and explain what it means and what wisdom I have, and hopefully, I get the other people to share my vision. I have noticed that it is not so easy if I don't find head teachers or teachers who are eager, to follow the vision. But the most important thing is that you have a head teacher, principal, who is interested in CLIL and in bilingual education, because from my point of view, it is not possible to do it if you don't have similar minded people working with you.”

Expert 3 furthermore highlights the importance of careful consideration, arguing that *“I would say that one size doesn't fit all. So, you have to think about the location, the needs of the municipality, what the students are like, that defines what are your goals in bilingual education!”*

Here we can see that there is a need for implementation to occur through a bottom-up approach. The need for language learning was identified, and the municipality chose to use CLIL to fulfill that need. CLIL was selected to be the best way to meet the demand for improved language learning.

5.4.3 The national level

From the national level we got a sense of the culture of Finnish education. Finnish teachers enjoy a lot of freedom and autonomy in their teaching due to a consensus of trust in their professionalism (Paradis, A., Lutovac, S., Jokikokko, K., & Kaasila, R. 2019). When questioned about policies and frameworks concerning bilingual education, we received a very straightfor-

ward reply. In Finland, educational policy follows a simple yet stringent process: First the National Core Curriculum is set up, which entails all the goals and expectations. Then, it is the job of everyone to follow the goals and expectations as set out in the national core curriculum. Any support offered by the government is therefore in line with following the goals of the national core curriculum. Expert 5 explains how

“municipalities [...] have to make their local curriculum and then in that local curriculum [...] schools define what their bilingual education is like, and then then they decide themselves the things which we have listed in here in our curriculum.”

This is where the narrative for CLIL diverges. There is no mention of CLIL in the National Core Curriculum (2014). The reason in large is because CLIL is seen more as a teaching method, and as such, the curriculum does not stipulate how the goals should be met. This falls in line, again, with the culture of Finnish education. Schools have the freedom to decide how they want to meet the language and bilingual targets that the curriculum prescribes.

The ministry of education does, however, offer support to municipalities to help them meet these goals and targets. Monetary support and funding are the primary sources of support for schools, but then there are also opportunities for in-service teacher training. Expert 5 described how,

“every year, we hand out money to the municipalities, to schools, to private schools [...] to develop for example CLIL education in the schools, in one municipality in one city and then of course, start new programs [...] it's important for Finland that children learn many languages [...] during the last five years, we've had a network called “kaksari”. Some of the municipalities, the cities who have got this funding have been active in this network and we have organized workshops, training for schoolteachers, for example, or language immersion teachers and also some of the municipalities who have received the funding from us have organized [...] in-service teacher training [...] there are universities like Oulu, Jyväskylä, Helsinki, and Åbo Akademi, where you can study to become CLIL teacher or a language immersion teacher, so, that's also part of the picture.”

Furthermore, at the academic level, universities in Finland also offer teacher training that provides students the qualifications to teach in Finland but also offers opportunities to specialise in intercultural or multilingual environments.

When Expert 3 was asked about CLIL as part of national policy, they corrected: *“I rather use word a bilingual education because you can't find CLIL in the national curriculum. So, it's bilingual education, and I call CLIL as a method to achieve the goals of bilingual education.”* Expert 5 furthermore reinforces the views of the national level, as seen through the goals of the National Core Curriculum (2014)

“CLIL, of course, it's part of this bilingual education, it's the same thing and as it says in the curriculum, the long-term goal of bilingual education is laying a foundation for lifelong learning of languages, and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity and then an effort is made to achieve solid and versatile language skills, both in the language of instruction in the school and in the target language.”

It has been often mentioned by our interviewees that the biggest challenges in implementing CLIL are finding teaching materials and qualified teachers. Selected universities in Finland, such as the University of Oulu and Jyväskylä, are offering programmes that provide the necessary qualifications for new teachers. However, there remains the problem of access to teaching materials. As one of the interviewees mentioned, while some languages have the “national status” publishers of school textbooks do not have the pressure to create books in other languages. Pressure could therefore be put on local publishers to create material in line with the needs of the national core curriculum in the languages that Finnish schools use to teach bilingual education.

6. Discussion

As part of our research, it was our aim to investigate the phenomenon of CLIL within the Finnish context. We hoped to understand how local experts defined it, as well as reasoned how and why it should be implemented in Finland. We interviewed experts in education with connections to CLIL across the three disciplines and levels of the school, municipality, and the national level. Across these three levels, we built a holistic picture that represents CLIL in Finland.

In research, the debate continues as to whether CLIL is a method, or an approach. But through our experts, we have learned that in the classroom, we see that CLIL is understood as a teaching method with its own set of benefits and challenges. Furthermore, CLIL is an approach to teaching bilingual education. It is an approach that, when implemented well, has clear advantages for both content and language learning. Therefore, CLIL has to be seen both as a method and as an approach, depending on the context in which it is being viewed from.

In Finland, there is still a deficiency of teachers that are uniquely qualified to teach CLIL. Furthermore, teachers and schools lack the teaching materials in all the required languages, which inevitably leads to more work for teachers in preparing materials and lesson plans. Despite this, the demand for CLIL classes and schools remains.

At the municipal level, the word CLIL brings its own set of connotations. While CLIL has been called a buzzword, it is so not without merit. Municipalities in Finland compete, particularly as bigger and more populous cities attract more people and businesses. Smaller municipalities find ways of attracting young parents by promising their children a specialised education. Some schools in Finland may offer specialised education in the form of sport, language, or music. CLIL offers a specialised linguistic education that is becoming ever more relevant in this globalised society.

At the national level, CLIL becomes less of an issue. Teachers in Finland experience a high level of trust and autonomy (Paradis et al., 2019). While CLIL is not mentioned in the National Core Curriculum (2016), the goals of bilingual education are clearly defined. It states that “in bilingual education, an effort is made to achieve solid and versatile language skills both in the language of instruction in the school and in the target language” (National Core Curriculum, 2016, p. 95). It goes on to say that “the long-term goal of bilingual education is laying a foundation for lifelong learning of languages and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity” (National Core Curriculum, 2016, p. 95), as was quoted by one of our experts.

In this regard, we observe that in policy and framework, the Finnish Board of Education lays the foundation for education in the National Core Curriculum and continues to follow the goals and guidelines within it. Teachers and schools are thereafter trusted to autonomously decide on an appropriate course of action as to how they plan to achieve these goals. Therefore, even though CLIL has been highlighted as an effective method to teach bilingual education, as a teaching method, it is up to the schools to decide if they want to use it or not. From a national perspective, there are, however, many opportunities, such as funding and in-service teacher training, available to support CLIL education, as CLIL has been identified as a worthwhile cause to support.

In Finland, there is no clear consensus on what CLIL looks like. Largely CLIL is still defined as education with both language and content occurring simultaneously, but the degrees to which the target language are utilised vary greatly. It is not so much a misunderstanding or miscommunication, but due to the synonymous nature that CLIL has with bilingual education in Finland, there is no clear-cut definition that describes what CLIL should look like. As such, CLIL varies between layers of varying degrees of language immersion.

CLIL still often has the reputation of being a buzzword. This may, however, not be a purely negative outlook. It is a buzzword because it does indeed offer a specialised linguistic education. It is a highly effective way of teaching both content and language simultaneously. As Expert 2 reiterated “*education is all about buzzwords*”.

The true area where CLIL shines in Finland, as we often observed in the responses from our interviewees, is the internationalisation that follows from implementing CLIL. For this reason, English is a quite popular choice as target language. It needs to be stressed, however, that other languages are also considered, but lack of teachers and teaching materials severely restrict schools’ abilities to offer CLIL in other foreign languages than English. As a de facto lingua franca, English language instruction has been hailed as an opportunity for parents eager to offer their children an education with the potential to broaden their horizons later into adulthood beyond Finnish borders. This, as a result, attracts businesses and educated international expats, as well as potentially indirectly improving the socio-economic conditions of locals.

The question remains if CLIL needs to be rebranded. With many different definitions or interpretations of CLIL, there may be ambiguity or confusion. Having distinct tiered levels may provide a wider consensus that, at least academically, can assist in directing future research.

There are many models of bilingual education and modes of bilingualism. Modes such as additive bilingualism – which enhances an individual’s language repertoire, recursive bilingualism – in which L1 and L2 exist together in some form and bilingualism is seen as a flow, as well as dynamic bilingualism – which responds to the ever-changing multilingual contexts of an interlocutor in diverse speech acts (Garcia 2009), all indicate possibilities that CLIL can aim to achieve.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, CLIL is synonymous with bilingual education in Finland. CLIL is a popular approach to implementing bilingual education according to the goals of the National Core Curriculum (2014). It is an effective teaching method that collects many good teaching strategies and practices.

As a general theme, the teachers looked at CLIL, more from a pupil-centred perspective. As Expert 2 highlighted:

“What I hope for is when our students come out with the CLIL lessons, that they've grown in such a way [...] that students be so comfortable when they leave, that they're not afraid to have a voice. Whereas I think that some of the other ways that English is taught, it's not about having a voice, it's about getting a good grade.”

Teachers see CLIL as a method of teaching pupils, as well as the perceptions surrounding the classroom.

Experts in administrative positions focus more on the larger picture, as is relevant to their respective positions and contexts in which they work. They consider the goals of the National Core Curriculum (2014), as well as how best to achieve these needs, while considering the needs of the population.

At the National level, the core concern relates to following the goals of the current National Core Curriculum. Opportunities and support are offered to municipalities and schools, without imposing restrictions or suggestions on how these goals are to be met. This is in line with the trust and autonomy that Finnish teachers often perceive.

Our final conclusion is quite neatly summarised in the words of Expert 2:

“The learning journey should be a metamorphosis, from a caterpillar to a butterfly. But the modern education system just turns a caterpillar into a faster caterpillar. I think that's where CLIL kinda actually flowers a little bit. What we try and do [is] turn students from caterpillars into butterflies [...] gradually giving them confidence in themselves.”

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Appendix 1

List of interview questions for the Teacher level.

- What's your background in CLIL, and what training have you had in it?
- How do you define CLIL in your context?
- What are benefits and challenges of teaching CLIL, and should we be teaching CLIL?
- What is the purpose of implementing CLIL within your context?
 - Why do you think children need CLIL education? (follow-up question if needed)
- How do you implement CLIL?
- Now that we've said everything, why is CLIL more than just a buzzword?

Appendix 2

List of interview questions for the Municipal level.

- What is your background and what's your experience with CLIL?
- How do you define CLIL in your context?
- What is the purpose of implementing CLIL in your school/ municipality?
 - What is the specific need for CLIL? (follow up if needed)
 - Why do you think children need CLIL education? (follow-up question if needed)
- How do you implement CLIL?
 - What does CLIL look like in your school/municipality (follow-up question if needed)
- Do you perceive any challenges for implementing CLIL?
- Now that we've said everything, why is CLIL more than just a buzzword?

Appendix 3

List of interview questions for the National level.

- What is your background and connection to Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and bilingual education?
- How do you define CLIL within the Finnish context?
- What is the purpose of implementing CLIL within the national context? What is the need for CLIL in Finland?
- CLIL is not mentioned in the National Core Curriculum. Does CLIL have a place in it, and why?
- What are the goals in policy concerning bilingual education and does CLIL have a place in that?
- How do you incorporate CLIL into policy and framework?
- What nation-wide support systems are in place for CLIL schools?
 - Workshops/ in-service training/ mentors/ consultancy etc. (follow-up question if needed)
- What support can municipalities and schools receive for CLIL education?
 - Such as funding or teaching materials. (follow-up question if needed)
- Why do you think children in Finland need CLIL education?
- Now that we've said everything, why is CLIL more than just a buzzword?