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Mearns, T.L.; Kampen, E. van; Admiraal, W.; Banegas, D.L.; Zappa-Hollman, S.

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CLIL in the Netherlands: Three decades of innovation and development

Tessa Mearns, Evelyn van Kampen & Wilfried Admiraal

Since the opening of the first CLIL department in the Netherlands in 1989, *tweetalig onderwijs* ('bilingual education') has expanded into a national network of over 130 secondary schools, serving a population of around 37,000 learners. While academic interest in the field has also seen growth and diversification, the pace of practical developments and the lack of a structured research agenda have led to research becoming fragmented and lagging behind practice. This chapter provides an overview of the Dutch CLIL context followed by a critical review of research into organisation, implementation, outcomes and experiences in Dutch bilingual education. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the ways in which future research could support further developments in practice.

Introduction

This chapter opens with a brief introduction to the broader educational setting in the Netherlands, and a description of how CLIL and bilingual education are organised and implemented within that setting. It then presents a review of published research on CLIL in the Netherlands, aiming to bring into focus the scope and main findings of research thus far and consider implications for practice and further research. In the Netherlands, CLIL as a pedagogy is an essential aspect of the organisational paradigm of bilingual education (Mearns & De Graaff, 2018a, pp. 124-125) within which most CLIL teaching in the Netherlands takes place. Therefore, this chapter will take the same attitude as Morton and Llinares (2017), addressing CLIL on both organisational/institutional and pedagogical/classroom levels.

CLIL within the Dutch educational context

Figure [chapter number.1]. Figure 1provides an overview of the Dutch education system, including the stages at which bilingual education is offered alongside mainstream programmes. In Figure 1, we paraphrase the title of each educational programme in English as well as providing the Dutch title and the commonly used abbreviations. We will continue to use these abbreviations throughout this chapter.

CLIL in the Netherlands is most common at secondary level, although there are now also CLIL programmes offered at primary and vocational tertiary level. While English-medium instruction (EMI) programmes are common in higher education (universities and universities of applied sciences, known in Dutch as 'HBO'), these degree programmes generally do not involve explicit attention for language development, and are therefore not addressed in this chapter.

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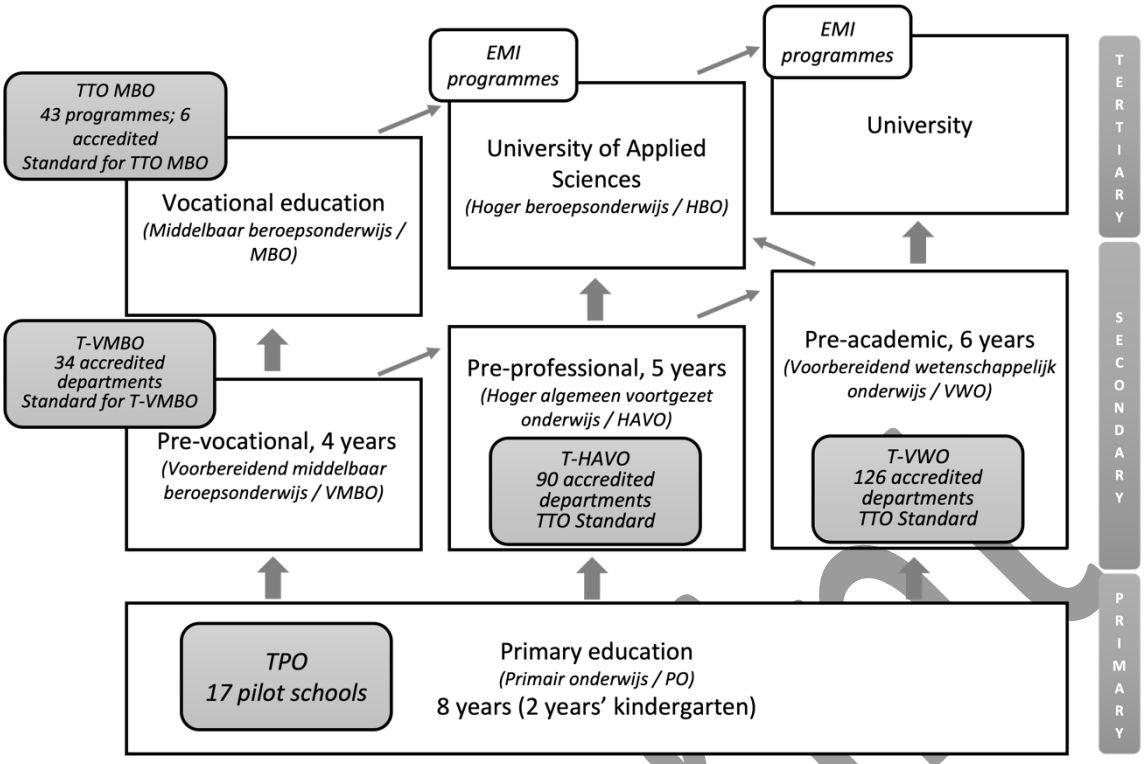

Figure 1 Overview of Dutch education system, including bilingual streams; figures as of October 2021 (Nuffic, 2021a)

Bilingual secondary education (TTO)

We begin by addressing bilingual secondary education (*tweetalig onderwijs*, henceforth TTO) as this was the first context in which CLIL began to take hold in the Netherlands. TTO began in 1989 as a grassroots movement, initiated by parents, teachers, and school boards (Maljers, 2007), but was quickly institutionalised and expanded rapidly, in particular in the 2000s. At the time of writing, 134 of the 648 (Statline, 2021) secondary schools in the Netherlands (see Figure 1) run an accredited Dutch-English bilingual programme (Nuffic 2021a).

All accredited bilingual secondary schools belong to the Network of Bilingual Schools. Accredited schools must comply with a 'TTO Standard' and a quality assurance process in the form of an accreditation framework in order to make use of the trademarked 'TTO' logo and the label 'TTO school'. The current TTO Standard (Nuffic, 2019) allows room for the individual development of TTO schools in terms of three domains: English language proficiency, global citizenship, and personal development. TTO programmes are funded through voluntary parental contributions.

Some schools offer TTO only in the first three years, switching fully to Dutch in senior years. Pre-vocational TTO schools and schools that continue with TTO in the senior years reduce the English-medium programme to a limited number of subjects in the final two or three years, in preparation for the final examinations, which are in Dutch. They offer an international diploma programme for English in the upper forms, such as the International

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Baccalaureate. Other subjects taught through English in the senior years vary per school, but often include physical education and social studies.

Bilingual primary education (TPO)

A subsidised pilot project for bilingual primary schools (*tweetalig primair onderwijs* – henceforth TPO) has been running since 2014 (Jenniskens et al., 2020). All seventeen pilot schools employ CLIL pedagogy in 30-50% of the curriculum from Kindergarten (age 4-5) until the end of primary school (age 11-12). Some of the schools use a 'one teacher, one language' approach (where one teacher speaks English and the other Dutch); some use a 'one situation, one language' approach (where the teacher speaks both languages, but they are offered at different times); and others offer both languages during the whole week in a mixed approach. All of the primary schools currently participating in the pilot teach in Dutch and English.

Bilingual vocational education (TTO MBO)

A small but growing number of vocational education colleges offer bilingual programmes. TTO MBO has its own quality standard and professional network (Nuffic, 2021b). Vocational TTO programmes are in many ways similar to secondary TTO programmes, but also have features that are unique to the vocational context and its learners. At least 50% of teaching and learning time should be in the target language (TL), teachers are expected to be competent in CLIL, and there is emphasis on international orientation, for example through work placement in an international environment. One accredited vocational TTO college has chosen German as the language of instruction, while the most common TL is English.

Teacher education for bilingual education

Most teacher education for bilingual education is aimed at in-service teachers. Many teachers working in bilingual education have been recruited from the non-bilingual stream of their school, are native speakers of Dutch and have experienced the same initial teacher education as their colleagues in the Dutch-medium departments (De Graaff,Koopman, Anikina, & Westhoff, 2007). Professional development for these teachers largely focuses on English language proficiency and CLIL. A growing minority of TTO teachers have completed pre-service teacher education focusing specifically on CLIL or bilingual education. As will be illustrated in the review of research, the diversity in approaches to and quality of CLIL training available to teachers is accompanied by diverse understandings of what good CLIL practice should look like.

Research on CLIL in the Netherlands

The reviewed literature consists of published peer-reviewed research papers, research-based book chapters, official reports and PhD theses, focusing on empirical research into CLIL in the context of bilingual education in the Netherlands. The list of publications for review was compiled from PhD theses' reference lists, the existing databases of the authors and of colleagues from the Dutch CLIL research community, and exhaustive searches in Web

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of Science and Google Scholar. The resulting corpus includes 62 works published between 2000 and 2021. For the ongoing TPO pilot, only the most recent measurement is included, as it refers back to data from the earlier measurements. No publications were found that related to either vocational education or teacher education in CLIL settings. For a full overview of the reviewed publications, see the additional online appendix. In what follows, we report on four broad thematic areas we identified in our review of the literature, synthesising research on learner profiles, affective factors, learning outcomes, teacher perspectives and teaching practices in the Dutch CLIL context.

Learner characteristics

Weenink (2005) purports that TTO was originally intended to cater for an emerging cosmopolitan elite. While Dutch CLIL has evolved since then, TTO learners still have a reputation for being more academically inclined and more motivated than mainstream learners (Oattes, Oostdam, de Graaff, & Wilschut, 2018; Verspoor et al., 2013). This impression has been confirmed in studies that took baseline measurements of motivation (e.g. Mearns et al., 2017; Oattes,Fukkink, Oostdam, de Graaff, & Wilschut, 2020), confidence (e.g. Goris et al., 2017), initial level of English (e.g. Admiraal et al., 2006) or standardised test results (e.g. Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). Beginning TTO learners generally scored higher in these aspects when compared to mainstream learners from the same school, suggesting that TTO was a conscious choice of more motivated or higher-achieving learners.

Sieben and Van Ginderen (2014) and Mearns et al. (2017) explored the choice for TTO in more detail. In Sieben and Van Ginderen's study, the fact that TTO was a conscious choice was reflected in the fact that TTO learners generally commuted further to school and were more likely than mainstream learners to be the only pupil from their primary class to choose that secondary school. Mearns et al. found that TTO learners appeared to have been attracted largely by the instrumental value of learning English to a high level, but also by the additional challenge and the appeal of international school trips. Non-TTO learners in the same study indicated that TTO would have been "too difficult", suggesting lower self-confidence and a perception that TTO requires a higher level of academic ability.

A possible factor influencing such differences between learners in bilingual and non-bilingual streams could be their family background. Although the studies were separated by a decade, both Weenink (2005, 2007, 2008) and Sieben and Van Ginderen (2014) identify differences in the family backgrounds of learners in TTO when compared to those in non-TTO, although their findings do not entirely align with each other. Sieben and van Ginderen's smaller study suggested that learners in TTO had a higher socio-economic status (SES) than those in the mainstream programme, while Weenink (2007) found that TTO learners stood out more for their cosmopolitan upbringing than for their SES, and that it was more likely that one or both of their parents were expatriates. The latter was also noted in Jenniskens et al.'s (2020) ongoing exploration of the Primary CLIL (TPO) pilot. Goris et al.'s (2017; 2020) baseline

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measurement of international orientation supports the view of TTO learners as relatively cosmopolitan. While Weenink's (2008) interviews with parents of TTO learners suggested that they had high ambitions for their children; however, Sieben and Van Ginderen did not find evidence that parents in TTO were more actively involved with their children's schooling than parents of learners in mainstream programmes.

Contrary to the above findings in more academic streams, Denman et al. (2018) note that pre-vocational learners' attitudes towards English were not more positive at the start of the TTO programme. Nevertheless, the CLIL experience appeared to support their growth in both affective and linguistic terms. Denman et al.'s research in this context is the first of its kind due to a tendency for TTO research to focus on the most academic streams.

Learner affect

As mentioned above, several studies report more positive attitudes and higher levels of motivation among CLIL learners in secondary TTO when compared to those in mainstream programmes. In most cases, however, there was little concrete evidence of a connection between the TTO experience and these affective factors. In studies by Mearns et al. (2015; 2018b; 2017) and by Elzenga and De Graaff (2015), the difference in L2 motivation between younger and older years of TTO was not greater than in mainstream contexts. Goris et al. (2017) observed a similar trend with regard to L2 self-confidence and international orientation. As observed by Mearns et al. (2017), the lack of causal connections in the quantitative data from such studies prevents us from drawing concrete conclusions that CLIL is or is not experienced positively.

Again, the work of Denman and colleagues stands out in this regard. The pre-vocational learners in their 2018 longitudinal study of attitudes towards learning English showed a positive effect after one year of pre-vocational CLIL. Positivity fell again in third year, when less of the curriculum was taught in English (Denman et al., 2018). This, together with qualitative evidence from related studies (e.g. Tanner & De Graaff, 2011) suggests that these learners found TTO to be an enjoyable and motivating experience due to the challenges and opportunities it offered, the instrumental value of improving their English, the authentic approach to language learning and the emphasis on international orientation. Similar findings were revealed in Mearns' (2015) study of learners in pre-professional bilingual education, as well as among the Dutch respondents in Papaja et al.'s (2016) international study of learner motivation in CLIL programmes in four European countries. These researchers also observed that the gap between TTO boys' and girls' motivation was narrower than in mainstream (Papaja et al., 2016), and that TTO boys were the most motivated group (Mearns & De Graaff, 2018b). In their study of various sub-groups within TTO, Mearns and De Jong (2021) identified similar trends, as well as refuting the assumption that learners in the pre-university stream were most motivated. A further finding in this study was that older TTO learners were not necessarily less motivated, but that they were motivated in different ways.

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A less positive finding with regard to affective factors is Papaja's (2019) observation that learners in bilingual programmes in the Netherlands, Poland and Germany appeared to experience more anxiety in CLIL subject lessons than in English language lessons, although that anxiety appeared to decrease over time.

A small number of studies have explored TTO learners' motivation to learn languages other than English (LOTE). Elzenga and de Graaff (2015) observed higher motivation for French among third-year TTO learners when compared to mainstream and first-year TTO learners, which the authors suggest could indicate a positive effect of TTO on L3 motivation. Mearns et al. (2017) observed higher motivation among TTO learners to learn foreign languages in general, although there was no evidence that this increased over time. Subsequent analyses of the same data suggested that this difference was only present among girls (Mearns & De Graaff, 2018b).

Learning outcomes

The earliest findings regarding the academic outcomes of bilingual education for Dutch learners have been cited largely as evidence in support of its effectiveness in supporting the learning of English or to dispel fears that it could have a detrimental effect on the learning of subject content or the development of learners' Dutch. Later studies have aimed to explore the interactions between CLIL and learning in more depth and from different perspectives.

English language acquisition (ELA)

A relatively large number of studies address learning outcomes for English. Nearly all of them agree that learners in bilingual education acquire English to a higher level and faster than their mainstream counterparts (Admiraal et al., 2006; De Bree & Unsworth, 2014; Goris et al., 2013; De Graaff & Costache, 2020; Huibregtse, 2001a, 2001b; Huibregtse et al., 2000; Jenniskens et al., 2020; Verspoor et al., 2007; Verspoor, De Bot, & Van Rein, 2010; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). This finding was obtained through a variety of measures of proficiency (e.g. vocabulary tests, reading tests, speaking tests, grammar tests, writing tasks, classroom interaction) and was the case also when controlled for learner variables such as scholastic aptitude, starting level, extramural exposure to English, motivation and attitude. Gains appear to be greatest at the beginning of the bilingual programme (Huibregtse, 2001a; Huibregtse et al., 2000; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010), although a 'sustainable advantage' has been observed into later years (Verspoor & Edelenbos, 2011, p. 3).

In addition to exploring quantitative gains, researchers have also explored qualitative differences in learners' use of English. Findings from such studies helped counteract concerns that CLIL learners would quickly become fluent but lag behind in terms of accuracy (Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). These fears appeared unfounded. TTO learners' English did develop differently to that of mainstream learners, although not in a negative sense. Their written English was more idiomatic and contained more chunks (Gustafsson & Verspoor, 2017; Verspoor & Edelenbos, 2011; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). In the initial stages, increased output and greater risk-taking led to more inaccuracies among TTO learners, but these inaccuracies disappeared in later measurements. This was

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interpreted as an indication of a more natural process of language acquisition which could only be observed over a longer period. Contrarily, Bulté and Housen (2019) found no significant differences between TTO and mainstream groups, although their study was limited by the very small number of participants and the short gap between measurements.

Less commonly researched are factors contributing to English language acquisition (ELA) among CLIL learners. There is some indication that scholastic aptitude, motivation, confidence and initial English proficiency may play a role, although the studies published do not explain all of the additional gain (Goris et al., 2020; Verspoor et al., 2015). Some studies have indicated a causal link between bilingual education and ELA. For example, Verspoor, De Bot and Van Rein (2010) suggested that TTO contributed to closing the gap in English proficiency between learners with higher and lower extramural exposure to English. Furthermore, De Bree and Unsworth (2014) found that dyslexic learners appeared to benefit from TTO as much as non-dyslexic learners in terms of English language and literacy, suggesting that CLIL is beneficial for a broad range of learners. Less apparent is whether it is the quantity of exposure, the quality of exposure or the quality of teaching that contributes to such gains. The only studies that address this question directly are those regarding Primary CLIL. There, it appeared that the quality of the teacher's use of English had greater impact on learner ELA than quantity of exposure or the teacher's English proficiency (De Graaff & Costache, 2020; Jenniskens et al., 2020).

Dutch and/or content learning

In spite of anecdotal concerns regarding the effects of increased exposure to English on learners' Dutch, there has been little attention for this aspect of CLIL. Initial explorations of TTO (Admiraal et al., 2006; Huibregtse, 2001a, 2001b; Huibregtse et al., 2000) and TPO (Jenniskens et al., 2020) have confirmed that learners do not score lower on national exam or test scores for Dutch following several years of CLIL. Indeed, in a study by De Bree & Unsworth (2014), it appeared that both dyslexic and non-dyslexic learners in TTO performed better in some indicators of literacy and language proficiency in Dutch than their peers in mainstream education.

The basic picture with regard to the learning of subject content is very similar. Huibregtse (Admiraal et al., 2006; Huibregtse, 2001a, 2001b; Huibregtse et al., 2000) found that secondary CLIL learners' final examination results in geography and history were not significantly different when compared to mainstream learners in the same schools. Likewise, Jenniskens et al. (2020) saw no negative differences in primary CLIL learners' scores on numeracy tests. For primary, the pilot and accompanying research are still ongoing and may provide further insights in this regard. The lack of attention for learning in other content areas such as science, mathematics or physical and creative subjects in secondary education, suggest that this is an area of TTO in need of more investigation.

Oattes et al. (2020) have provided some insights into the relationship between language and content learning and assessment. TTO learners in first and third year completed one history

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test in English and one in Dutch, while mainstream learners completed identical tests but both in Dutch. TTO third years outperformed those in the mainstream regardless of the language of assessment. TTO first years, however, performed better in Dutch but less well when assessed in English. While this confirms that learning through English does not ultimately have an adverse effect on content learning, it does suggest that, in the initial stages, the CLIL context could affect learner performance in assessments of content knowledge. This could have implications for assessment, which has not yet been researched in the Dutch CLIL context.

CLIL learners as language learners

A few studies have explored the ways in which learners who follow a Dutch/English bilingual curriculum learn other modern languages (French and German), which are not taught through CLIL. Rutgers and Evans' (2015) study of metalinguistic awareness in German suggested that TTO learners were better language learners, were more intuitive and took more risks when learning German than mainstream learners, a finding also observed by Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al. (2010) with regard TTO learners' performance in English. This could indicate that CLIL contributes not only to the acquisition of the CLIL language, but also to learners' development as language learners more generally.

Other studies exploring effects on non-CLIL languages investigated cross-linguistic transfer. Specifically, multiple syntactical studies by Stadt revealed greater cross-linguistic transfer from English to French among TTO learners (Stadt et al., 2016, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c), although significantly less transfer was observed between English and German (Stadt et al., 2020). The heightened role of English as a background language in French acquisition appeared to be related to exposure to rather than proficiency in English, suggesting that the amount of time spent using English in TTO influenced the way they used French (Stadt et al., 2018a). As Stadt concludes, increased transfer from English need not be viewed as a disadvantage, although knowledge of this difference could help French teachers to better understand and cater for the needs of TTO learners (Stadt et al., 2016).

Alongside the L3 motivation findings discussed earlier, these studies suggest that CLIL plays a role in learners' broader development as language learners. It should be noted, however, that while rigorous, these studies were small-scale and limited in scope.

Teacher perspectives

Studies focusing on CLIL teachers have focused on how teachers experience teaching in bilingual programmes and on how they perceive their role.

The teaching experience

Only a handful of studies explore how teachers feel about teaching in bilingual education; those that do, paint a largely positive picture. History teachers in Oattes, Oostdam, De Graaff and Wilschut (2018) mentioned that teaching in CLIL had helped them bring more variety into their teaching and increased their awareness of the role of language in history, and that they appreciated the motivation of TTO learners. Likewise, an interview study in pre-

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vocational programmes (Denman et al., 2013; Tanner & De Graaff, 2011) revealed that teachers appreciated the opportunities CLIL offered to both staff and pupils, for example to explore the linguistic demands of vocational courses and to engage in international projects. This was contradicted by Van Dongen's (2017) finding that teachers in two pre-vocational schools were disappointed with TTO. He observed that the schools had embarked on TTO in the hope that it would be a "remedy" (p.118) to waning results for English and dropping pupil numbers without realising the extent of CLIL's pedagogical implications. The differences between these findings could reflect the observation by Van Beuningen et al. (2021) that CLIL contexts and the needs of teachers differ significantly, even within the Netherlands.

In terms of experienced support and readiness to teach in a CLIL programme, findings have been limited and mixed. Teachers in various studies felt that their own level of English was sufficient for CLIL teaching (e.g. Jenniskens et al., 2020; Oattes,Oostdam, de Graaff, & Wilschut, 2018; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010), but while some considered themselves well-equipped in terms of pedagogical knowledge and skills (De Graaff & Koopman, 2006; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010), others – even within the same study – expressed a need for more professional development (De Graaff & Koopman, 2006). It should be noted that these findings are from the early years of Dutch CLIL research in secondary (early 2000s) and primary education (from 2012) respectively, and may thus not reflect the current situation. This was highlighted by participants in Tanner and De Graaff's (2011) study of the then newly-introduced pre-vocational CLIL departments, who expressed the view that it was too early to think about professional development beyond teachers' English language proficiency. The only study to report directly on teachers' experience in professional development was Van Beuningen et al. (2021). Their results indicated that teachers in primary CLIL settings benefitted from the opportunity to collaborate, to apply theory and to reflect explicitly on their practice.

The role of the teacher

Based on the reviewed studies, it appears that CLIL teachers in the Netherlands are conscious that the role of a CLIL teacher is different to that of a teacher in mainstream education (Van Beuningen et al., 2021; De Graaff & Koopman, 2006; De Graaff, Koopman, Anikina, & Westhoff., 2007; De Graaff, Koopman, & Westhoff, 2007; Van Kampen, Admiraal, & Berry, 2018; Koopman et al., 2014; Oattes, Oostdam, de Graaff, & Wilschut, 2018; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). That is not to say, however, that they identified more as CLIL teachers than as teachers of their own discipline.

As highlighted by Dale (2020) and by Van Kampen, Admiraal, and Berry (2018), English teachers experience a special role in Dutch bilingual schools, due to the demands of the TTO Standard. As evident from Dale's research, disciplinary identity is important to English teachers working in a CLIL context, although they are also prepared to collaborate with and support colleagues from other disciplines, and to support learners' development of subject-

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specific language. Challenging for these English teachers was that their own disciplinary identity was not always recognised by colleagues or in policies.

In studies involving teachers of other CLIL subjects, it appears they view themselves first and foremost as subject teachers, not language teachers (e.g. Busz et al., 2014; De Graaff & Koopman, 2006; Oattes,Oostdam, de Graaff, & Wilschut, 2018; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). Van Beuningen et al. (2021) underscore teachers' primarily disciplinary identity in their conclusion that CLIL teachers need not deviate significantly from their usual practice, provided they remain actively conscious that language is an essential aspect of subject learning. This leads to questions regarding the frames through which we examine the practice of CLIL teachers (Van Kampen et al., 2020a; Oattes, Oostdam, De Graaff, Fukkink, & Wilschut, 2018), a topic be addressed in the next section.

Conceptualisations of CLIL teaching practice

Reviewing the literature on teaching practices in Dutch CLIL highlighted the variety in the frames of reference employed in exploring and evaluating teachers' CLIL practices. This may reflect one of the challenges expressed by teachers in van Dongen's (2017) study, who revealed that they were unsure about what constituted good practice in CLIL. We therefore begin this section by exploring the standards against which CLIL teachers' practice has been measured, before addressing researchers' findings regarding classroom practice.

Many of the features used to examine CLIL teaching practice are taken or adapted from theories of foreign language teaching or second language acquisition (SLA). Common elements include:

- Use of rich, comprehensible input, including extensive target language use and accessibility of teachers' language
- Stimulation of output for authentic communication and interaction
- Focus on meaning and inductive learning
- Focus on form
- Corrective feedback on language (with emphasis on explicit correction rather than recasts)

Recent studies have drawn specifically on theory from CLIL literature. For example, in her series of studies of CLIL practice in the Netherlands, Van Kampen drew on different areas of CLIL theory to design new frameworks for analysis based on, amongst others, an elaborated version of Coyle's (2010) 4Cs (Van Kampen, Mearns, et al., 2018) and Dalton-Puffer's (2013) Cognitive Discourse Functions (Van Kampen et al., 2020b). Van Beuningen et al.'s (2021) study involving a professional learning community (PLC) of primary CLIL teachers took as its starting point six basic principles drawn from existing literature on CLIL and other forms of language-focused content teaching, including the use of home languages.

Dale's series of studies of English teachers in CLIL (Dale, 2020; Dale et al., 2018a, 2018b) made use of an original model that classifies the English teacher's role into four quadrants

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according to the level of focus on content or language, in either a subject-oriented or culture-oriented context (Dale et al., 2017). This framework can help to explore the teaching and collaborative practices of English teachers, who in the Dutch bilingual secondary education system are expected to not ony support learners in their own subject lessons, but also to support colleagues from other English-medium subjects.

Other than Van Kampen et al.'s 2020b study and Dale's work with English teachers, the only other example of a subject-specific model for classroom practice is in Oattes (2021). His observation tool was not specifically designed to evaluate CLIL practice, but to explore the impact of language of instruction on History teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).

Rather than starting from a theoretical perspective, three studies (Denman et al., 2013; Van Kampen et al., 2020a; Rutgers et al., 2020; Tanner & De Graaff, 2011) sought to explore good CLIL practice using a grounded approach. They drew conclusions based on the views of teachers (all studies) and learners (Tanner/Denman). Van Kampen et al. set these views against those of CLIL specialists (trainers, academics, researchers). The conclusions drawn from these studies reflected to differing degrees elements also valued in language teaching, as mentioned above (input, output, focus on meaning and corrective feedback on language), with the exception of focus on form, which was not identified in this study as being important for CLIL. Other elements are not specifically language-related, such as opportunities for active learning, practical and creative tasks, real-life relevance, variety of materials and approaches, learner-centredness, differentiation, formative assessment and diagnostic strategies, and supporting learner confidence. This is reinforced by Van Beuningen et al.'s (2021) conclusion that good CLIL teaching may be more a question of linguistic awareness and a shift in mindset than a significant adjustment to existing good practice. The complex picture revealed by these studies suggests that teachers and learners in Dutch CLIL classrooms may be well-positioned to provide a rich view of effective CLIL practice without deferring to more generic SLA models.

Strengths and weaknesses in CLIL teaching

A common finding across all of the studies addressing teaching practices in CLIL was that CLIL teachers of both English and other subjects appeared to be aware of the need to approach teaching differently in CLIL classes than in mainstream classes, although their practices varied significantly both between and within studies. As the previous section highlighted, however, there is not one model of 'good CLIL teaching' in the Netherlands. The line we will take here in considering 'successes and weaknesses' in Dutch CLIL practice is to consider the areas that do and do not appear to fit with the frameworks employed by researchers.

In the studies that placed CLIL practice against concepts from SLA, examples were observed of nearly all elements, although to varying degrees. Teachers generally provided rich linguistic input (Huibregtse, 2001a, 2001b; Huibregtse et al., 2000; Jenniskens et al., 2020; Oattes, Oostdam, De Graaff, Fukkink, & Wilschut, 2018; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010), although in some cases quantity of input was prioritised over comprehensibility

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(Huibregtse, 2001b; Huibregtse et al., 2000; Jenniskens et al., 2020; Koopman et al., 2014). Elsewhere, teachers adjusted their language and resources to increase accessibility, for example by providing visual support or adapting materials (De Graaff & Koopman, 2006; de Graaff, Koopman, Anikina, & Westhoff, 2007; Van Kampen, Admiraal, & Berry, 2018). Learners were usually provided with opportunities and encouraged to communicate in English, either with each other or with the teacher (De Graaff, Koopman, Anikina, & Westhoff, 2007; Huibregtse, 2001b; Jenniskens et al., 2020; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). In English lessons, Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al. (2010) observed that teachers employed higher-order questioning to elicit richer responses than with mainstream classes, although other researchers commented that rich, idiomatic language use was not supported in subject lessons (e.g. Koopman et al., 2014; Schuitemaker-King, 2013). Feedback on language was observed in both content and language lessons, although content teachers tended to favour oral feedback methods such as recasts, which are known to be less effective than more explicit methods (Huibregtse, 2001b) and to provide only simple, word-level feedback on written work rather than focusing on subject-specific conventions and language use (Busz et al., 2014). In some cases, it was not clear whether the feedback given was referring to the language or the content in learner output (Schuitemaker-King, 2013).

Focus on form produced a less defined picture, in part due to the varying expectations of the researchers. Generally, content teachers paid little explicit attention to language form, either because they did not feel confident doing so or because they did not feel this was their responsibility (De Graaff & Koopman, 2006; Koopman et al., 2014; Oattes, Oostdam, de Graaff, & Wilschut, 2018). Whether or not this aligned with the 'ideal' depended on the interpretation of the researcher: while some believed that focus on form was the responsibility of every CLIL teacher (e.g. Huibregtse, 2001b), others believed that focus on form should take place in the language classroom (e.g. Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010).

Another area in which researchers did not always agree was with regard to the use of Dutch in the CLIL classroom. Many earlier studies comment that exclusive use of English was among the most successful elements of teachers' CLIL practice (e.g. Denman et al., 2013; Huibregtse, 2001b; Schuitemaker-King, 2013; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). Teachers in Oattes, Oostdam, De Graaff and Wilschut's (2018) study, however, were implicitly aware of the value of translanguaging as has been addressed in CLIL literature internationally (Van Kampen, Mearns, et al., 2018). Teachers implied that they felt they were breaking the rules in using Dutch to support the learning process. Only in the most recent publication reviewed (Van Beuningen et al., 2021) was learners' multilingualism actively positioned as a pedagogical tool. Teachers found this to be a valuable enrichment to their practice.

Other areas in which teachers were seen to succeed in terms of effective CLIL practice, but which did not fall directly under the standard models from SLA, were encouraging learner

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engagement (Denman et al., 2013; Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010), conducting cross-curricular projects (Denman et al., 2013), emphasis on international orientation, intercultural competence and global citizenship (Denman et al., 2013; Van Kampen et al., 2020b), creating a supportive and positive atmosphere (Denman et al., 2013), providing context and structure, recycling and applying language and content in different ways (Van Beuningen et al., 2021; Denman et al., 2013), and collaboration and team-teaching (Dale, 2020).

Some recent studies have provided more detailed insights into the practical side of CLIL from a subject-specific perspective. Oattes (2021) observed that History teachers' PCK was as strong in English as in Dutch, although their more limited linguistic repertoire led to less thorough explanations in TTO than in mainstream. In their exploration of the integration of language and content through cognitive discourse functions in the subject Global Perspectives, Van Kampen et al. (2020) observed that teaching practices varied significantly, not only in terms of pedagogy, but in the application of subject content and its associated language. Similarly, Dale's (2020) examination of how the four roles of the English teacher in CLIL were enacted in practice provides valuable practical examples but also highlights discrepancies in how teachers interpreted 'language' and 'content'.

Conclusion

Through this exploration from the perspectives of practice, policy and research, it is clear that Dutch CLIL has come a long way in little more than three decades, and also that it is continuing to grow and evolve. Important at this stage is to nurture that growth by allowing practice and research to continue to learn from each other.

With its expansion into different tracks and levels of education, CLIL is reaching more Dutch learners than ever. It is also evolving to contribute to learners' development beyond their mastery of English, by placing equal emphasis on personal development and engagement with the wider world. Learners and teachers feel the benefits of this, and learning outcomes and evaluations are generally positive. However, we also saw that learners in bilingual streams appear to differ to those in mainstream programmes. Recent research has not given us a clear picture of which learners opt in or out of bilingual programmes, nor of which factors can influence that decision. For example, it is not clear to what extent the voluntary financial contribution requested from parents acts as a barrier to learners from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, except for a single study, there is no published research regarding the learning and experiences of cognitively, socially, culturally, neurologically or linguistically diverse learners in this CLIL setting. In an era where the international CLIL community is becoming increasingly active in exploring questions of diversity, equity and social justice, this appears to thus far be something of a blind spot in the Dutch context.

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In terms of CLIL pedagogy, research is moving in exciting new directions. A small number of recent studies have demonstrated the possibility to deviate from traditional SLA-based models and develop more contextualised understanding of CLIL teaching as a specialism in itself. As highlighted by Dale (2020) and Van Kampen (2019), an important aspect of this exploration will be to seek clearer definitions of what we mean by 'content', 'language' and 'integration'. Coupled with Van Beuningen et al.'s (2021) approach to CLIL as a mindset rather than a specific pedagogical model, this could aid the development of CLIL teacher education in a direction that is relatable to teachers and transferable to practice in a range of contexts and disciplines. This could go hand-in-hand with research into pre- and in-service teacher education for CLIL, which is notably underrepresented in the studies reviewed here.

In addition to the suggestions already made, the above discussion points could be addressed at least in part by a single solution: more structural funding and opportunities for CLIL research. The first publication stemming from the special appointment of a Professor in Bilingual Education and Global Citizenship Education (Duarte & Robinson-Jones, 2022) appeared too late to be included in this review, but will hopefully be the beginning of a wave of research exploring the non-linguistic aspects of bilingual education. However, this is not the only unanswered question. Dutch CLIL research thus far has been broad, although many studies have been relatively isolated, with limited impact. A clearer and more focused research agenda, based on the practical needs of educators and learners as well as on theoretical gaps, could help to create balance and to ensure that key areas, such as inclusion, assessment and teacher education, are not overlooked. More thorough and consistent research could help shed better light on challenges and potential solutions, provide more substantial evidence to support changes in policy, and allow us to continue developing CLIL pedagogies appropriate to our learners and teachers.

Further reading

- European Platform (2010), *A sustainable advantage: The findings of a study into bilingual education* (English summary of Verspoor, Schuitemaker-King, et al., 2010). Available via https://www.nuffic.nl/en/publications/sustainable-advantage-findings-study-bilingual-education.
  Research report documenting some of the first key explorations of the effects and workings of Dutch bilingual education (TTO).

- Mearns, T. and De Graaff, R. (eds) (2018c), Special Issue: CLIL and Bilingual Education in the Netherlands. *Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 7:2. Available via https://doi.org/10.1075/dujal.7.2.
  Special issue dedicated to the Dutch CLIL context, including a number of articles reviewed here as well as editorial, discursive and contextual accounts.

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- Van Kampen, E. (2019) *What's CLIL about bilingual education? A window on Content and Language Integrated Learning pedagogies*. Leiden University: PhD thesis. Available via https://hdl.handle.net/1887/77223.
  Thesis addressing pedagogies used in the Dutch secondary education CLIL context through a series of four studies: 1) A review study in which trends revealed by research into CLIL subject pedagogies in the Netherlands and abroad were considered; 2) An interview study with CLIL practitioners and specialists, investigating these stakeholders' perceptions about the ideal goals and practices of CLIL pedagogies; 3) A questionnaire study exploring Dutch CLIL teachers' self-reported pedagogical practices; 4) An in-depth observational study of pedagogies used by CLIL teachers of the subject Global Perspectives.

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