The relationship between language pedagogy and subject pedagogy in the CLIL classroom

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Research context

• CLIL: focus on language across the curriculum
• language pedagogical competence for CLIL subject teachers
• what language-related pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) may CLIL subject teachers possess?
• Two approaches:
  – ‘language bath’
  – language support
Research questions

1. What pedagogical procedures for supporting language learning do Dutch CLIL teachers identify?
2. How do these procedures correspond with the two separate positions on language learning?
3. How do teachers match their own pedagogical procedures with Long’s methodological principles?
4. What do these findings suggest about Dutch CLIL teachers’ knowledge of language pedagogy?
Long’s methodological principles

1. Use task, not text, as the unit of analysis
2. Promote learning by doing
3. Elaborate input
4. Provide rich input
5. Encourage inductive learning
6. Focus on form
7. Provide negative feedback
8. Respect learner syllabuses
9. Promote collaborative learning
10. Individualize instruction
Research method

- 6 CLIL teachers from 3 secondary schools
- The *Language Teaching Wall* activity
Learning wall phase one:
What did you do in the lesson you have just taught that supported language learning? Write down each action/activity on a white card.

What other actions/activities do you do in other lessons that support language learning?

Identify the rationale for each action. Why does an action/activity support language learning?

Now organise your cards into a wall. Each card is a brick. You need to put your bricks in the wall according to their importance. Essential bricks at the base of the wall, then another layer etc.
Learning wall phase two:
Look at Long’s principles for language teaching. Do any of these principles match with any of your rationales and activities? Is there anything from Long that matches with something that you do in a lesson but you have not recalled up to now?
Results

Long’s methodological principles

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8. Respect learner syllabuses
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by # teachers
2x
all 6
all 6
1x
3x
all 6
3x
all 6
all 6
Examples of ‘essential’ bricks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General language – new words</th>
<th>Creating a positive atmosphere</th>
<th>Kids [pupils] name things they associate with certain words/terms/concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring use of English in class</td>
<td>Encouraging interaction</td>
<td>Actively thinking about language and tapping prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedures and positions

One third of the responses (25 cards) could be placed into a teacher-centred input phase category.

**Input focused**

- “Writing key words on whiteboard”
- “Place words in context – show a picture that involves the key term”

**Support focused**

- “When talking about different religions, let kids [pupils] figure out links/similarities between names”
- “Get pupils to read the questions and part of the content out loud – so that level of language, pronunciation can be ‘checked’ and corrected.”
Main research findings

• Teachers do use a range of pedagogical procedures for supporting language learning and were able to match these to many of the principles for effective language learning as outlined by Long (1999).

• We identified specific areas that (Dutch) CLIL teachers can be expected to benefit from further training in: task-based learning, teaching language “chunks”, focus on form, and learner readiness in relation to second language acquisition.
Main research findings

- This research gave us a better understanding of what we can expect (Dutch) CLIL teachers to know when we plan teacher training workshops. Based on this, it is to be expected that content teachers are often unable to define explicit language learning aims for their lessons.
Discussion

1. How relevant are Long’s methodological principles for CLIL subject teachers?

2. Long insists on the activity as the unit of analysis. Are the teachers’ examples suitable activities for analysis?

3. How does language-related pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) relate to subject-related PCK?

4. How does the *Language Teaching Wall* instrument contribute to research on teacher cognition? (questionnaires, interviews, think-aloud protocols, observations, reflective writing)