Language-sensitive CLIL teaching in higher education: 
Approaches to successful lesson planning

by Ulla Fürstenberg
University of Graz (Graz, Austria)

and

Petra Kletzenbauer
FH Joanneum – University of Applied Sciences (Kapfenberg, Austria)

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Abstract
In response to increased international cooperation, mobility and profiling within the European context, many tertiary educational institutions now offer degree programmes taught in English, the language of academia. However, adapting the concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) for an educational setting where non-native English speaking content teachers have to teach their subjects in English, often with very little preparation and support from their institutions, poses considerable challenges. The lack of proper methodological training and support from stakeholders, and complex linguistic learning situations – to name just a few – complicate the realisation of the concept of CLIL in this context. The ‘dual focus’ of CLIL (language and content learning aims integrated in class in order to achieve proficiency in both dimensions) in particular is problematic as the classes are mainly content-driven. Developing and strengthening content teacher’s language awareness must, therefore, be a central element of training courses to prepare these teachers for CLIL as an increased awareness of language issues can lead to more effective lesson planning and thus more successful CLIL lessons (cf. Hüttner, Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2013). In this paper, we will present lesson planning guidelines for content teachers that aim to increase their awareness of issues of language and didactics and show how these guidelines can be applied to an authentic content teaching sequence in an IT subject at an Austrian University of
Applied Sciences\textsuperscript{1}. We will also discuss the benefits and challenges of collaborations between content and language teachers in this particular educational context.

**Background**

In recent years, the European educational landscape has been profoundly influenced by Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in the form of diverse English-language educational programmes and initiatives in countries where English is an additional language. In higher education, numerous institutions aim to achieve greater international recognition and prestige by offering degree programmes taught in English. However, there is often little awareness of the complexity of teaching and learning through an additional language. Not only are the challenges of this situation not addressed, the potential of this situation for CLIL is sadly not realized either.

“CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels” (Marsh, 2010, p. 11). It is widely acknowledged that successfully realizing the dual focus in CLIL is “a challenge at the individual and systematic levels” (Mehisto, 2012, p. 70), especially in settings where the foreign / second language is not spoken in the students’ and teachers’ local communities.

In contrast to teachers in immersion or bilingual programmes, which are generally run in countries where more than one language is spoken (Canada is a prime example), content specialists\textsuperscript{2} in Austria (where this is not the case) lecturing in degree programmes taught in English in higher education often do not have the appropriate language proficiency level for teaching confidently and efficiently in the language they use in the classroom (usually English), much less an additional degree in English (as is the case for many CLIL content

\textsuperscript{1} University of Applied Sciences is a common English-language name for the institutions of higher education in several European countries which are designed with a focus on vocational [and professional, author's comment] degrees, especially in engineering, business, and health professions. Similarly to the universities, they provide both undergraduate and postgraduate education as well as grant academic degrees, but they do not award doctoral degrees. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_applied_sciences)

\textsuperscript{2} In the CLIL context described in this article, students are taught all their content subjects in English. The content specialists who teach these classes are not native speakers of English and not trained language teachers. The students also have compulsory English lessons. These are taught by qualified English teachers who are not specialists of the relevant content area. Collaborations between content and language teachers are informal and are not supported by the institution. Thus, the teaching of language and content can be said to be regarded as two separate areas.
teachers in Austrian secondary schools). This situation arose because Austrian university authorities often decided to introduce English-language degree programmes with little preparation or support given to the lecturers, assuming that because of their experience with English-language publications and presentations at international conferences, academics must consequently also be capable of teaching content in English.

In reality, there is, of course, more to being a successful CLIL teacher than the ability to give presentations in English, but “there are many misconceptions and erroneous assumptions that lead some to consider that these [CLIL] programmes can be implemented simply by changing the language in which the subjects are taught” (Pavón Vázquez, 2013, p. 83). Crucially, “[t]he pedagogical relevance of (classroom) discourse for learning and for developing subject expertise is largely ignored or downplayed, as has become highly apparent in the wake of the recent trend toward internationalisation of universities” (Smit, 2013, p. 15). Ironically, in consequence, teachers are not given proper training and support. It is assumed that if they are able to use English they are, by definition, already well equipped for teaching in a CLIL situation. This lack of language support puts them in a position where they are fully responsible for choosing materials and methods for a highly complex teaching situation which they lack the proper language training for: “[the teachers] decide largely autonomously on their ability to teach CLIL and the materials and methods they wish to use, and [this] places high levels of responsibility on the individual teacher” (Hüttner, Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2013, p. 279).

This lack of attention given to appropriate training for Austrian lecturers in higher education who teach their subjects English potentially has serious consequences. Without adequate preparation for teaching in a CLIL context, i.e. some training in English and methodology, content teachers quite often miss the main goal of this educational approach altogether and give lecture-type classes where the focus on the content but not on English.

Interaction and direct teacher-student communication are reduced to a minimum due to the content teachers’ lack of language awareness and knowledge of the appropriate pedagogical methods for successfully combining content and language. Not only does this lead to frustration in the classroom for teachers and students alike, it even threatens the continued existence of the degree programmes taught in English. If the quality of instruction is seen to
suffer when English is introduced as the language of instruction, this reinforces existing fears within the universities that teaching in English leads to a ‘dumbing down’ of the subject content and consequently to poorer learning outcomes. Eventually, this might lead institutions to the conclusion that degree programmes taught in English are doomed to fail, and they could one day be abolished as precipitately as they were introduced. This would be unfortunate as there is great potential in educational situation where an additional language is used as the language of instruction. It is unfortunate if the focus is on the challenges rather than on the potential of the situation. It is not English as the language of instruction that is the problem, but the way teaching in English is often introduced and implemented. In fact, a CLIL approach would be the perfect way to address the challenges of the situation and fully realize the potential.

Although internationalisation is part of most Austrian universities’ vision for their future and degree programmes taught in English are seen as an important means to achieve this, there have been hardly any initiatives for preparing lecturers for CLIL in terms of teaching formats, language learning guidelines and teacher qualification. However, in the absence of intensive, long-term training programmes, there has been some demand for intensive methodology seminars for lecturers at universities to prepare them for teaching in English, and we (the authors of this paper) have been involved in designing and teaching such seminars for a number of years now. One of our goals has always been to bridge the gap between content and language teaching that exists in higher education and to point lecturers in the direction of CLIL, in particular by supporting them in developing their language awareness.

Although we do address language issues (the language of the classroom, general and subject-specific vocabulary, pronunciation etc.) in the seminars, it would be unrealistic to attempt to significantly improve the seminar participants’ general language proficiency within such a short time (typically no more than 20-30 hours of instruction). The goal of our teacher training seminars is, therefore, to at least create a minimum of language awareness among content specialists. Firstly, we aim to raise content teachers’ awareness of the way they use speak English. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, we draw attention to the way activities in class have to be designed and the interactive teaching methods that should be used to address the linguistic challenges of the CLIL situation. The main goal here is to make teachers aware of the specific language support that is required in order for students to
successfully complete their tasks. In the final stages of the training seminars, we look beyond the level of individual tasks and work on lesson planning.

Ideally, every CLIL teacher should be a proficient speaker of the CLIL language and also have a good understanding of how languages are learned (cf. Wolff, 2012). In the situation we have described above, content teachers often lack this kind of knowledge about language and therefore tend to ignore the linguistic complexity of the CLIL situation in their lesson planning, which can result in unrealistic lesson plans (e.g. involving too much content for the time available and/or linguistically too complex material) for their CLIL classes.

The objective of this paper is to present some of our insights into how the problem discussed above is addressed in our teacher training seminars. We will also present the results of a collaboration with a content teacher when planning a CLIL lesson and discuss the potential of such collaborations in the specific teaching context (CLIL in a tertiary-level educational institution in a country where the CLIL language is a foreign language and not the L1 of either the teacher or the students) outlined above. We will contextualize the central issue of this paper by providing some information on the current situation of CLIL programmes in Austria and the misconceptions surrounding this pedagogical approach in higher education.

**CLIL rationale and misconceptions**

European universities have a variety of strategic reasons for implementing CLIL programmes, many of them are linked to a desire to increase visibility and stay competitive in the increasingly globalised world of higher education. By teaching content in English, the global lingua franca, universities hope to attract not only local but also international students. It also enables universities to position themselves in the international arena by creating new opportunities for its students in the global market. CLIL programmes also enhance educational, economic and cultural partnerships with other countries and contribute to the creation of collaborative networks among universities in academic, professional and research fields (Pavón, Vázquez & Gaustad, 2013, p. 84).

There are also numerous advantages to teaching complex subject matter in a foreign language from the pedagogical point of view. According to studies at undergraduate (Dalton-Puffer, 2008; Dalton-Puffer, & Smit 2007; Lasagabaster, 2008; Marsh, Baetens Beardsmore, deBot,

Pavón Vázquez and Gaustad (2013, p. 84) summarize the results of previous research into the advantages of CLIL programmes as follows: “[T]he overall benefits of this type of education are linked to improved motivation, increased knowledge of specific terminology, the strengthening of intercultural communicative competence, meaning-centred and communication-centred learning, the promotion of teacher-student and student-student interaction, and as a result, improvement in overall target language proficiency.” Being required to process complex content presented in a foreign language improves students’ motivation to improve their language skills: “[T]he necessity to understand complex content through an additional language also improves students’ attitudes towards their own learning of that language which is considered one of the most important drivers of learning among adult learners in formal settings” (Pavón Vázquez & Gaustad. 2013, p. 84).

Students also benefit in terms of self-awareness and confidence: “[A]s students progress in the additional language they become more confident about the communication skills they are able to develop. As they gain confidence, feelings of inhibition and inferiority disappear. By improving their language competence, students gain greater self-awareness of their own capabilities in both the classroom setting and in terms of their future professional development” (Pavón Vázquez & Gaustad. 2013, p. 84).

These are very weighty arguments in favour of CLIL in higher education3, but there is an important caveat: CLIL can only be realised if the whole educational system in question is not being averse in implementing changes in terms of structural, organizational and pedagogical initiatives.

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3 There has been more research on CLIL in secondary education, but despite significant differences between educational levels, we consider the lessons from CLIL in secondary education highly relevant to CLIL in higher education.
Thus, it is obvious that universities have to take certain measures to guarantee successful implementation of CLIL programmes, and teacher training programmes that equip content teachers with the necessary language awareness, and relevant methodological tools are the first step towards successful CLIL programmes. As Smit (2013, p. 15) points out, the success of CLIL programmes depends on teachers who have “the appropriate expertise to help their students in their discursive learning process”.

Successful CLIL teaching requires content teachers to move away from the traditional concept of lecturing to a more interactive engagement with the subject matter: “[T]eaching through a second language advocates the use of methodological strategies to promote interaction and language use in the classroom as the main means for students to access information. It aims to harness the principle of redundancy (repetition and coordination of content) and comprehensible input” (Pavón Vázquez & Gaustad, 2013, p. 84). Clearly, content teachers in a CLIL context need to develop their language awareness in order to create a language-rich CLIL classroom and achieve language-sensitive CLIL teaching and learning: “The teacher of whatever material is being taught in an L2, should not only update his linguistic knowledge to a standard and recognized level of fluency but should develop a different linguistic sensitivity to be able to adapt the contents to the new language and develop teaching procedures that make it possible for the student to learn” (Lorenzo, 2005, as cited in Pavón Vázquez & Ellison, 2005, p. 71).

**Planning for teaching in English: Considerations and innovative approaches**

In a CLIL context, language awareness plays a crucial role when lecturers plan their teaching. A lack of awareness of how the teacher uses language him-/herself for pedagogic purposes can lead to poor planning and frustrating experiences for all actors in the classroom: students become demotivated because they cannot complete the tasks successfully due to the lack of adequate language instruction and support, and teachers are dissatisfied with their choice of materials and activities when the results fall short of the expected learning outcomes. Therefore, content specialists in higher education, for whom language awareness is usually an unfamiliar concept, ideally need either the support from language specialists – if available at their institutions – or the advice of CLIL instructors when they plan their CLIL lessons.
However, it is important to realize that language awareness cannot be taught explicitly. As Bolitho, Carter, Hughes, Ivanić, Masuhara, and Tomlinson (2003, p. 252) point out,

Language awareness is not taught by the teacher or by the coursebook; it is developed by the learner. It is an internal, gradual, realization of the realities of language use, driven by the positively curious learner paying conscious attention to instances of language in an attempt to discover and articulate patterns of language use. [...] learners discover language for themselves.

It follows that language specialists working with content teachers or running teacher training seminars for inexperienced CLIL teachers have to support this process of discovery by encouraging reflection on linguistic aspects of teaching and by using tasks and activities that allow them to become more language sensitive.

In doing so, the content teachers should not be overwhelmed with strategies, activities and information they cannot digest as a whole, as is the case with, for example, Hansen-Pauly’s (2014, p. 35) comprehensive list of aspects that have to be considered when planning language-sensitive CLIL teaching:

- Planning for language and subject learning (careful progress, differentiated learning, time constraints)
- Methods of scaffolding integrating conceptual and linguistic elements
- Use of languages for interaction and knowledge construction in group work
- Language skills development, in particular, reading skills and text comprehension, interactive learning in L2, academic writing
- Practices of remediation
- Vocabulary work as part of literacy development,
- Translation, mediation and translanguaging4 activities for specific learning situations

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4 “Translanguaging is the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential. It is an approach to bilingualism that is centered, not on language as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable in order to make sense of their multilingual worlds”. García, O. (2011). Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century. In Fishman, J. & García, O. (eds). 2011. *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity: The Success-Failure Continuum in Language and Ethnic Identity.* Vol. 2. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 140 – 158.
Multimodal approaches to facilitate comprehension

It is tempting to hand content teachers this as a sort of ‘checklist’ when working on lesson planning with them, but they might not find it helpful because they are not used to thinking about teaching in these terms. Instead, it might be better to use a pragmatic approach that concentrates on setting realistic goals in terms of content teachers’ language awareness and use of interactive methods. Such an approach would help content teachers feel secure and comfortable when teaching in a foreign language.

Successful planning for teaching in English should be seen as a process that takes time. Where this is possible, a language specialist supporting the lecturer or the trainer of a teacher training seminar for CLIL lecturers can help to raise awareness of the role of language and provide lecturers with a set of tools to plan their CLIL teaching independently at a later stage.

A step-by-step guide for CLIL lesson planning

The guidelines that we have developed for Austrian content teachers working in a CLIL context in an Austrian University of Applied Sciences is intentionally simple, as jargon-free as possible and limited to a few key steps. The main goal is to convince content teachers that it is possible to have a more language-rich lesson where interaction, learner-centeredness and active learning are essential elements of the lesson by being aware of the linguistic challenges of the various tasks and using some simple methodological ‘tools’. The guidelines are based on content teachers’ own questions and the concerns they raised in our CLIL training seminars.

In particular, we found that while content teachers often have a wealth of materials at their disposal, having to think about using diverse teaching methods, organising tasks into teaching sequences and providing language support is a new experience for them; they do not know how to turn their sources into learning resources (Fürstenberg & Kletzenbauer, 2012). A repertoire of interactive teaching methods, however, is an essential element of successful CLIL lesson planning (Fürstenberg & Kletzenbauer, 2013).

Research suggests that, in a CLIL context, students very often need support for interaction, and as Hansen-Pauly (2014, p. 22) stresses,
…teachers have to provide suitable scaffolding. The appropriation of key phrases for questioning, challenging and responding will simultaneously promote learners’ cognitive and language development. A step-by-step conscious development of concepts and appropriate language prevents experiences of frustration which are detrimental to learning. Especially for group and individual work, precisely formulated questions for each step of a task will help overcome language barriers and facilitate contributions or answers in a foreign language.

Our guidelines are intended to help content teachers achieve Hansen-Pauly’s goals.

**STEP 1:**
Think about your **aims** for your lesson: what do you want your students to learn?

**STEP 2:**
Break these general aims down into concrete **teaching points**.

**STEP 3:**
How are the students going to learn? Think about **methods and materials** you could use for each teaching point.

**NB:** The AIMS should always come before the METHODS – you should pick the method that is best for a particular teaching point. Sometimes this will simply mean ‘Talk and Chalk’!

**STEP 4:**
Write down a **lesson plan**. You could use:

→ a very detailed structure of the lesson (listing tasks, methods, classroom arrangements, teaching notes and times)
→ a brief ‘running order’ (a reminder of the sequence of tasks you have planned for a session)
→ a flow chart (to remind you of the logical sequence of your tasks) etc. – whatever works best for you.

**STEP 5:**
Critically **reflect** on your lesson plan and **revise** as needed: Is there **variety** in my lesson?
If not – think some more about **methods** (Talk & Chalk, interactive methods…), **class arrangements** (group work, pair work…) and **materials** (video, texts, worksheet, ppt…)
What are the challenges for my students, both in terms of content and in terms of language? Think about how you can help your students (scaffolding: worksheets, grids, glossaries, using simple language, allowing time for thinking…)

**STEP 6:**
Have fun teaching!

**STEP 7:**
Reflect on your teaching experience. What will you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

**STEP 8:**
Revise and file your lesson plan.

### Table 1: Planning for teaching in English: A step-by-step guide

Our guidelines are based on the idea that lesson planning is not about producing elaborate written documentation; rather, it is essentially a ‘thinking skill’ (Scrivener, 2011, p. 123), and it is up to the content teachers whether they want to draw up a written lesson plan at all and what format they choose if they decide to do so. The main goal of the guidelines is to get content teachers to think about the methods they are going to use once they have decided what the aims of a lesson are and to encourage them to develop a greater awareness of their students’ language needs.

Ideally, content teachers using the guidelines will first think about their overall aims for a lesson and the teaching points they intend to address. They then draw up a provisional lesson plan on the basis of the materials at their disposal and using the teaching methods they is familiar with (e.g. the interactive methods displayed in Fürstenberg & Kletzenbauer, 2013). Rather than teaching according to this lesson plan immediately, however, we encourage him/her to critically reflect on his/her lesson plan first, paying particular attention to the methods he/she intends to use to teach content as well as to the students’ language needs.

It is at this point in the lesson panning process that co-operation with a language teacher can be extremely useful as the language teacher can provide the content teacher with a different perspective and evaluate the linguistic aspects of the teaching materials the content teacher is
planning to use. A language teacher can also advise the content teacher on how to provide language support for the students.

The following example is the result of a collaboration between a language and a content teacher. Together, we designed a lesson on the topic of ‘Mobile First’ (for an explanation of the concept see below) together with a content teacher for the course ‘Mobile Platforms,’ which is part of the Master’s programme “IT & Mobile Security” at a University of Applied Sciences in Austria. The language of instruction in the programme is English. The content teacher is an L1 speaker of German with good English skills (Level B2, i.e. ‘independent user’, of the Common European Framework for Languages\(^5\)). Typically, the students of the degree programme are also non-native speakers of English, and the student population at the University of Applied Sciences are predominately Austrian and L1 speakers of German. There is considerable individual variation between students’ language English proficiency, but they fall mostly into the range of B1/B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Group size in the IT and Mobile Security programme ranges from 15 to 25 students.

‘Mobile First’ programming: The original lesson plan

In the lesson we picked for our collaboration, the content teacher worked on ‘Mobile First’ programming with his students. ‘Mobile First’ refers to the process of “designing an online experience for mobile before designing it for the desktop Web or any other device. […] Mobile first shifts the paradigm of a Web-site user experience. Instead of users’ viewing desktop versions of Web sites on their mobile device with some adjustments, users are now viewing sites that have been created specifically for their mobile device” (Graham, 2012).

The teaching sequence was not newly developed by the content teacher. He had already taught it several times before, but never in English. When we started working together, he had already completed steps 1 and 2 of our guidelines: he had decided what the aims of the lesson were and he had broken these aims down into concrete teaching points. Our collaboration was mainly carried out via e-mail, with only two face-to-face meetings with one of us to go over the teaching material.

\(^5\) For more information on the levels of the Common European Framework for Languages, see [www.coe.int/lang-CEFR](http://www.coe.int/lang-CEFR).
According to the provisional lesson plan the content teacher provided when we started working together, the overall aim of the lesson was to teach students to design a user-friendly mobile application using ‘Mobile First’ programming. To do this, the students would have to understand why it is important to plan, design and test of such an application on mobile devices right away, instead of first designing a desktop version and adapt it for use on mobile devices later.

**Developing the teaching sequence**

The content teacher had three main aims for the lesson. The students had to

1. understand the target group for mobile applications and encourage them to think about the circumstances in which people use mobile applications;
2. design (in groups) a mobile application of their choice and draw a flipchart poster of 1-3 pages (including navigation, buttons, etc.) of their application, keeping in mind the target group for their application and the problem(s) it is intended to solve;
3. present the flipchart posters.

Step 3 of our guidelines encourages content teachers to think about methods and materials they could use for each teaching point. This is where we became involved, and at this point, co-operation between content and language teachers becomes very interesting: the materials (texts, videos, etc.) have to be provided by the content teacher, but the language teachers have different ideas for exploiting the materials and turning them into learning resources. Based on the materials provided by our colleague, we suggested the following teaching sequence:

**Task 1 – Good and bad mobile applications**

Students work in groups of five. Using their own mobile devices, they analyze a mobile application pre-selected by the teacher. They have to comment on the positive and negative aspects of the application and explain why certain features are problematic. The groups then compare the results of their discussions.

**Task 2 – The ideal mobile application**

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6 The lesson is conducted entirely in English.
Students are presented with a series of visual cues about the use of mobile devices. They continue working in groups. Each group has to list five characteristics of a well-designed mobile application. The characteristics are collected by the teacher, and the students then rank them from most important to least important. This can be done quite efficiently by telling every student to allocate three points to the feature he considers most important, two to the second-most important one, and one point to the third most important feature.

**Task 3 – Why Mobile First?**

The teacher sets up a so-called “expert round” on aspects of ‘Mobile First’. This means that students work in three groups and extract the most important points from a series of PowerPoint slides by Luke Wroblewski, one of the leading proponents of ‘Mobile First’ programming. After reading some quotes by influential figures in the field together, students are split into three groups. The first group works on the section “growth = opportunity”, the second group on “constraints = focus”, and the third group on “capabilities = innovation”. It is not the goal at this stage to summarize all the information on the slides; the idea is simply to choose some interesting points to share with the other students. When every group has collected a few interesting points, the students form new groups. Each group now contains at least one ‘expert’ on the three aspects discussed before, and the students share their insights.

**Task 4 – Designing a mobile application**

In this phase, students design their own application based on what they have learned in tasks 1-3. This activity is called “Paper Prototyping” (see Figure 1).
Task 5 – Presentation and discussion
The groups present a poster of their ideas for their applications (“Paper Prototyping”) and receive feedback from the other groups and the teacher. At this stage, there will be a mixture of German and English on the students’ posters.

Task 6 – Homework
Students watch a video of Luke Wroblewski giving his ‘Mobile First’ presentation (material taken from http://www.lukew.com/presos/preso.asp?26) to remind them of the points covered in class and find an application that they consider to be a successful example of ‘Mobile First’ programming to present in class in the next session.

Focus on language
Step 4 of our guidelines asks the content teacher to write a lesson plan in a format that he/she feels comfortable with. The result might look like the brief ‘running order’ above. Step 5 calls for critical reflection on (and, if necessary, revision of) the lesson plan, specifically concerning the variety of methods and materials and language support. The language teacher’s role at this stage is to help the content teacher create a language-rich environment. In our teaching sequence, we provided suggestions for enhancing the language component of each of the tasks.

7 ‘Paper Prototyping’ http://openmobiledevelopment.wordpress.com/mobile-design/
Task 1 – Good and bad mobile applications

To get the conversation started, it would be a good idea to give the students the English vocabulary they need beforehand. This can also be a way of introducing the necessary technical language (or revise it if the students already know it) and encourage the students to use it instead of falling back on strategies such as paraphrasing or resorting to German. The teacher could provide a list of features and characteristics or a grid that the students have to fill in, rather than just telling them to analyze an application without providing language support.

Task 2 – The ideal mobile application

In this phase, language could be added to the visual cues. For example, captions could be added to the pictures, and the teacher could use gaps or scrambled words to render selected vocabulary items salient. The caption for the picture of the man on the motorbike, for example (see Figure 2), could read “Don’t _____________ and drive!”, drawing the students’ attention to the verb ‘text’, which is more idiomatic than ‘to write sms’, which would be the first choice of many German speakers due to interference (the most common German expressions for texting are ‘sms schreiben’, ‘smsen’, ‘simsen’).

Figure 2: Beckham is “bending” the rules...

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8 Beckham is “bending” the rules... Retrieved September, 25 2014 from http://www.usridernews.com/tag/handlebars/
**Task 3 – Why ‘Mobile First’?**

In this phase, the students will tend to carry out their own language research on their devices while they work in groups. They are likely to be familiar with the technical English of their field of study, but general or business vocabulary such as ‘to outpace’, ‘shipment’, ‘to scope out a neighbourhood’, ‘revenue’ etc. might present problems. The teacher should encourage students to make a list of the English words they have to look up and also jot down a translation or explanation. This information can then be collated and turned into a student-written glossary for the whole PowerPoint sequence. This will be useful when students listen to the whole PowerPoint presentation independently outside of class since they only work with a part of the material intensively in the expert round.

**Task 4 – Designing a mobile application**

In this phase, the students can add more items to the vocabulary lists which will form the basis of the glossary. Students can also be told to avoid using any German expressions on their posters.

**Task 5 – Presentation and discussion**

In this phase, the teacher might want to consider setting a time limit for the presentation. This could take the form of an ‘Elevator Pitch’ task, where students are told that they have only a limited amount of time, for example, three minutes, to present their application. In addition, the teacher could provide a structure for the presentation with the English phrases that students are likely to need for each point. If the teacher is worried that students are not comfortable giving feedback to their fellow students, feedback request forms can be provided to the presenters. The form specify the areas the presenters would like feedback on, which could be content-related (what did you think of our ideas for navigation? etc.) or concern the presentation (did I speak too fast / too slowly?). As well as giving students the opportunity to organize their thoughts and prepare before they give feedback, the teacher can also use this approach to provide useful language (e.g. ‘pace’, ‘delivery’, etc.) by including it on the feedback form. Some students could also be assigned the task of taking notes during the presentations. These notes could then also be circulated and serve as a complement to the student-written glossary.
Task 6 – Homework

It is sometimes difficult for students with weaker English skills to filter out the main content points when they watch a video in English which has not been adapted for use with non-native speakers. This requires skills different from watching original material for entertainment, which most students now regularly do in their free time. The teacher can provide a worksheet to make their task easier, focusing on a list of content questions (e.g. “What can we not rely on when we design for mobile? In what way will designing for mobile first do designers a lot of good?”) or if a transcript of the video is available, the teacher could turn the most important sections into a fill-in-the-gap task by deleting the key words that he wants to draw the students’ attention to:

“I think it increasingly makes sense to start thinking about the mobile experience first, and the reason why I bother talking about this is because 99% of the time, the exact opposite thing happens. So we start with something we had on the ___________, we have these _______ and these ___________ designed for these big ________, these always-on ___________, these fast ___________ – and that creates a certain kind of approach to design that I think designing for mobile sort of breaks a lot of the things that we find comfortable there, and that breaking is good. In fact, I think it is so good that I would recommend even if you are not planning to launch a mobile ___________, which you should, or a mobile _________, or a mobile ___________ or anything like that, even spending half a day or a couple of hours just brainstorming what your product could be on mobile I think will help you _________ a lot more, will help you kind of _________ in some areas you might not even be thinking about and will do a lot of good for you. So this is kind of the high-level approach that I am talking about, which is just starting with mobile first and then moving to other places, and I’ll talk about why.” (01:50-2:55)

[Key: desktop; screens; applications; monitors; power sources; internet connections; version; app; website; focus; innovate]

Content lecturer and language teacher cooperation: The path ahead

It is our belief that cooperation between content lecturers and language teachers is highly useful in a CLIL context in higher education:
The success of programmes involving the teaching of content through another language does not rest solely on whether the teachers responsible have a high level of linguistic and subject competence, but also on the collaboration between those teaching content subjects and languages. For example, foreign language teachers can provide invaluable linguistic support to students in their language lessons. It is not enough to increase the content teacher’s basic knowledge of the second language. These teachers need to develop a language consciousness that triggers their awareness of their own foreign language input as well as expected output from students. This is what will take their language competence to a new ‘pedagogic’ level. This is a highly skilled procedure, for not only does it imply a heightened awareness of the potential of language, but also an adaptation of teaching methodology and a more strategic use of teaching aids and materials. (Pavón Vázquez & Ellison, 2013, p. 70)

Cooperation between lecturers and language teachers is challenging and interesting for both parties. After all, both content and language teachers get an insight into the ideas and methodologies of a field they are not familiar with, and this is an opportunity to develop as a teacher. However, for practical reasons such as time constraints, cooperation like the one described above will always be limited to a few selected modules, not least because there are subjects so technical that a language teacher who is not also a content specialist will simply not be able to make any sense of the material.

Cooperation like the one described here should therefore be seen as learning opportunities on both sides and serve as a springboard for content teachers’ own lesson planning. The language support we have described for the ‘Mobile First’ teaching sequence is not very ambitious and could be provided by any content teacher with a reasonable command of English, provided the teacher is aware of the areas of language that are likely to cause difficulties for his/her students. If, for example, a content teacher starts by initiating student-written glossaries for every new topic he/she covers and encourages students to document the vocabulary they research themselves during lessons, awareness of the sort of language his/her students find difficult will be raised without causing the teacher any extra work. The students will also be made more aware of the English they use and the language they still have to learn, and they will come to accept language as a natural part of their content lessons.
A content teacher who is familiar with the rationale behind common features of language teaching, e.g. a gapped text, because of a cooperation with a language teacher on a specific project, will then be able to design similar tasks for other topics he/she covers in his content classes. It does not require any specialist training in language teaching to blank out key words in a text to make students more aware of them as we do in Task 6 above. Once a teacher understands and accepts why the technique can be useful in specific teaching situations, it is easy enough to apply without the support of a language teacher.

For content teachers, the idea of doing ‘content and language integrated learning’ in English often evokes the idea of having to explain aspects of English grammar such as the present perfect tense or the third conditional to their students, and they understandably feel that this is best left to the language specialists. However, language sensitive teaching does not mean that content teachers have to become language teachers: (see above)

To be a ‘teacher of language’ in the content class is related to facilitating students’ use of the language, helping them to use it effectively in all the language skills when dealing with content and not becoming a language teacher in the traditional sense. It would be a mistake to think that the content teacher should work on specific grammar points, and on establishing linguistic objectives different from “the ability or capacity” to do something with the language, without focusing on the strategies to make students understand and express themselves. This would be to ignore that principle of language as a medium of instruction and not an end in itself. The content teacher should not be fully in charge of teaching the language; their role is not that of ‘policing the language’ but of facilitating its use for academic purposes. (Pavón Vázquez & Ellison, 2013, p. 73)

In fact, language-related tasks such as the ones described above for the ‘Mobile First’ teaching sequence do not require in-depth theoretical knowledge of the English tense system or syntax. Beyond reasonable proficiency in English, all that is required of the content teacher is an awareness of the areas of language that his/her students find difficult and a willingness to support them in their language development in the context of their content lessons.
Content teachers in Austria are often concerned that methods such as the ones described above and providing additional English language support in their lessons will take too much time and have a negative impact on the amount of material they manage to cover in their classes. Unfortunately, this means that they often rely too much on teacher-centered lectures. While it may be true that a lecture appears more efficient than more interactive methods at first glance, we believe that this is more than compensated for by the students’ deeper conceptual understanding when more interactive methods are used. This is particularly true in a CLIL situation, where the use of English adds another layer of difficulty for the students.

Our guidelines call for a phase of reflection after teaching the lesson, and a content teacher and an English teacher who work well together may find it useful to reflect on a lesson together and discuss if anything needs to be improved. As English teachers, we are in a good position to support content teachers in developing a few simple strategies to make language awareness a component of their lesson planning. It is our belief that making language development a part of content teaching need not detract from the main content focus of a lesson and may even lead to better overall learning outcomes.

**Conclusion**

Implementing a CLIL programme requires intensive support for students, teachers and stakeholders alike. Short-term training programmes, such as our intensive CLIL teacher training seminars for content teachers, are not sufficient to guarantee positive results. More structured processes at the institutional level (e.g. intensive, long-term training programmes) are necessary to avoid experiences of frustration and demotivation that negatively affect students’ and teachers’ performance.

In fact, many CLIL researchers “argue for a combination of foreign language and CLIL teaching, but the question of whether additional foreign language teaching is necessary is at heart an empirical one and requires more, and more detailed, studies of the classroom discourse of CLIL and foreign language classes embedded in specific educational contexts” (Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2013, p. 529).

If a combination of foreign language and CLIL teaching which is organised, supported and monitored by the institution is not an option, a close collaboration between the content and
language teachers of an institution may be a viable alternative in the short term. It is to be hoped that, in time – as content teachers become more confident and language-aware – this will lead to successful language-sensitive CLIL teaching, especially if such initiatives are accompanied by empirical research.

References


**About the authors**

Ulla Fürstenberg studied English at Graz University and worked in adult education, both as a language teacher and a manager, for nine years. During that time, she developed a strong interest in English for Specific Purposes and various aspects of the methodology of teaching English to adult learners. She is currently a lecturer at the English Department, Graz University, Austria, where she teaches language and methodology classes and contributes to research projects. Ulla Fürstenberg is also involved in CLIL training programmes for teachers.
at technical schools and universities and runs seminars and workshops for language teachers in adult education.

Petra Kletzenbauer studied English at Karl-Franzens University Graz, focusing on Applied Linguistics and ESP. She was a research assistant at the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Graz University being interested in the research of CLIL in tertiary education as well as foreign language teaching and learning processes. Currently, she is a lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences, FH JOANNEUM Kapfenberg, teaching English at the Departments of Internet Technology and Software Design. She also holds seminars in teacher training and adult education.