

# Content and Language Integrated Learning in Dutch bilingual education

## How Dutch history teachers focus on second language teaching

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This small-scale observational study explores how Dutch bilingual education history teachers (BHTs) focus on the L2 component in their CLIL-lessons. We observed and rated eight BHTs on five language teaching categories. Results show that Dutch BHTs focus more strongly on using the L2 to teach subject content and that they tend to be less engaged in teaching specific second language topics, such as focus on form or language learning strategies. Further results and suggestions for improving the BHTs' L2 focus are discussed together with a plea for a CLIL definition that is more in line with the everyday reality of the CLIL classroom.

**Keywords:** CLIL, second language pedagogy, bilingual education history teachers, focus on form, focus on meaning, subject specific language

### 1. Introduction

Most European countries, including The Netherlands, apply Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as the educational approach to engage students in bilingual education (Euridyce, 2006, 2012). Dutch students in year 1–3 of the pre-university bilingual stream are exposed to a substantial amount of second language input, as at least 50% of their curriculum is taught in English (Europees Platform, 2011; Eurydice 2006, 2012; De Graaff & Van Wilgenburg, 2015). English is the sole language of instruction and communication in five or six school subjects in that case.

The Standard for bilingual education, the Dutch bilingual education policy document (Europees Platform, 2011; <<http://www.nuffic.nl>>), assigns an important role to the CLIL subject teacher in the second language (L2) development of

students, but how this should be developed and systematically taught is less clear. Teachers are expected to consistently work on improving L2 proficiency, but this is perhaps easier said than done as in many cases there is no subject-specific L2 curriculum available. The Standard for bilingual education offers no concrete CLIL definition and the individual CLIL subject teachers are supposed to design their own CLIL curriculum (Europees Platform, 2011). The minimum required L2 proficiency level of the CLIL subject teachers, B2 (CEFR: Council of Europe, 2001), combined with a training in CLIL-methodology is thought to be sufficient for subject teachers to integrate L2 learning when teaching subject content. Further, there is no hallmark for (in-school) CLIL training courses, which suggests that subject teachers are prepared in different ways for their role as language teacher in CLIL. In ideal settings CLIL subject teachers are team players within a professional CLIL team that has developed a shared teaching ideology and responsibility (Dale, Oostdam, & Verspoor, in press; Dale et al., this volume). Teaching CLIL, nevertheless, remains a challenge for the individual subject teachers.

Earlier studies have shown that CLIL subject teachers find it difficult to balance teaching content and teaching language in their CLIL lessons (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Koopman, Skeet, & De Graaff, 2014; Lorenzo, 2007; Oattes, Oostdam, De Graaff, & Wilschut, 2018; Schuitemaker-King, 2012). Cammarata and Tedick's phenomenological study (2012) used written accounts and interviews of three experienced teachers and identified five dimensions related to immersion teaching: from seeing themselves as content and language teachers, facing external challenges, experiencing a sense of isolation, increased awareness of the interdependence of content and language to struggling to identify what language to focus on. The researchers posit that it is mainly a lack of pedagogical expertise (knowledge and awareness) of second language learning that leads to the teachers' preference to focus on content teaching.

Lorenzo's theoretical research into the implementation of CLIL in Andalusia, Spain, (2007) suggests that CLIL lessons are often content driven with the linguistic focus on meaning. He notices that CLIL lesson plans regularly lack linguistic content, and as a result, activities focusing on students' L2 development are frequently missing or at best addressed ad hoc. Lorenzo further indicates that the mismatch between the subject teachers' focus on content and language can be repaired by developing an integrated curriculum building on second language teaching principles. He argues that task-based learning offers opportunities to restore the balance between content and language teaching.

Dutch classroom researchers (Koopman et al., 2014) observed six teachers who were aware that the focus of the observation would be on the language learning activities in their CLIL lessons. After analysing the videotaped lessons and questioning the performed language activities it was concluded that CLIL sub-

ject teachers had limited knowledge of second language learning. It appeared that none of the teachers had received training on specific L2 pedagogy, which may have had an impact on their teaching in L2. Another explanation for the limited focus of the BHTs for specific linguistic matters is consistent with earlier research on Dutch CLIL teachers (Schuitemaker-King, 2012) and points to the attitude displayed by some teachers who stated that specific L2 teaching issues, like focus on form, 'was a job for the English teacher, not theirs' (Koopman et al., 2014, p.133). A recent study on Dutch bilingual education (Oattes et al., 2018) showed some of the L2 challenges CLIL teachers face especially in the early stages of teaching CLIL in year 1. As subject teachers they want to teach their subject and some feel frustrated when the second language is an obstacle: "During that first period, when the blackboard is filled with language notes, it sometimes makes me wonder: why am I doing this? This is not what I want" (p.170). These CLIL subject teachers for various reasons seem to give priority to teaching content thereby showing that keeping a dual focus on content and language is not a given.

We want to ascertain if and how a group of Dutch bilingual education history teachers (BHTs) focuses on students' L2 development in their CLIL lessons. When analysing L2 teaching in CLIL practice, the language proficiency of the subject teachers also needs to be taken into account. The CLIL teacher initiates and stimulates the CLIL process and is expected to be a role model for the students in both content knowledge and L2-proficiency (Bertaux, Coonan, Frigols-Martin, & Mehisto, 2010), because poor language-related teaching skills could interfere with the students' communicative, subject-specific and academic L2 development (Aiello, Di Martino, & Di Sabato, 2017; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2010; Nel & Muller, 2010; Papaja, 2013). BHTs need to be able to explain historical concepts clearly and fluently and give appropriate corrective feedback to enhance students' L2 development, e.g. on subject-specific terminology and academic language use (Schuitemaker-King, 2012). We want to establish if the proficiency level of Dutch BHTs' in spoken English affects their role as language teachers.

### Present study

This study focuses upon BHTs and how they approach L2 teaching in their CLIL lessons. That places this study in line with earlier studies on Dutch bilingual education (De Graaff, Koopman, Anikina, & Westhoff, 2007; Koopman et al., 2014) that looked into the ways that L2 learning was addressed by different subject teachers in different CLIL lessons. The present study focusses specifically on BHTs because history is a language sensitive school subject. Teaching history means teaching language, and understanding and learning history requires the learners to develop language proficiency. To teach history in and through a L2 makes the

BHTs' challenge even greater as history uses different genres, registers and abstract concepts that need careful explaining (Achugar & Schleppegrell, 2006; Coffin, 2006; De Oliveira, 2011; Llinares & Peña, 2015; Lorenzo, 2013; Monte-Sano, 2008; Morton, 2010, 2017; Schleppegrell & De Oliveira, 2006).

This context leads to two research questions:

1. How do Dutch bilingual education history teachers implement L2 teaching in their CLIL lessons?
2. Is L2 teaching in CLIL affected by the L2 proficiency of the bilingual education history teachers?

## 2. The language component in CLIL

CLIL may have established itself as the most common European bilingual education teaching methodology, but practitioners and researchers are still trying to theoretically underpin if and how the four individual elements of content, language, integration and learning add up to one coherent educational approach (Llinares, 2015; Nikula, Dalton-Puffer, Llinares, & Lorenzo, 2016). Current CLIL research focuses on integration because it is a vital link in the CLIL concept that should clarify how content and language can successfully be approached simultaneously (Lasagabaster, 2017; Llinares, 2015; Ruiz de Zarobe & Cenoz, 2015). In CLIL, students access subject content through a foreign language and they learn the foreign language through subject content. A well-known definition of CLIL was constructed by Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010):

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

This definition states that content and language are closely linked without prioritising one over the other, and which one is emphasised can vary according to the circumstances. 'Dual focus' thus allows for flexibility in the balance between teaching and learning content and language.

To find out if and how second language learning focus is used by subject teachers in the Dutch CLIL context, we will take a closer look at two earlier studies. The first study concerned itself with the development of an L2 observation tool and will play an important role in the current study. The second study focused on the L2 knowledge of a mixed group of bilingual education subject teachers.

In an attempt to get more grip on the second language learning process in CLIL, Dutch researchers developed an observation tool for effective L2 teaching (De Graaff et al., 2007). It is the CLIL teacher's task to create and facilitate language learning opportunities. The tool was based on five basic principles from second language pedagogy as put forward by Westhoff's 'penta-pie' of elements for effective and successful second language acquisition activities (2004). Westhoff distinguished: exposure to input, content-oriented processing, form-oriented processing, (pushed) output, and strategic language use. These language learning principles were then transformed and renamed by De Graaff et al. (2007) into five observable L2 learning categories: exposure to L2 input, focus on meaning, focus on form, student output and use of strategies. In their study on effective language teaching in CLIL the observation tool was used on a small mixed group of Dutch teachers to find out which L2 learning activities they used that could be identified as performance indicators to validate the relevance of the five second language learning principles (De Graaff et al., 2007). For each category matching between four and six performance indicators for the CLIL context were derived. The observed lessons revealed that performance indicators focussing on form were among the least used. The study concluded that not all teachers used all performance indicators all of the time but that the involved CLIL subject teachers performed 'at least incidentally as effective language teachers' (p. 620) according to Westhoff's model.

In a separate subsequent study, Koopman et al. (2014) observed a small sample of experienced CLIL subject teachers to find out about their second language teaching knowledge, using Long's (2009) categorization of four language teaching areas: activities, input, learning processes and learner interaction. Little focus on language learning processes such as the teaching of language chunks was observed, as the teachers were more strongly engaged in language activities at word level to keep meaningful classroom communication going. An explanation for the restricted focus on form was found in the reaction of several of the CLIL teachers who stressed that they were subject teachers and that feedback on form and giving language rules was the domain of the English language teachers (Koopman et al., 2014). The researchers explained the lack of language learning activities in the CLIL classroom as a result of teachers' limited knowledge of developmental L2 learning processes because they never had proper training in L2 pedagogy (Koopman et al., 2014).

These studies leave us with the question of what can reasonably be expected of CLIL subject teachers when it comes to maintaining a dual focus on teaching content and teaching language.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Design

In this observational study we explored, described and assessed Dutch BHTs' focus on L2 in their CLIL subject lessons in relation to their English proficiency. The eight BHTs were videotaped during fourteen CLIL-lessons all together (see Table 1) taught according to the curriculum in junior secondary education and scored quantitatively on five aspects of their L2 teaching and eight aspects of their demonstrated proficiency in spoken English.

##### *Study sample*

The sample consisted of eight Dutch BHTs teaching one or more CLIL lessons in year 1 and/or 3 in the pre-university stream of eight secondary schools throughout the Netherlands. A total number of fourteen CLIL history lessons were observed (see Table 1).

The eight history teachers involved volunteered to participate in this research. In a previous study by the first author (Oattes et al., 2018) into Dutch bilingual education they had made known that they were willing to participate in further research activities. They were informed of the goal and procedure of the study and assured anonymity. We chose BHTs who had experienced the transition from mainstream subject teacher to CLIL teacher and were thus familiar with integrating language teaching into their subject teaching.

The history teachers, two females and six males with between 8 and 29 years ( $M=14.63$ ,  $SD=7.0$ ) of history teaching experience and between 6 and 10 years ( $M=8$  years,  $SD=1.3$ ) of CLIL-teaching, all had a Cambridge Advanced English certificate (CAE=CEFR: C1) and four of them also had a Cambridge Proficiency English certificate (CPE=CEFR: C2) or similar qualification. As regards proficiency in CLIL methodology, their training was diverse. All teachers had completed in-school CLIL courses and four teachers had taken extra CLIL courses e.g., while pursuing their teaching degree, at language training institutes in the UK or through private education consultants.

#### 3.2 Measurement instruments

To be able to answer the two research questions we used two observation and marking schemes: The L2 Pedagogy assessment instrument for assessing the BHTs' use of L2 pedagogy and the Spoken English assessment instrument for assessing the proficiency of the BHTs' spoken English during the observed lessons.

**Table 1.** Videotaped history lessons: Identification letter BHT (A-H), year, lesson theme, lesson goals, designation of activities

Teacher	Year	Lesson theme	Lesson goals (set by BHTs)	Activities
A	1	Middle Ages (1); Agriculture, Islam	Understanding medieval agricultural society & the rise of Islam	Teacher driven; narrative, Teacher/Student dialogue, individual written assignments
A	1	Middle Ages (2); Christianity	Understanding the spread of Christianity in Europe	Teacher driven; narrative, T/S dialogue, individual written assignments
B	1	Middle Ages; Daily life	Activating prior knowledge of Middle Ages	Teacher/student driven; written assignment in groups
C	1	Roman Empire; Roman culture	Understanding the lasting influence of Roman culture (repetition)	Teacher driven; verbal student output (games)
C	3	World War II; Occupation of the Netherlands	Response to German occupation: collaboration & resistance	Teacher driven; narrative, dialogue, 'what if.' assignment
D	3	Modern World propaganda	Designing a propaganda poster in pairs	Discussing and creating a propaganda poster in pairs
E	3	Cold War Vietnam War	Understanding the Vietnam war through lyrics (1)	Teacher/student driven; narrative, translating lyrics in groups
E	1	Middle Ages Class-society	Understanding medieval agricultural society; the peasants	Teacher driven; narrative, life of farmers/serfs, written assignments
E	3	Cold War (2) Vietnam, Berlin Wall	Understanding the Vietnam war through lyrics (2)	Student driven; students presenting new lyrics
F	3	World War I (1) Final Years	Understanding the ending of World War I	Teacher driven; T/S dialogue, individual written assignments
F	3	World War I (2) Causes	Understanding the origins of World War I	Teacher driven; T/S dialogue, written assignments
G	3	World War I; Versailles	Understanding the ending of World War I	Teacher/Student driven; T/S dialogue, written assignments in pairs (treaty, historical atlas)

**Table 1.** (continued)

Teacher	Year	Lesson theme	Lesson goals (set by BHTs)	Activities
G	3	Interbellum; Germany '19–33	Understanding Hitler's rise to power	Teacher driven; T/S dialogue, written assignments in pairs
H	3	Interbellum; Germany '33–39	Understanding the build-up of the totalitarian Nazi-state & the violations of the Versailles Treaty	Teacher driven; T/S dialogue, individual written assignment

Note. BHTs taught in year 1, in year 3 or in both years.

### 3.3 L2 Pedagogy assessment instrument

To analyse the use of L2 pedagogy by the BHTs, we adapted an existing observation tool (De Graaff et al., 2007) by adding an assessment scale. We adapted the existing L2 pedagogy assessment instrument in order to not only observe if the BHTs used all five language learning categories in their CLIL lessons, as De Graaff et al. (2007) did, but also to assess the frequency and quality of the BHTs' language activities.

The L2 pedagogy assessment instrument (see Table 2) focuses on five language learning categories used by De Graaff et al. (2007). In category 1, *exposure to input*, the teacher facilitates extended exposure to challenging, meaningful and functional L2 input. In category 2, *focus on meaning*, the teacher facilitates meaning-focused processing and so students are given tasks that will challenge their understanding of the (new) topic. In category 3, *focus on form*, the teacher facilitates form-focused processing by raising students' awareness of language form by noticing and discussing problematic or correct use of language forms in texts and by correcting students' use of language forms 'on the spot', and organising peer feedback. In category 4, *student output*, the teacher facilitates opportunities for output production because both content and language are being processed through meaningful communication (oral or written) and are open for discussion by means of teacher or peer-feedback. In category 5, *use of strategies*, subject teachers should teach students how to compensate for deficiencies in receptive and productive skills by employing strategies like using prior knowledge, inferring, or paraphrasing.

De Graaff et al. (2007) also developed matching teacher performance indicators that consist of elements that are part of or directly related to a language learning category, e.g. 'creating a context for students to communicate' is a performance indicator of the 'facilitating student output' category (see Table 2). The per-



formance indicators helped the observers to identify, analyse and rate the BHTs' dealing with the different language learning categories.

Adding an assessment scale was deemed necessary because our exploratory analysis indicated that, in line with earlier research (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Koopman et al., 2014; Lorenzo, 2007; Oattes et al., 2018; Schuitemaker-King, 2012), the more subject language and meaning related categories (1, 2 and 4) received considerably more attention from the BHTs than the more L2 form related categories (3 and to a lesser extent 5).

Table 2 shows the five observation categories, the related performance indicators and some classroom examples that we used to analyse the video recordings.

With the assessment instrument categories 1 to 5 were rated based on a holistic approach taking into account the quantity and quality of the observed performance indicators. We designed a marking scheme ranging from 0 (insufficient), 2 (sufficient), 4 (good) and 6 (excellent), with 1, 3 and 5 as the in-between marks. We deployed one researcher and four student teachers of English who were taking a specialised International Degree in English and Education course. The student teachers volunteered to be part of the observer team and received training on how to use the observation and marking scheme. Each videotaped BHT was assessed by the researcher plus two rotating student teachers. Intraclass Correlation Coefficients were calculated for all five categories and proved to be sufficient (cat.1=0.73; cat. 2=0.70; cat. 3=0.77; cat. 4=0.73 and cat. 5=0.77). Partial correlations between the different categories were calculated controlled for teachers' proficiency level of Cambridge Spoken English. This analysis showed a significant correlation between all categories, with the exception of category 4 which shows no empirical connection to the other four categories.

### 3.4 Spoken English assessment instrument

For the Spoken English assessment, we slightly adapted the existing In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT) marking scheme for Spoken English (CELA, 2015). This well-known marking scheme was used to analyse and rate the BHTs' English proficiency in two different circumstances that were based on the Council of Europe's distinction between Spoken Production and Spoken Interaction (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR, 2001) focusing on the four spoken language elements: accuracy, range and flexibility, pronunciation and audience awareness (see Table 3). We wanted to be able to distinguish the English language proficiency of the BHT in different circumstances or contexts, e.g. is the pre-planned presentation/instruction (made) suitable for the audience? And also, how skilfully does the BHT respond to spontaneous interaction with her/his audience?

**Table 2.** L2 pedagogy assessment instrument based on De Graaff et al. (2007): Category of observation, performance indicators and examples from the present study**The (CLIL) teacher facilitates:**

Category of observation	Performance indicators	Examples from the present study
1 Exposure to input	Text selection in advance, text adaptation in advance, adaptation of teacher talk in advance, text adaptation during teaching and fine-tuning of teacher talk.	When teaching about the political developments in Germany in the nineteen-thirties a teacher used a tailored digital presentation to introduce key players, key events and key concepts to support his teacher talk with images, graphs and film footage. Noticing that not every student understood all of the new content in the textbook he was able to adapt the text by breaking it down into smaller parts and use alternative descriptions to fine-tune his teacher talk.
2 Focus on meaning	Stimulating meaning identification, checking meaning identification, emphasising correct and relevant identifications of meaning, and exercise on correct and relevant identifications of meaning.	A teacher asked students to fill out a table matching new concepts and their description. Students were challenged to discuss the meaning of the concepts.
3 Focus on form	Noticing problematic and relevant language forms, providing examples of correct and relevant language forms, correcting use of problematic and relevant language forms, e.g. by giving rules and having pupils give peer feedback.	A teacher gave his students a writing assignment: <i>A day in the life of a medieval man or woman</i> and demonstrated the use of a writing frame to help the students organise and structure their paper.
4 Student output	Asking for reactions, asking for interaction, letting students communicate, stimulating the use of the target language, providing feedback, focusing on corrected output and organising written practice.	A teacher asked students to rewrite lyrics of a pop song on the war in Vietnam and they were encouraged to discuss the meaning of the original lyrics and replace those with a new text with similar content. The newly produced output was presented orally in class.

Table 2. (continued)

## The (CLIL) teacher facilitates:

Category of observation	Performance indicators	Examples from the present study
5 Use of strategies	Eliciting receptive compensation strategies, productive compensation strategies, reflection on strategy use and scaffolding strategy use.	When a student could not give a clear definition of the concept 'heathen', she was stimulated by her teacher to activate her prior knowledge about the rise of Christianity to trigger the lexis she was looking for.

Note. Marking scheme 0–6: 0 = (not observed) insufficient, 2 = sufficient, 4 = good, 6 = excellent

The eight categories of this Spoken English assessment instrument showed a high internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ : 0.97). The original ICELT marking scheme uses five categories of assessment: well below requirements, not to standard, pass, merit, and distinction. Because of the expected adequate level of teachers' language proficiency, we changed this into a four-point scale where 1 contains both the 'well below requirements' and the 'not to standard' qualification, 2 equals 'pass', 3 equals 'merit' and 4 is equal to 'distinction'. According to the BHTs their English language level was either C<sub>1</sub> (Cambridge Advanced English) or C<sub>2</sub> (Cambridge Proficiency English). Therefore, there was no reason to believe that they would perform below the 'pass' level on any of the spoken English requirements (see Table 3 for the descriptions).

For the Spoken English assessment, we selected four experienced English language teachers from our institute; three of them were native speakers, and all four had broad expertise in language assessment. Each videotaped BHT was assessed by two rotating English language teachers. The inter-rater reliability (Intraclass Correlation Coefficient) was not applied as there was too little variance between both raters ( $N=2$ ). An alternative way to demonstrate rater reliability is to show their agreement on observed and rated BHT language use in the eight different categories. In approximately 83% of the ratings there was no (48%) or just a one scale (35%) difference in scores between the raters. In 17% of the ratings there were two scale differences in scores, e.g. 4 and 2. Scores with three or four scale differences did not occur.

**Table 3.** ICELT Spoken English assessment instrument (2015): 'Pass' level qualifications

Requirements	Description
Accuracy	a. understand and identify main ideas and implications of the source text
	b. use clear, generally accurate English for oral presentation and discussion questions
Range and flexibility	c. employ sufficient lexical range and flexibility to convey the content of the source text without distortion
	d. use appropriate professional-to-professional discourse *
Pronunciation	e. Ensure that pronunciation and use of stress and intonation maintain a reasonable level of intelligibility and are helpful in emphasizing key points
Audience awareness	f. select and present relevant information to facilitate understanding
	g. adapt and adjust information effectively to meet the needs and responses of the audience
	h. use appropriate and relevant questions to initiate peer group discussion

\* *Note.* Range and flexibility description d was not used as it does not fit the classroom context.

### 3.5 Procedure

The videotaped lessons (50–80 minutes each) were first used to assess the quality of L2 teaching in the BHTs' history lessons, and secondly to determine the spoken L2 proficiency level of the eight BHTs. They were asked to teach according to the curriculum and to 'business as usual'. The teachers received a modest gift voucher afterwards.

Each of the four student-teachers involved in analysing the L2 pedagogy of the BHTs observed and assessed eight videotaped history lessons, while the first author observed and assessed all fourteen videotaped history lessons. In this way, each lesson was observed and assessed by three observers, one fixed and two rotating observers. The language proficiency of each BHT was observed and assessed by two English language teachers.

### 3.6 Data analysis

To answer the first research question (RQ<sub>1</sub>), we used the L2 Pedagogy assessment instrument and calculated means and standard deviations. Because the unit of analysis is the individual BHT we averaged the cases where the BHT taught two or more history lessons. To answer the second research question (RQ<sub>2</sub>) we used the Spoken English assessment instrument and calculated means and standard deviations. We then analysed the relationship between the BHTs' L2 proficiency and their demonstrated L2 pedagogy when teaching CLIL.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Implementing L2 teaching in CLIL lessons (RQ1)

The mean scores of the eight BHTs combined in Table 4 show substantial differences between the language teaching categories. Teacher input (1), focus on meaning (2), and students' output (4) are strongly connected to language activities that focus on subject content. Categories focus on form (3) and use of strategies (5) are more strongly focused on specific second language learning activities. In accordance to our exploratory analysis they were observed less and received lower ratings (<1.00).

At an individual level and irrespective of their L2 proficiency (C1/C2), all eight BHTs' ratings also show a gap between the BHTs' focus on teaching subject content and (L2) language. All eight teachers show a tendency to focus more on the language activities directly connected to subject content (categories 1, 2 and 4) and less on the language form activities (categories 3 and 5).

**Table 4.** Mean BHT score and individual BHT score (min-max: 0–6) for applying L2-learning categories in lessons; Means, standard deviations between brackets

Teacher	A-H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Proficiency level *		C1	C2	C1	C1	C2	C2	C2	C1
1 Exposure to teacher input	3.58 (0.59)	4.00	4.00	3.83	2.67	2.67	4.17	3.67	3.67
2 Focus on meaning	3.35 (0.94)	3.67	4.33	3.83	1.33	2.78	3.50	3.33	4.00
3 Focus on form	0.74 (0.44)	.50	1.33	.50	.33	.22	.67	1.00	1.33
4 Student output	2.67 (0.73)	2.17	2.67	3.67	2.67	2.56	1.83	3.83	2.00
5 Use of strategies	0.26 (0.58)	.00	.33	.00	.00	.11	.00	.00	1.67

\* Note. Self-reported proficiency levels according to the CEFR: C1 (= Cambridge Advanced English), C2 (= Cambridge Proficiency English)

### 4.2 CLIL teaching and English proficiency levels (RQ2)

The official minimum language proficiency requirement for Dutch CLIL teachers is a B2 language level (CEFR: Council of Europe, 2001) in English (Europees Platform, 2011). All of the involved BHTs reported to have a C1 or C2 level certificate and as such were amply qualified.

The mean scores for the combined BHTs on eight categories of the spoken English assessment were high (between 3.25 and 3.56 on a 4-point scale; See Table 5). There was no significant difference between the BHTs' spoken production and spoken interaction ( $t(7) = .229, p = .786$ ).

At an individual level we see more variance in the BHTs' scores of spoken English. Teachers C and F score a 4.00 on all 8 categories, while Teachers D and H fall behind with scores between 2.00 and 3.00. Looking at the individual differences between the teachers, a CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) proficiency level at C1 or C2 apparently does not automatically imply a high level (merit or distinction) for spoken production and/or spoken interaction. Furthermore, the higher C2 level is no guarantee for higher scores in spoken English, as in this case the C1 qualified Teachers C and A outperform some of their C2 colleagues.

Also, there is no clear relation between the BHT's L2 proficiency level (C1 or C2) and the L2 teaching quality, as is shown in several cases where C1 qualified BHTs reach equal or higher scores than their C2 qualified colleagues. The results in Table 4 show that three language learning categories receive more attention in the history lessons than the two L2 learning categories focus on form and use of strategies. Regardless of the assessed individual proficiency levels of the BHTs it is not obvious that they will keep up the dual focus in their CLIL lessons. This is reflected in the lower scores of focus on form (category 3) or the use strategies to compensate second language deficiencies (category 5).

**Table 5.** Mean BHT score and individual BHT scores of the Spoken English scores (divided into Spoken Production and Spoken Interaction); Means, min-max: 1–4, standard deviations between brackets

Teacher	A-H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Proficiency level		C1	C2	C1	C1	C2	C2	C2	C1
<i>Spoken production</i>									
Accuracy	3.56 (.42)	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.00	3.50	4.00	3.50	3.00
Range & flexibility	3.38 (.69)	4.00	3.50	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.00
Pronunciation	3.50 (.53)	3.50	4.00	4.00	2.50	3.50	4.00	3.50	3.00
Audience awareness	3.50 (.60)	4.00	3.50	4.00	2.50	3.50	4.00	4.00	3.00
<i>Spoken interaction</i>									
Accuracy	3.25 (.85)	4.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	3.50	4.00	4.00	2.00
Range & flexibility	3.25 (.76)	4.00	2.50	4.00	2.00	3.50	4.00	3.50	3.00
Pronunciation	3.50 (.53)	3.50	4.00	4.00	2.50	3.50	4.00	3.50	3.00
Audience awareness	3.25 (.76)	4.00	2.50	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.00
<i>Overall scores</i>									
Spoken production	3.49 (.56)	3.88	3.63	4.00	2.50	3.38	4.00	3.63	3.00
Spoken interaction	3.31 (.73)	3.88	3.00	4.00	2.13	3.38	4.00	3.63	2.75
Total	3.40 (.65)	3.88	3.32	4.00	2.32	3.38	4.00	3.63	2.88

*Note.* Self-reported proficiency levels according to the CEFR: C1 (= Cambridge Advanced English), C2 (= Cambridge Proficiency English)

## 5. Discussion

The goal of this study was to establish how Dutch BHTs implement their role as language teacher when teaching history through English and if the L2 proficiency of Dutch BHTs affects the application of CLIL pedagogy.

When BHTs teach their subject in English using an English-language history textbook and teaching materials, they create a user-friendly L2 context with ample opportunities for students to learn the L2 as they listen, read, speak, interact and write in English. One could argue that because of this the CLIL teacher fulfils her/his role as language teacher, but looking closer at the L2 component of the CLIL lessons a more detailed and refined picture appears.

The BHTs that were observed in this study seemed to be comfortable using English to teach history content but implementing L2 teaching in their CLIL lessons (RQ1) does not seem self-evident. The results of this study show that teaching explicit second language knowledge receives far less attention. This indicates that BHTs feel better equipped to teach L2 that is directly connected to subject content (focus on input, meaning, and output) and are less engaged to teach the linguistic features of L2 (e.g. focus on form and use of strategies). On the other hand, we have to consider that there is no fixed ratio between the five language learning categories used in this study and that the lower scores for focus on form and use of strategies therefore do not automatically imply that the BHTs consider these categories to be less important. Perhaps they lack awareness and knowledge regarding these categories or consider them less important for their role as subject teachers and as a result pay less attention to them when teaching. This conclusion regarding the Dutch BHTs' language focus fits in with earlier research that reported on the displayed preference of CLIL subject teachers to teach content over language (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Koopman et al., 2014; Lo, 2017; Lorenzo, 2007).

Checking the BHTs' L2 proficiency through a twofold assessment of their spoken English confirmed that their Spoken English proficiency on average reached a high level, but individually showed more variation in their scores. Their L2 proficiency supports their role as subject content teachers and suggests that the BHTs are capable of switching between teaching pre-planned presentations and reacting on the spot to e.g. spontaneous student input.

Their Spoken English proficiency also assumes that the BHTs would be able recognise students' form-related language errors (such as grammar, lexis, spelling, pronunciation) and offer appropriate corrective feedback e.g. on the students' oral output. The latter however was hardly observed in this study indicating that the BHTs assign less prominence to these aspects of their role as language teacher. Regarding research question 2 we may therefore conclude that L2 teaching in

CLIL in general does not seem affected by the BHT's L2 proficiency. We could not find significant differences in L2 teaching between C1 or C2 qualified BHTs.

At another level BHTs' L2 proficiency both does and does not affect their L2 teaching in CLIL. On the one hand the BHTs' L2 proficiency enables them to especially teach content related language (exposure to input, focus on meaning and student output) in the L2. On the other hand, that same L2 proficiency does not lead BHTs to teach language related matter with the same intensity, as BHTs seem hesitant (cf. Oattes et al., 2018) to engage in teaching more specific L2 features (focus on form, use of strategies) and offering corrective feedback

There are a number of reasons that could explain the observed differences in the BHTs' L2 teaching. For many BHTs a CLIL course is the only means to prepare for an additional focus on language teaching within subject teaching. Can such a course prepare the BHT for her/his additional role as language teacher or facilitator? As non-language teachers with limited awareness and knowledge of second language acquisition (Andrews, 2001; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Koopman et al., 2014; Lo, 2017; Lorenzo, 2007), BHTs may hesitate to get involved in explicit linguistic matters, like teaching spelling or grammar rules. The observed lack of corrective feedback by the BHTs on students' spoken English could be another example of a limited focus on specific L2 teaching. Also, there often is the pressure of the subject curriculum (Bonnet & Breidbach, 2017) which could lead to a more prominent teacher focus on covering subject content and spending less time on developing students' L2 proficiency. A CLIL subject teacher after all only has two or three lessons per week to teach the subject in the L2, but the students have about 15 hours per week to learn and use the L2 in five or six different subjects (Europees Platform, 2011).

### 5.1 Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research

This study used a small sample of fourteen recorded CLIL lessons of eight BHTs, all of whom volunteered to participate. This limits the possibility to generalise the results that were found. It would be useful to know if a large-scale random study and an increased number of observed lessons of the BHTs' use of L2 in the CLIL classroom would confirm or refute the pattern in the BHTs L2 teaching as we have established in this study. On the other hand, our findings most likely apply to more CLIL subject teachers because the attempt to balance teaching subject content and teaching L2 is a generic challenge in bilingual education (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Lorenzo, 2007; Nikula et al., 2016).

Future research could increase our insight into integrating language in content by subject teachers. What if BHTs focus on teaching their students to think, talk and write like a historian? Several researchers (see Achugar & Schleppegrell,



2006; Coffin, 2006; De Oliveira, 2011; Llinares & Peña, 2015; Lorenzo, 2013; Monte-Sano, 2008; Morton, 2010, 2017; Schleppegrell & De Oliveira, 2006) have shown that the language of history consists of specific genres each with its own register. Discussing assignments involving cause and consequence, multi-perspectivity, chronology, sourcing etc. demands the ability to use the right wording. A genre-based approach could be a promising starting point for the creation of an appropriate subject-specific L2 curriculum. New history textbooks written by subject and language specialists with clearly described subject content and language goals, would be a practical aid for BHTs.

On the short run BHTs may improve the focus on language teaching in their CLIL lessons by setting clearly defined language learning outcomes in the curriculum and language goals for each CLIL lesson (Lorenzo, 2007). Also, the recognition and employment of translanguaging (cf. Butzkamm, 1998; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cummins, 2007; Gierlinger, 2015; Lasagabaster, 2013; Lin, 2015; Moore & Nikula, 2016; Nikula & Moore, 2016), or the deliberate shuttling between the mother tongue and the L2, in the Dutch CLIL classroom may reduce the subject teacher's hesitation to engage in specific second language learning activities. It opens up the possibility for both students and teachers to make additional use of the familiar mother tongue and familiar L1 concepts, which could lower the threshold when teaching and learning the L2. These L2 approaches seem relevant for the further development of second language learning through CLIL.

## 5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, it appears that Dutch BHTs succeed in teaching the second language when it is focused on subject content (*exposure to teacher input, focus on meaning, students' output*). We also noticed that Dutch BHTs tend to be less engaged to address specific L2 language issues (*focus on form, use of strategies*) although their L2 proficiency is relatively high (C1–C2).

Based on these results it is difficult to uphold that CLIL teachers' dual focus on teaching content and language demonstrates that 'they are interwoven, even if the emphasis might shift from one to the other' (Coyle et al., 2010, p.1). This study shows that they are partly interwoven, but that the emphasis does not seem to shift as the BHTs' focus predominantly is on content. Due to a different teacher perspective or to limited knowledge and awareness of second language teaching (Andrews, 2001; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Koopman et al., 2014; Lo, 2017; Lorenzo, 2007) one should not expect the subject teachers' role as language teacher to be of the same intensity and quality and as her/his role as professionally educated content teacher.

Adjusting the definition of CLIL to the reality of the CLIL classroom should therefore be considered. De Graaff (2013, p.11) proposed a definition with less emphasis on specific language learning, which would fit this new CLIL perspective: “CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach with an additional focus on language for the learning and teaching of content, which also supports language learning”. This way CLIL keeps its double focus on both content and language, but without asking too much of the CLIL subject teacher who primarily uses L2 to teach subject content. Perhaps the role of the subject teacher could be that of a L2 learning facilitator creating a user-friendly L2-context while the English-language teacher, being the language specialist, could teach the specific L2 linguistic features.

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