CLIL and non-CLIL students' beliefs about language

Liss Kerstin Sylvén

University of Gothenburg, Sweden

lisskerstin.sylven@ped.gu.se

Abstract

This article presents the findings of an innovative qualitative study involving one CLIL (content and language integrated learning) student and one student in a parallel, non-CLIL strand at high school level in Sweden. The aim of the study was to investigate differences in students' beliefs about language. The success of second (L2) and foreign language (FL) learning depends to a large degree on individual differences (Dörnyei, 2005; Skehan, 1991). Differences are normally elicited through questionnaires, interviews, and/or observations. In the present study, the aim was to get direct access to the informants' own perspectives, without the content being too directed through predetermined questions. In this study, students were asked to take photos illustrating how they view (a) their L1 (Swedish), and (b) the FL/L2 English. Then the photos were thematically organized by the researcher. Subsequently, the thematic organization and the photos themselves were discussed with each of the informants during an interview. The informants were asked to elaborate on each theme and/or picture as to why and how it illustrates the respective language for them. The findings reveal substantial differences between the two informants in their views on their L1 and FL/L2, with the CLIL student highlighting communication rather than seeing the two languages as separate systems, and the non-CLIL student seeing language rather the other way around.

Keywords: individual differences, learner beliefs, CLIL, visual narratives

1. Introduction

The role of individual differences (IDs) in language learning has been recognized for a long time. Dörnyei (2005) identifies *creativity, willingness to communicate*, *aptitude*, *motivation*, *self-esteem*, *language learning styles* and *strategies*, *personality traits*, *anxiety*, and *learner beliefs* as the most salient IDs to take into account when trying to understand the process of second (L2) and foreign language (FL) learning. For this paper, the ID *learner beliefs* is the focus of the study, as illustrated in learners' photographs and narrated in the subsequent interviews.

The growing interest in learner beliefs in the area of language learning is evidenced, among other things, in the increasing number of publications taking into account both teacher and learner (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011; Ellis, 2008; Ferreira Barcelos & Kalaja, 2013; Kalaja, Menezes, & Barcelos, 2008; see also Barcelos, this volume). All these studies add pieces to the patchwork of understanding the importance of learner beliefs, what they are, how they interact with other IDs and factors relevant for language learning, and how best to deal with them. The present study aims at filling a gap in this field of research, namely, how FL/L2 learners perceive their first language (L1) and their FL/L2 (in this context English) through the camera lens.

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is an umbrella term covering methods used in educational settings to combine the teaching of a subject, such as history or biology, with the learning of an FL/L2 (Marsh, 2002; Tedick & Cammarata, 2012). In the Swedish context, English is by far the most common target language used in CLIL. English is also frequently encountered in Swedish everyday life, and there is an ongoing debate whether it should be considered as an L2 or an FL in Sweden (Hyltenstam, 2004; Viberg, 2000). Officially, it is still seen as an FL, even though for certain individuals, it may very well be an L2 (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2014). As a consequence, when referring to English in this paper, the abbreviation FL/L2 is used. As we know very little about learner beliefs in connection with CLIL, the present study aims at investigating any possible differences in students' views on language by using a qualitative approach involving one CLIL student and one student in a parallel, non-CLIL (where the L1 Swedish is used as the medium of instruction, and the FL/L2 English is studied as a separate subject) strand in upper secondary school in Sweden. The intent is to gain insights into the thoughts about language among adolescent FL/L2 learners in order to identify possible underlying assumptions that might influence the language learning process and further add to our understanding of CLIL and non-CLIL students.

2. Theoretical and contextual framework

2.1. Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)

Learning an FL is most likely easiest when surrounded by people using that language and in an environment where the FL is virtually the only means at hand to make oneself understood. Under such circumstances, large amounts of authentic language input are available for the learner, as well as opportunities for output and interaction with others in the FL. All these factors, input, output, and interaction, are considered vital for successful learning to take place (e.g., Gass, 1997; Long, 1981). Such ideal conditions, however, are rarely available for the individual FL learner, who rather has to settle for language classes offered in an educational setting. The immersion method in Canada (Genesee, 1987) and, later, CLIL in Europe (Marsh, 2002) and elsewhere (Lin & Man, 2010) are approaches which aim to increase the amount of both input, output, and interaction for FL learners by using the FL as the medium of instruction in school subjects such as biology, history, and mathematics.

Immersion, CLIL and other types of bilingual education have attracted a great deal of interest from the research community, evident not least from the number of edited volumes (Dalton-Puffer, Nikula, & Smit, 2010; Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols Martín, 2008; Ruiz de Zarobe, Sierra, & Gallardo del Puerto, 2011), specialist journals and symposia as well as thematic strands devoted to CLIL at large international conferences. The principle aim of CLIL is to increase learners' exposure to a target language and, in so doing, also increase chances for more successful learning. Several studies have reported that this intended aim is being met. For instance, Navés and Victori (2010) showed that CLIL students in grades 7 and 9 outperform their non-CLIL peers in higher grades in English fluency, lexical complexity and accuracy. Admiraal, Westhoff and de Bot (2006) and Navés (2011) both found positive effects of CLIL on reading comprehension. Furthermore, Jimenéz Catalán, Ruiz de Zarobe and Cenoz (2006) investigated vocabulary knowledge among Spanish students and found CLIL students to have a larger English lexicon than their non-CLIL peers. Similar findings have been reported in studies from other contexts (Klippel, 2003; Zydatiss, 2007). However, CLIL is not always the panacea to L2 learning, as it sometimes has been depicted, as there may be other factors influencing the positive outcomes reported. Bruton (2011), for instance, criticizes the lack of baseline data in many studies, and Rumlich (2013) highlights the fact that students opting for the CLIL approach seem to be higher achievers than those choosing non-CLIL. As pointed out by Sylvén (2013), CLIL has not led to an increase in English proficiency compared to non-CLIL education in the Swedish context, which may be explained by four factors:

lack of framework, lack of teacher training, late introduction, and large amounts of exposure to English outside of school.

One of the underlying assumptions about CLIL is that by using language in social interaction in the classroom in order to construct meaning of a specific subject content, the language will more or less automatically be learnt. However, in order for any CLIL approach to be more successful, Lyster (2007), among others, calls for a counterbalanced approach, where authentic input of the L2 is offered together with explicit language learning including grammar, in order to facilitate and improve the L2 learning process. The stance taken in this paper is that although language is co-constructed in a social context, the cognitive process of L2 learning takes place within the individual L2 learner's mind. It is therefore of interest to learn more about individuals' own idiosyncratic beliefs and assumptions as they influence the learning process (e.g., Cotterall, 1995; Dweck, 2006; Skehan, 1991), and, further, to see if there are possible differences at group level between CLIL and non-CLIL students.

2.2. Learner beliefs

Learner beliefs "play a central role in learning experience and achievements" (Cotterall, 1999, p. 494), and are an important factor to account for in FL/L2 learning research. Many studies, therefore, focus on beliefs in connection with language learning. To do this, a widely used instrument is the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) questionnaire (Horwitz, 1987), which was specifically designed for the purpose of tapping into learner beliefs about language learning. Horwitz (1999) reviews several studies using BALLI where possible differences between cultural groups are investigated and finds that rather than specific groups being different from one another, large intergroup variations were found suggesting that individual factors such as age and language learning context play a crucial role in learner beliefs.

Cotterall (1999) uses her own set of questions to investigate subareas of learner beliefs in need of further investigation and finds that learners hold beliefs about metacognitive strategies, feedback, self-efficacy, self-esteem and their own ability as a language learner. These would thus be fruitful areas for further research to extend our understanding of the broader concept of beliefs. In this paper, the focus is on the subarea of learners' beliefs about language *per se*.

In an in-depth meta-analysis of three studies on learner beliefs, Ellis (2008) concludes that not only do the dynamic and situated beliefs among learners influence the language learning process, but also that teachers' beliefs are important to take into account. Ellis suggests that becoming aware of both learners' and teachers' beliefs would be beneficial in the FL/L2 classroom. In a

CLIL context, these may be relevant findings to take into account, where an FL/L2 is used as the medium of instruction and language is learned in nontraditional ways.

Studies looking into learner beliefs have typically used questionnaires to elicit data. However, as pointed out by Kalaja, Alanen, and Dufva (2008), other measures than questionnaires are perhaps needed in order to get a better understanding of individuals' beliefs about language learning, and thus they call for more qualitative methods such as written narratives or more specifically visual narratives. They feel that traditional methods were inadequate in their quest for a more in-depth understanding of beliefs and therefore find the visual narrative approach innovative and useful. Others have followed suit with this approach (Alanen, Kalaja, & Dufva, 2013; Dufva, Kalaja, & Alanen, 2011), and, most recently, Kalaja (in press) asked students attending the teacher training programme in Finland to illustrate themselves as in-service teachers in the future, teaching a foreign language class by drawing a picture. By combining visual and oral narratives richer renderings of the "multiplicity of meanings present in the views held by a learner" (Kalaja et al., 2008, p. 198) can be captured.

Whereas photographs are used in other fields of research, such as ethnography, as a method of gathering valuable empirical data, they have not been used to any great extent within the field of FL/L2 learning. One of the very few studies using photographs taken by the informants themselves, and thus similar in approach to the present study, was conducted by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008), who focused on informal L2 learning among 14-15 year-olds. A total of seven students took photographs illustrating objects, places and events in their everyday lives where English played a role. The authors found that English indeed plays an important role in these young people's lives, and that they encounter English daily in school as well as outside, through the entertainment industry, tourism and also in many of their hobbies. By asking the informants to use the camera, the researchers were able to get access to their everyday activities in connection with English in a way that would have been very difficult otherwise. In a similar vein, looking into the narratives of identity among young learners of English in Hong Kong, Besser and Chik (2014) asked learners to photograph their everyday English learning opportunities. They find socio-economic class to be an important indicator of identity development and argue that the use of photographs is a fruitful way of capturing participants' thoughts in richer detail.

An aspect which is not addressed in the studies accounted for above is learners' thoughts and beliefs about language *per se*. The present study uses photographs to elicit learner beliefs about language and thereby aims at filling that gap.

2.3. Individual differences and CLIL

This article reports on findings from students involved in CLIL and non-CLIL settings respectively and examines their beliefs about languages. Whilst there are no studies about learner beliefs and CLIL, there has been work on other IDs which is of relevance. The most commonly researched ID in connection with CLIL is motivation. In many studies, a preconception seems to be that motivation is an inherent characteristic of CLIL (Fehling, 2008; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009). However, without having baseline data at the pre-CLIL level, it is difficult to claim any such intrinsic feature of CLIL. Recently, Sylvén and Thompson (2015) found that CLIL students are significantly more motivated than their non-CLIL peers already from the commencement of CLIL. These findings corroborate Rumlich (2013), who refers to the selection of students into CLIL versus non-CLIL strands as "a creaming effect" (p. 185). In other words, it is the cream of the crop, or the most able and motivated students, who opt for CLIL.

Another ID studied in connection with CLIL is Willingness to Communicate (WTC). Menezes and Juan-Garau (2014) focussed on WTC in a study including CLIL and non-CLIL students and administered two questionnaires. The results clearly show the CLIL students to have a significantly higher WTC than the non-CLIL ones. Similarly, Pihko (2007) found the level of WTC to be higher among CLIL than non-CLIL students. Neither of these studies reported baseline, pre-CLIL data, though, and it is therefore difficult to know whether the findings are the result of CLIL or were pre-existing among those who chose the CLIL option.

Anxiety is yet another ID studied in CLIL contexts. Thompson and Sylvén (in press) investigated CLIL and non-CLIL students at the beginning of a CLIL programme, and the results indicate that already before the start of CLIL there are significant differences in levels of anxiety between the two groups. The CLIL students suffer less from anxiety and have higher levels of self-confidence as regards L2 use in comparison to the non-CLIL students. In other words, when CLIL is an optional choice, students opting for CLIL are less anxious and more self-confident than their non-CLIL peers already before CLIL starts. Needless to say, this is crucial information to take into account when analysing possible effects of CLIL.

Indeed, whenever CLIL is an optional choice (as is the case in the Swedish context) and not mandatory for all students, such findings are not at all surprising. Rather, it is to be expected that students who are more proficient in and less anxious about English are also the ones choosing CLIL where English is the target language. What is important is therefore to be aware of these baseline differences whenever effects of CLIL are analysed.

Given the importance of learner beliefs and other IDs in the language learning process and the alleged language learning benefits of CLIL, it was decided in

this study to take a closer look at CLIL and non-CLIL students' beliefs about language. The specific research questions addressed by this study are:

1. What beliefs are reflected in adolescent students' photos of their L1 and the FL/L2 English?
2. Are there differences between CLIL and non-CLIL students?

3. Methodology

The present study is part of a large-scale longitudinal research project, the CLISS project,[1] the overall aim of which is to study the proficiency and progress in written academic English and Swedish among CLIL as well as non-CLIL upper secondary level students (grades 10-12) in Sweden (for details, see Sylvén & Ohlander, 2014).

3.1. The Swedish context

Sweden, where the present study was conducted, is a fairly small country, with approximately 9 million inhabitants, located in the very northern part of Europe. Swedish is the official majority language, and there are five official minority languages (Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkeli, Romani and Sami). Altogether, more than 150 languages are spoken in Sweden, according to the website of Institutet för språk och folkminnen (http://www.sprakochfolkminnen.se). In the country, there has long been an awareness of the need to learn other languages and nowadays English is introduced as the first foreign language in school already in grade 1 (Skolverket, 2014). English is also encountered to a great extent outside of school in everyday life, and there is an ongoing debate whether English should be regarded as a second rather than a foreign language (Hyltenstam, 2004; Viberg, 2000). For instance, English TV productions and movies are subtitled rather than dubbed, English words and phrases are often found in ads, new terms in sports and IT, among other areas, are used in their original English form rather than being translated into a Swedish equivalent. Studies have shown that young people spend a lot of their spare time doing things in English on the computer, for instance, playing digital games, and that this extramural exposure to English correlates positively with their learning outcomes in English in school (Oscarson & Apelgren, 2005; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2012, 2014; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012). Indeed, in many of these studies, it is shown that learners believe they learn most of their English outside of school. Therefore, an important background

---

[1] Funded by the Swedish Research Council, project number 2010-5376

factor to control for in any study involving FL/L2 learning is the amount of extramural exposure to that language. In the CLISS project, this is done by using a so-called language diary in which students are asked to indicate all types of encounters they had with English during one week. Information from this diary was also used to identify prospects for participation in the present study, as explained below.

3.2. Procedure

The present study takes an emic perspective, giving the students themselves the chance to interpret the task, take the photographs, and, in the subsequent interview, talk about what the photographs illustrate.

As students' exposure to English outside of school was deemed to be a decisive factor to control for in the present study, information gained from a language diary as described above was used and a list was established where students with high amounts of exposure were found at the top, and those with the least at the bottom. Individuals with high and low exposure to English outside of school were targeted, and an even distribution between gender and CLIL versus non-CLIL was aimed for. A total of 20 individuals were identified, and an e-mail was sent out to them, outlining the details and aims of the present study and asking for voluntary participation. A reward of two movie tickets and something to eat and drink during the interview were offered for those who were willing to take part. The mail was sent out during the very last semester before graduation, which had a detrimental effect on the number of affirmative responses. Many students replied that they were too involved in studying for exams and/or taking part in various activities in connection with the final term. However, eight students replied that they were willing to participate in the study, four girls (two CLIL, two non-CLIL) and four boys (two CLIL, two non-CLIL). For this paper, two of the boys, one CLIL and one non-CLIL, were selected for detailed analysis. The reason for choosing these individuals was that they were the ones who shared most commonalities (see below for further details about the participants) as evidenced in a background questionnaire and the language diary. It was therefore deemed as particularly interesting to investigate if their beliefs may help explain why one of them chose the CLIL option and the other did not.

When an agreement about participation was reached, an e-mail was sent out to each of the students. In this e-mail, the study was outlined, and the specific task was presented. The students were informed that participation was voluntary, that they could opt out at any time, and they were ensured anonymity in the subsequent dissemination of results. More specifically, the task the participants were asked to do was to take approximately five photos per day and per language during one week illustrating (a) their L1 (Swedish), and (b) their

FL/L2 (English). Several of the participants asked for information about how the task should be interpreted. As it was deemed important to gain access to participants' own views and thoughts and not steer them in any particular direction (cf. Benson & Lor, 1999; Kalaja, in press; Ryan & Mercer, 2012), no such further information and/or elaboration was offered, but it was left for the students themselves to make their own interpretations. The photographs were sent in to the researcher, who then organized them thematically. The photos were printed out on separate sheets of paper and placed in piles, where each pile represented one theme. Each pile was then analysed again, and some reordering of the photographs took place. This was repeated until no further reordering was deemed necessary, and enough themes had been found to cover all photographs. Subsequently, the thematic organization and the photos themselves were discussed with each of the informants during an interview. The interviews were all conducted on a one-to-one basis in Swedish, and they were audio-recorded. No other guide than the photographs, with their respective themes, was used during the interviews. We met either at a local coffee shop or in the school cafeteria and the interviews took between 30 and 60 minutes. During the interviews, the informants were asked to elaborate on each theme and/or picture as to why and how it illustrates the respective language to them. The recordings were transcribed using the software NVivo. The transcripts were subject to analysis using the themes of the photographs as the starting point. The interpretation of the photographs was supported by quotes from the interviews, and in some cases, the photographs were reorganized so as to fit the intended meaning, rather than the interpretation made by the researcher. The coding of the photographs, together with the interview transcripts was repeated until saturation was reached, and no fresh codes could be assigned as inspired by grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The grounded theory approach to data analysis was used in order to allow the data to "speak for itself" and to reduce the influence of preconceived notions on the process. In order to ensure anonymity for the participants, all personal information has been removed from the photos included here as illustrations and pseudonyms have been used throughout.

3.3. Participants

As described above, two individuals were selected for analysis in this paper. They are two boys, here referred to by the pseudonyms Eric and Vincent, one in a CLIL class and the other in a non-CLIL class. Both are in their final term of upper secondary school. They have both grown up in the area where they presently live and are both enrolled in the natural science strand, which is academically the most demanding strand in Swedish upper secondary school, theoretically

rather than practically oriented, and one of the preparatory strands for higher education. Both Eric and Vincent report their wish to enrol in engineering studies and plan on entering higher education after the summer break. Both of them have high levels of exposure to English outside of school, as evidenced in their language diaries (see above). Although obviously IDs mean that the two can differ in personality and other aspects, in terms of their contextual circumstances both share many commonalities.

Eric said that he found the task of photographing "English" and "Swedish" fun but challenging, and he was not quite sure he had done it the way he was supposed to. Vincent said that he thought the task had been intriguing and appealing to him from the start, much because he likes and spends much time photographing in his everyday life. It was clarified that there were no "rights" or "wrongs" about how to do this, but it was up to each individual to make his/her own interpretation of the task to illustrate Swedish and English in a number of photographs (see the procedure section above).

4. The photographs

4.1. Eric

In the interview, Eric explained that he joined the CLIL program initially because he thought it would be nice to learn more English than what would be possible only in the language arts classes. He was good at English already from an early age and claims that before joining the CLIL program, he learnt most English outside of school. In 4th to 6th grade, for instance, he played a great deal of digital games in English and in doing so acquired a large English vocabulary. His photos were thematized into two themes: school (7 photographs) and screens (12 photographs). The screen theme consists of photographs of computer and TV-screens.

Some of the photos depict ongoing games, and he recalls from his younger gaming career: *"I was really motivated to understand what was happening in the game."* He recalls how he learnt words and phrases he would never even have encountered anywhere else than in these games. He offers the phrase *excavation site* as an example of something he learnt from one of his gaming experiences. He still continues to play digital games, but to a lesser extent, and says that he now also learns a great deal of English in school. Pointing to photos taken in chemistry and math class, Eric says: *"I definitely think we get better at this kind of English."* Several of Eric's photos are from the history, chemistry and English classrooms, subjects which are all taught in English. He says he enjoys using English as the medium of instruction in school and says he has no problems doing so. Apparently,

he believes that studying in English is beneficial, both regarding content and language, and he clearly connects English with school to a large extent.

One of Eric's photographs illustrates his notebook, with notes from chemistry class. From this photograph, it is evident that not only is the subject taught through English, but Eric also uses English for his own notes in class. The notebook is interesting as he does not seem to revert to his L1 but uses English also for his notes. This challenges to some extent the general belief that cognitive activities take place in the L1 even in an FL/L2 context.

About the English language class, Eric comments,

> *English vocabulary. I'm trying to learn. Not sure if this English* [i.e. in the English language class] *helps us in our other CLIL subjects. The level is really high, spelling needs to be correct, and so does grammar. In the other subjects it doesn't matter if it's correct or not.*

He illustrates the English language class with a photo of a word list page in the English book. Given the underlying assumption that in CLIL language and content are two equally important integrated parts, Eric's thoughts are intriguing. It seems as though when studied as a language, English, in Eric's view, is difficult and demanding. This stands in sharp contrast to his comment above about getting "*better at this kind of English*" when it is used as the medium of instruction.

Eric also uses English to a great extent in his spare time, among other things for chatting online, playing computer games, or having Skype conversations with friends. He explains their use of English by saying, *"Skype, computer games, chats – all in English. A lot of writing. Bad English – nobody cares."* This quote further illustrates the dichotomy between English as a school subject and as a communicative tool.

About his L1, Eric says:

> *Well, I think that if you get used to switching to English too fast when you know an expression in English without thinking about what it is in Swedish, well then my Swedish will suffer. But I do use a lot of Swedish expressions also!*

Eric did not make a clear distinction as to whether the photos illustrated Swedish or English. This indicates that to him there are not clear boundaries between the two languages. This view is also strengthened in the interview, where he says, *"We switch between languages and mix them all the time."* His beliefs are that languages are meant to be used for communication, and as long as those involved in a particular communicative situation understand, it makes no difference what languages are used and mixed. However, Eric admits that his L1 Swedish is the one in which it is easiest to express himself and ends by saying, *"I*

know English really well. It's like another L1. But of course it is easier to use Swedish." To sum up Eric's beliefs, he does not seem to distinguish between the two languages but rather believes they are both to be used for communication. However, he seems to dichotomize between English when studied as a subject and when used as the medium of instruction.
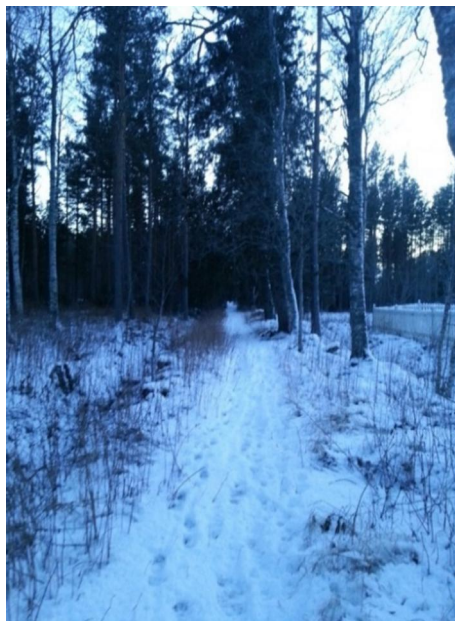
4.2. Vincent

While Eric sent in fewer photographs than expected (see the procedure section), Vincent did the opposite and delivered a total of 53 photographs. During the interview, he explained that photography is one of his favourite pastimes and one of the reasons he thought this task was appealing. Vincent's photos were thematized into three broad themes: exteriors (31), interiors (13), and school (5). There were also photographs that were difficult to interpret and thus also impossible to put into a certain theme. In these instances, the interview was very helpful in allowing Vincent to explain and clarify his beliefs as represented in his photographs.

To start off the interview, Vincent talked a little bit about why he had chosen to attend the non-CLIL program of the natural science strand in high school and said that he thought studying several subjects through the medium of English may have been a little too much for him: *"I like studying English the way I do now, but I don't want it to get too serious. I wouldn't want to be educated with English all the time."* He made it clear that CLIL was never an option that he considered.

Figure 1 is a photograph in the exterior theme. What we see is a path in the woods. This photo, according to Vincent, illustrates how,

> *the Swedish language manages to find its way forward all the time, despite the threats posed by other languages, in particular English. The trees surrounding this path symbolize these constant threats. So there are many hurdles in the way.*

He explains that he considers English with the ongoing influx of words and phrases into other languages to be a threat to Swedish but says that he is convinced that Swedish will live on despite this. It is as though he believes the two languages to be two distinct forces, with human characteristics, almost as individuals constantly fighting one another, with the strongest destined to survive.

Figure 1 A path in the woods

Another photograph in this theme, presented in Figure 2, is of a typical Swedish landscape with some old buildings in the distance and with snow on the ground. These are surroundings in which he grew up, and Vincent sees them as very Swedish. Thus, he connects his L1 to his home environment and believes that the environment and the language are inseparable.

Figure 2 Snowy landscape

Figure 3 includes a photo of a large lake near to where Vincent lives. In the photo, we see a lot of birds swimming around on the surface.

> *Language is like water — broad and deep. What you see in your everyday life is the broadness of the language, but then there is so much more to language than what meets the eye on the surface. The deeper you dive down into the language, the more you learn. And you have to dive deep to find the really sophisticated kind of language.*

Once again, Vincent's belief that language can be seen as an individual becomes evident. In order to learn more about the individual, be it language or a human being, deeper levels of familiarity need to be reached.

Figure 3 Birds swimming on a lake

An illustration of the second theme, interiors, is found in a photo of a typical Swedish rug. This colourful rug, according to Vincent, illustrates the multicultural Sweden of today, where people from all over the world gather and try to communicate through Swedish: *"Swedish becomes like a common denominator for all of us living here, regardless where you originally come from."* Here it becomes clear that Vincent does not see the expanding ethnic diversity in Sweden as a threat but rather as a vibrant addition to the speakers of Swedish. This accentuates his belief that Swedish is the language that should be, and is, used in Sweden.

Another interior photo shows a completely white wall. When asked about the meaning of that photo, Vincent explained, *"this is an illustration of how monotonous English is when you don't know it too well. You use the same words over and over."* This quote should be compared with what he says about a photo of almost total darkness, but with a bit of light coming in at the upper left hand corner: *"There's some light coming in there. English becomes brighter and brighter the more I learn."* Then, there is a picture with a colourful teacup, which illustrates Vincent's progress in English, and that to him the language becomes richer as his proficiency increases. The teacup, he says, was chosen because tea is so strongly culturally connected to England.

However, there are numerous photos that are very dark, some with light spots, others almost completely black. This, Vincent says, *"illustrates the darkness of the English language. It is full of swearwords and such. I watch a lot of American TV-programmes and all I hear is swearing."* Again, though, he refers to his own level of proficiency in English, and says that, of course, there are positive things about English also, and that the more he learns, the more he is able to pick up also other words, apart from swearwords in TV programmes and films.

Thus, to Vincent, language can be illustrated by colour: white when the level of proficiency in the language is low, and more colourful the more proficient one becomes. It is also evident that Vincent believes swearwords to be the dark side of language as he illustrates this aspect with dark, or even black, photographs. Finally, a few words about two pictures which were especially difficult to interpret before the interview. They both illustrate a devastated room, and one of them is shown in Figure 4. It turns out that they were taken right after a horrendous storm had hit Vincent's home town and destroyed parts of his house. In one of the photos, we see how the window has been covered with planks and plastic, after the roof had hit the glass window, and, as shown in Figure 4, the mess caused by the broken window. But how does that fit into the meaning of English and/or Swedish?

> *This is catastrophe. It is not what language is now but what might happen to Swedish in the long run. The more words from other languages come into Swedish, the worse it will get. But then, just like I had to do with my room, we just have to start cleaning it up.*

Here, the interpretation that Vincent sees language as a force or an individual is strengthened. These photos illustrate how he believes English forcefully tries to attack Swedish, but also how Swedish, with the help of its speakers, can recover from the attack by cleaning up the mess.
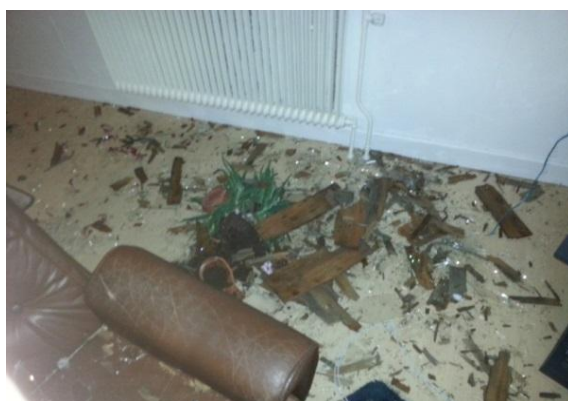
Figure 4 Room devastated by storm

To sum up Vincent's data, he has many diverse and complex thoughts about language. He seems to view the L1 and the FL/L2 as separate entities, and each language as something or someone in need of being safeguarded from external influences.

5. Discussion

The overriding research question guiding this study was how a CLIL and a non-CLIL student illustrate their beliefs about their L1 and an FL/L2. The data reveal interesting insights into the minds of two adolescent boys, Eric and Vincent. There are certainly similarities but also a great deal of disparity in their respective accounts. The two boys use both English and Swedish to a large extent in and outside of school, both say that the two languages are necessary in today's world, and both claim to be fairly proficient in their L2, English. However, while Eric does not seem to bother much about when he uses which language, Vincent has thoughts about the nature of each of the two languages and how they are two distinct forces or individuals that are in competition with one another. Eric apparently considers languages to be communicative tools, to be used to convey a message, and if that purpose is fulfilled, they have done their job. He pays no particular attention to whether the language in question is used correctly or not and says "*bad English. Nobody cares*" about the language used in Skype conversations, chats and games. This is an illustration of what in Saussurian terms would be the "parole" part of language, that is, the individual use of language for communicative needs (Chambers, 1995). In other words, language is for Eric merely a tool.

Vincent, on the other hand, seems to be concerned more with the "langue," to continue in the Saussurian vein. In other words, language to him is in itself a system with rules that need to be adhered to. He worries about mixing the languages and feels that Swedish might be in need of some cleaning up as there has been such a major influx of English into it.

Both "langue" and "parole" are necessary in the FL/L2 learning process as they are the two sides of the language coin. It seems as though Eric and Vincent represent one side each, and that they both would benefit from learning more about the other's point of view. Eric, in order to become proficient in other, more academic areas of English, would benefit from learning more about the system, that is, grammar, spelling, and so on. Vincent, on the other hand, would probably profit from having some of Eric's undauntedness as regards the communicative use of English.

As we saw, Vincent was not interested in attending the CLIL programme as he thought that would entail too much work and because he liked learning English the way he did, that is, as a separate subject. This view is in line with his

thinking that languages are separate systems that need barriers to reduce the influence on one another. It may also be a sign of possible underlying language anxiety, that is, that he is worried about using a language he does not know well enough. This interpretation coincides with the findings on differences in levels of anxiety among CLIL and non-CLIL students in Thompson and Sylvén (in press). Eric, on the other hand, thought that CLIL was the perfect way to both learn a subject and English at the same time. Interestingly, and also in line with his comments about languages as a means to communicate with others, he did not consider the English language class to be very helpful. Rather, he complained about how everything has to be "correct" in English class and said that in the regular CLIL classes it really does not matter if the language used correctly or not. This is entirely in line with Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta's (2008) findings where the informants argued that school English and the English they use outside of school are two different entities. One informant says: "When we talk with our friends we don't much care about grammar or word order or anything" (Nikula & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2008, p. 177), which in the present study is paralleled by Eric's comment about his conversations with friends: "*bad English – nobody cares*".

Finally, it is fascinating to see how Vincent uses colours to describe various aspects of the meaning of languages and how he clearly distinguishes between Swedish and English. To illustrate his L1, he uses a bright and colourful rug. The colours, he says, elucidate the many different people who speak Swedish. In stark contrast to this, many photographs illustrating English are black or white. The white photographs illustrate Vincent's personal feelings about not knowing the language well enough and how he is forced to use the same words over and over again. The black pictures, on the other hand, illustrate the dark side of English, namely the numerous swearwords. He admits that there is a dark side to Swedish, too, but there is so much more to that language that it is not as noticeable to him as it is in English. As he progresses in his learning of English, though, it becomes less black-and-white, and this he illustrates by a photograph of a bright teacup.

The metaphors of force, individual, colour and a cup that becomes more colourful the more it is filled with knowledge give fascinating insights into the beliefs about language in an adolescent FL/L2 learner. Such insights would be difficult to elicit through questionnaires and interviews alone and serve as an example of the usefulness of visual narratives, and specifically photographs, in connection with FL/L2 learning.

6. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

The views accounted for in this paper represent two individuals and their idiosyncratic views of their L1 and FL/L2, and, therefore, no generalisations can be

made. However, it is intriguing to note the CLIL student sees both the L1 and FL/L2 as communicative tools. In other words, language is merely to be used to convey information and to communicate with others. In sharp contrast to this, the non-CLIL student sees both languages as separate systems, or individuals, that need to be safeguarded from external influences. From a pedagogical point of view, these different ways of seeing language are of interest as they most probably entail different motives to learn an FL/L2. They probably also influence other IDs such as WTC, anxiety, and language learning strategies.

In line with the findings of Ellis (2008), the use of photographs to elicit individual learners' beliefs about language may be a fruitful activity in the classroom in order to raise the awareness of this complex area of IDs. Such activities could also facilitate individualized FL/L2 teaching. Specifically in a CLIL context, such activities could lead to a better understanding of how best to achieve a successful and true integration of the learning of an FL/L2 with that of content.

References

Admiraal, W., Westhoff, G., & de Bot, K. (2006). Evaluation of bilingual secondary education in the Netherlands: Students' language proficiency in English. *Educational Research and Evaluation, 12*(1), 75-93.

Alanen, R., Kalaja, P., & Dufva, H. (2013). Visuaaliset narratiivit ja valmistuvien aineenopettajien käsitykset vieraiden kielten opettamisesta. In T. Kei-sanen, E. Kärkkäinen, M. Rauniomaa, P. Siitonen, & M. Siromaa (Eds.), AF-inLA-e 5 - Soveltavan kielitieteen julkaisuja (pp. 24-40). Retrieved from http://ojs.tsv.fi/index.php/afinla/article/view/8738/6423.

Barcelos, A. M. F., & Kalaja, P. (2011). Beliefs about SLA revisited. *System* (special issue)*, 39*(3), 281-416.

Benson, P., & Lor, W. (1999). Conceptions of language and language learning. *System, 27*(4), 459-472.

Besser, S., & Chik, A. (2014). Narratives of second language identity amongst young English learners in Hong Kong. *ELT Journal, 68*(3), 299-309.

Bruton, A. (2011). Are the differences between CLIL and non-CLIL groups in An-dalusia due to CLIL? A reply to Lorenzo, Casal and Moore (2010). *Applied Linguistics, 32*(2), 236-241.

Chambers, J. K. (1995). *Sociolinguistic theory*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. London: Sage.

Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for autonomy: Investigating learner beliefs. *System, 23*(2), 195-205.

Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: What do learners believe about them? *System, 27*, 493-513.

Dalton-Puffer, C., Nikula, T., & Smit, U. (Eds.). (2010). *Language use and language learning in CLIL classrooms*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Dufva, H., Kalaja, P., & Alanen, R. (2011, May). *'Iloinen ja innostava'?: Miten kieltenopiskelijat kuvaavat omaa opettajuuttaan*. Paper presented at the ViKiPeda conference Global Trends Meet Local Needs, Vaasa, Finland.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York: Random House.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner*. Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Ellis, R. (2008). Learner beliefs and language learning. *Asian EFL Journal, 10*(4), 7-25.

Fehling, S. (2008). *Language awareness und bilingualer Unterricht: Eine komparative Studie*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Ferreira Barcelos, A. M., & Kalaja, P. (2013). Beliefs in SLA: Teacher. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of applied linguistics*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

Gass, S. (1997). *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Genesee, F. (1987). *Learning through two languages.* Cambridge, MA: Newbury House.

Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). London: Prentice Hall.

Horwitz, E. K. (1999). Cultural and situational influences on foreign language learners' beliefs about language learning: A review of BALLI studies. *System, 27*(4), 557-576.

Hyltenstam, K. (2004). Engelskan, skolans språkundervisning och svensk språk-politik. In B. Lindgren & O. Josephson (Eds.), *Engelskan i Sverige* (pp. 36-107). Stockholm: Svenska Språknämnden.

Jimenéz Catalán, R. M., Ruiz de Zarobe, Y., & Cenoz, J. (2006). Vocabulary profiles of English Foreign Language learners in English as a subject and as a vehicular language. *Vienna English Working Papers, 15*(3), 23-27.

Kalaja, P. (in press). "Dreaming is believing": the teaching of foreign languages envisioned by student teachers. In P. Kalaja (Ed.), *Beliefs, identity and agency in foreign language learning and teaching*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kalaja, P., Alanen, R., & Dufva, H. (2008). Self-portraits of EFL learners: Finnish students draw and tell. In P. Kalaja, V. Menezes, & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Narratives of learning and teaching EFL* (pp. 186-198). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kalaja, P., Menezes, V., & Barcelos, A. M. F. (Eds.). (2008). *Narratives of learning and teaching EFL*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Klippel, F. (2003). New prospects or imminent danger? - The impact of English medium instruction on education in Germany. *Prospect, 18*(1), 68-81.

Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2009). Language attitudes in CLIL and traditional EFL classes. *International CLIL Research Journal, 1*(2), 3-17.

Lin, A. M. Y., & Man, E. Y. F. (2010). *Bilingual education: Southeast Asian perspectives*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Long, M. H. (1981). Input, interaction and second language acquisition. In H. Winitz (Ed.), *Native language and foreign language acquisition* (pp. 259-278). New York, NY: Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Lyster, R. (2007). *Learning and teaching languages through content. A counter-balanced approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Marsh, D. (Ed.). (2002). *CLIL/EMILE the European dimension*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.

Mehisto, P., Marsh, D., & Frigols Martín, M. J. (2008). *Uncovering CLIL: Content and language integrated learning in bilingual and multilingual education*. Oxford: Macmillan.

Menezes, E., & Juan-Garau, M. (2014). English learners' willingness to communicate and achievement in CLIL and formal instruction contexts. In M. Juan-Garau & J. Salazar-Noguera (Eds.), *Content-based language learning in multilingual educational environments* (pp. 221-236). New York: Springer.

Navés, T. (2011). How promising are the results of integrating content and language for EFL writing and overall EFL proficiency? In Y. Ruiz de Zarobe, J. M. Sierra, & F. Gallardo del Puerto (Eds.), *Content and foreign language integrated learning* (pp. 155-186). Bern: Peter Lang.

Navés, T., & Victori, M. (2010). CLIL in Catalonia: An overview of research studies. In D. Lasagabaster & Y. Ruiz de Zarobe (Eds.), *CLIL in Spain. Implementation, results and teacher training* (pp. 30-54). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Nikula, T., & Pitkänen-Huhta, A. (2008). Using photographs to access stories of learning English. In P. Kalaja, V. Menezes, & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Narratives of learning and teaching EFL* (pp. 171-185). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oscarson, M., & Apelgren, B. M. (2005). Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003 (NU-03). Engelska. Ämnesrapport till rapport 251. Stockholm: Skolverket.

Pihko, M. K. (2007). Foreign language anxiety in content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and in traditional foreign language classes. In S. Tella (Ed.), *From brawn to brain: Strong signals in foreign language education* (pp. 129-142). Helsinki: University of Helsinki.

Ruiz de Zarobe, Y., Sierra, J. M., & Gallardo del Puerto, F. (Eds.). (2011). *Content and foreign language integrated learning*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Rumlich, D. (2013). Students' general English proficiency prior to CLIL. In S. Breidbach & B. Viebrock (Eds.), *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Europe. Research perspectives on policy and practice* (pp. 181-202). Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Ryan, S., & Mercer, S. (2012). Implicit theories: Language learning mindsets. In S. Mercer, S. Ryan, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Psychology for language learning. Insights from research, theory and practice* (pp. 74-89). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Skehan, P. (1991). Individual differences in second language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 13*(2), 275-298. doi: 10.1017/S0272263100009979

Skolverket. (2014). Kursplan - engelska. Retrieved December 28, 2014, from http://www.skolverket.se/laroplaner-amnen-och-kurser/grund-skoleutbildning/grundskola/engelska

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded Theory procedures and techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sundqvist, P., & Sylvén, L. K. (2012). World of VocCraft: Computer games and Swedish learners' L2 vocabulary. In H. Reinders (Ed.), *Digital games in language learning and teaching* (pp. 189-208). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sundqvist, P., & Sylvén, L. K. (2014). Language-related computer use: Focus on young L2 English learners in Sweden. *ReCALL, 26*(1), 3-20. doi: 10.1017/S0 958344013000232

Sylvén, L. K. (2013). CLIL in Sweden – Why does it not work? A metaperspective on CLIL across contexts in Europe. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 16*(3), 301-320.

Sylvén, L. K., & Ohlander, S. (2014). The CLISS project: Receptive vocabulary proficiency in CLIL and non-CLIL groups. *Moderna Språk, 108*(2), 81-119.

Sylvén, L. K., & Sundqvist, P. (2012). Gaming as extramural English L2 learning and L2 proficiency among young learners. *ReCALL, 24*(3), 302-321.

Sylvén, L. K., & Thompson, A. S. (2015). Language learning motivation and CLIL: Is there a connection? *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education, 3*(1), 28-50.

Tedick, D. J., & Cammarata, L. (2012). Content and language integration in K-12 contexts: Student outcomes, teacher practices, and stakeholder perspectives. *Foreign Language Annals, 45*(S1), S28-S53.

Thompson, A. S., & Sylvén, L. K. (in press). Does English make you nervous? *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies.*

Viberg, Å. (2000). Tvåspråkighet och inlärning av språk i och utanför skolan *Språk 2000:18. Kursplaner, betygskriterier och kommentarer [Languages. Curricula, criteria and comments]* (pp. 27-41). Stockholm: Skolverket.

Zydatiss, W. (2007). *Deutsch-Englische Züge in Berlin (DEZIBEL). Eine Evaluation des bilingualen Sachfachunterrichts in Gymnasien: Kontext, Kompetenzen, Konsequenzen.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.