

**"IT IS A BROAD, BROAD CONCEPT AND EXTREMELY  
INTERESTING." CLIL TEACHERS AND CLASS  
TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE AWARENESS**

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## Abstract

Maaailma on yhä enemmän monikielinen, minkä takia maiden tulee kehittää erilaisia tapoja huomioida kansalaistensa monikielisyys. Yksi keino monikielisuuden tukemiseen kouluissa on kielitietoinen opetus, mikä mainitaan Suomen Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelmassa (2014). Usein opetussuunnitelman muutokset siirtyvät käytäntöön hitaasti ja siksi onkin tärkeää tutkia, miten opettajat näkevät opetussuunnitelmassa mainitun kielitietoisuuden niin teoriassa kuin käytännössäkin. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää, miten CLIL- ja luokanopettajat määrittelevät kielitietoisuuden, miten kielitietoisuus näkyy heidän opetuksessaan, minkälaisena he näkevät roolinsa kielitietoisuuden edistämisessä ja minkälaisia samankaltaisuuksia tai eroavaisuuksia opettajien välillä on. Tutkimusta varten tehtiin neljä haastattelua, kaksi alakoulun englannin kielen CLIL opettajien ja kaksi alakoulun luokanopettajien kanssa. Haastatteluiden litteroinneista tehtiin temaattinen (thematic) analyysi, jotta saatiin selville toistuvia teemoja. Yleisesti voidaan sanoa, että tutkimukseen osallistuvilla opettajilla oli laaja käsitys kielitietoisuudesta. He liittivät käsitteen sekä vieraisiin kieliin ja opetuskieleen että oppiaineiden kieliin. He pääasiassa määrittivät kielitietoisuuden kielten tiedostamiseksi, hyväksymiseksi ja huomioimiseksi. Kielitietoisuus oli myös osa luokkahuoneiden käytänteitä, esimerkiksi eri kielten esittelemisen kautta. Osa opettajista näki roolinsa kielitietoisuudessa oppilaiden kielille rikastuttamisena kun taas vain CLIL opettajat näkivät roolinsa kielenkäytön mallina olemisena. Opettajat lähestyivät kielitietoisuuden käsitettä eri lähtökohdista: CLIL opettajat vieraiden kielten ja luokanopettajat koulukielen ja oppiaineiden kielten näkökulmasta. Kuitenkin oli myös limittäisiä näkemyksiä opettajien välillä, esimerkiksi kielitietoisuuden yhteydestä monikielisyteen. Tulokset viittaavat siihen, että tutkimukseen osallistuneilla opettajilla oli tietoa kielitietoisuudesta ja kielitietoisuus on osa heidän opetustaan.

The world is increasingly multilingual and so countries need to develop new ways to meet the needs of multilingual citizens. One way to develop schools to take multilingualism more into account is by implementing language-aware classroom practices. Finland mentions language awareness in their National Curriculum for Basic Education. Since curriculum changes take time to turn into action, it is worthwhile to investigate how teachers see language awareness, both in theory and in their classrooms. The aim of this study was to investigate how CLIL teachers and class teachers define language awareness, how it is a part of their teaching, what they think their role is in furthering language awareness and if there are any similarities or differences between the teachers. The study was done by conducting four interviews, two with elementary school English CLIL teachers and two with elementary school class teachers. Thematic analysis was done on the transcribed interview data to find common themes. Overall the results indicated that the teachers had a broad understanding of the term language awareness. They related the term to both foreign languages and the language of instruction as well as subject-specific language. The teachers mainly defined language awareness as recognizing, accepting and considering languages. Language awareness was also seen in their classrooms, by for example showcasing the students' language skills and using language creatively. Some teachers said their role in language awareness is to enrich students with languages while only the CLIL teachers said their role is to be a model of language use. The teachers approached language awareness from different points of views: the CLIL teachers from the point of view of foreign languages and the class teachers from the language of instruction and subject-specific language. However, there were also some overlapping views between the teachers, such as language awareness being related to multilingualism. The results indicate that the participating teachers had knowledge of language awareness and it was a part of their teaching.

Keywords language awareness, CLIL teachers, class teachers, beliefs

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## INTRODUCTION

The world is increasingly multilingual. This has created a need for many countries to develop new approaches to meet the needs of multilingual citizens. Schools reflect society, and they are thus encouraged to embrace multilingualism in their classrooms. In Finland, multilingualism in the education system is also reflected in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016) which was improved in 2014 to meet the changing needs of our global world. This document will be referred to as FNCCBE in the following.

The FNCCBE (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016) mentions multilingualism in three of the transversal competence goals: Thinking and learning to think (T1), Cultural competence, interaction and self-expression (T2) and Multiliteracy (T4) (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, pp. 21-24). Language is an essential part of the second (T2) goal. Among many other things, students will learn to appreciate their cultural and linguistic roots (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 22). They learn to see cultural diversity as a positive asset in their lives. This leads to the students being encouraged to express themselves in all the languages they know. Supporting students' linguistic capabilities is seen as a common goal of basic education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 90). In order to utilize students' language backgrounds, language aware education is needed. Language awareness can be seen as "explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use" (ALA, 1992). By using students' linguistic resources in teaching, students will hopefully appreciate different languages and cultures and increase their language awareness (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 90). From these parts of the FNCCBE we can see that the Finnish National Board of Education wants to emphasize the role of culture and language in our lives and schools. In order to promote language awareness, teachers need to make conscious efforts to make students' languages seen and heard. "Every teacher is a language teacher" (Honko & Skinnari, 2020) and so paying attention to language is essential for all teachers.

In this study I will investigate how CLIL teachers and classroom teachers in Finland define and express their beliefs on language awareness and their role in

teaching it. Studying teacher beliefs is necessary because they can influence instructional practices (Basturkmen, Loewen & Ellis, 2004, p. 245) and studying them can help us understand the thinking process behind choices made in teaching. I chose these two groups because they have a similar teaching job in terms of the content but the language is different. Classroom teachers generally teach in the majority language of the country, while CLIL teachers teach some of the lessons in a foreign language. This makes these two groups interesting to compare in terms of language awareness since language awareness can be seen in how languages are taken into account, how they are used and what beliefs people have about them. These two groups of teachers have not been notably studied together in Finland in terms of language awareness, to my knowledge, and this study has the opportunity to fill this gap in research.

The goal of this study is to see what beliefs CLIL and class teachers have toward language awareness and how they see it as a part of their teaching. This will hopefully bring forth conversations about language awareness, teachers' knowledge of it and how schools and universities could help teachers integrate language aware practices into their teaching. Supporting students' learning irrespective of their linguistic background can be seen as a teacher's responsibility (Lehtonen, Ahlholm, Suuriniemi & Tiermas, 2023) and making sure this happens in practice is highly relevant. Since classrooms are increasingly multilingual and multicultural, this support is highlighted even more.

I chose this topic because it is currently relevant as the FNCCBE highlights the importance of language and language awareness. As every teacher is seen as a language teacher, it is relevant to study how different kinds of teachers see language awareness in their job. Often curriculum changes can be difficult to transfer to actions. So, it is important to see how well the curriculum changes have so far affected teaching and if there is something that could be improved in the future. This study can bring forth not only practical ideas for language-aware education but also show what the current situation and understanding of the term is.

This topic is also closely related to my degree and future job. I study in the Language Aware Multilingual Pedagogy (LAMP) degree in the University of Jyväskylä. My degree gives me rights to be both a class teacher and an English teacher. I want to know more about the future field I will be working in and to gain more knowledge of how I can further language awareness in my work community.

This thesis consists of seven chapters. The first, second and third chapters explain the background of this study and some central terms, in particular language awareness, teaching, CLIL and beliefs. The fourth chapter focuses on the present study and the methods used for data collection and analysis and it introduces the participants. This is followed by the results of the study. The last chapter will have some discussion on the results and it will conclude this thesis. The interview questions



are included in the appendices and there is one table to illustrate the features of class teachers and CLIL teachers in Finland.

# 1 LANGUAGE AWARENESS AND TEACHERS

In the next three chapters, I will discuss the background of this study by introducing previous studies and determine which theories are relevant to the present study. I will present definitions for the most essential terms and the context in my study: language awareness, teaching in Finland and beliefs. I will start by narrowing down how language awareness are defined in this study based on previous research. Defining this term is essential since it is the main subject of my study. Then I will move on to teaching in Finland, focusing first on class teachers and then CLIL teachers. These terms might be unfamiliar to some so I will connect them specifically to the Finnish context and at the same time give background information of the participants and their jobs. The last chapter of the theoretical section will discuss beliefs, how they have been studied and how they are defined in this study. The study itself aims at researching teachers' beliefs and, thus, it is central to know what exactly is being studied besides language awareness.

## 1.1 The history of defining language awareness

Language awareness as a term has many possible definitions. Before we go further into these possible definitions, we need to look at the origin of language awareness as a term. Language awareness as a term can be traced back to the 1980s, when the Language Awareness Movement started to promote the term and its usefulness (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). The Language Awareness Movement was established because it was seen as important that students from lower social backgrounds could improve their language skills and have opportunities to be involved in schools (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). This eventually led to the formation of the Association for Language Awareness (ALA) in 1992 (Andrews, 2007). The main reason for the formation of this association was that the students in British

schools were showing weak results in foreign language learning and literacy skills (Andrews, 2007). It can be seen from these two movements why most of the research on language awareness has been done specifically on children and students more so than adults and teachers. Language awareness has grown in popularity as a research subject but there still seems to be no common definition for language awareness.

The Association for Language Awareness defines language awareness as “explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use” (ALA, 1992). This definition focuses on the explicit knowledge of language but many studies have also discussed the unconscious or nonconscious phenomena of language awareness (Garrett & Cots, 2017). The ALA definition has been widely used as the basis for different definitions and theories.

A common general definition of language awareness besides the ALA definition is "Language Awareness is a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life". (Donmall, 1985, cited in Donmall-Hicks, 1997). This definition came before the ALA (1992) definition but shares some aspects, like focusing on sensitivity and conscious awareness of language. This shows that language awareness as a whole is seen as sensitivity and conscious awareness of language in different contexts. Since language awareness as a term became known through an educational context, it is difficult to separate language awareness and education from each other. Thus, I will next discuss what language awareness is in the school context and give more definitions for the term.

## **1.2 Language awareness in education**

In research, language awareness (LA) has often been studied in terms of students and in particular multilingual students or students who have a different language used at home than at school. However, there is an increasing amount of research done on teacher language awareness and so I will now be discussing what language awareness means in a school context, first focusing on teachers and then students and classrooms.

Thornbury (1997, p. x, cited in Andrews 2007) defines teacher language awareness (TLA) as "the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively". This definition implies that all teachers need to be aware of language to teach effectively and, thus, language awareness should be improved in teacher education. In relation to what aspects of teacher language awareness should be developed through teacher education, Pinho, Gonçalves, Andrade & Araujo e Sà (2011, cited in Komorowska, 2022) give four categories. These categories are sociolinguistic awareness, sociocultural awareness,

linguistic culture and self-awareness as speakers, learners and teachers (Pinho et. al, 2011, cited in Komorowska, 2022). Sociolinguistic awareness relates to language use in its context, while sociocultural awareness highlights the understanding and sensitivity to these contexts (Pinho et. al, 2011, cited in Komorowska, 2022). Linguistic culture includes knowledge of world languages and cultures as well as knowledge of multilingualism and plurilingualism. Self-awareness is also a part that is highlighted and is particularly difficult to make visible (Pinho et. al, 2011, cited in Komorowska, 2022). These categories show that teacher language awareness includes both knowledge of the language and about the language and practical knowledge on how to use strategies that raise students' language awareness. All these parts of language awareness work together and sometimes simultaneously to build understanding and competence in language awareness. It is essential that teachers pay attention to these kinds of aspects of language and develop their own awareness and then possibly develop their students' awareness in the process.

While Pinho et. al (2011) discuss language awareness in teacher education, Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen (2022) discuss language awareness in classroom practices. Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen (2022) present categories for LA and divide it into three categories that can be connected to either teachers or students: metalinguistic awareness, practical language awareness and critical language awareness. Metalinguistic awareness refers to awareness that is observable in multilingual practices that focus on the metalevel of language, for example linguistic form or meaning (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). It also includes reflection and knowledge about language as well as metalinguistic analysis. Practical language awareness is "any linguistic practice indicating awareness of language", for example language play and linguistic creativity (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). Critical language awareness on the other hand means any practice that has a critical outlook on language and language use and it also includes social and ideological dimensions (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). These categories focus more on the practical side of language awareness compared to Pinho et. al's (2011, cited in Komorowska, 2022) categories, which are more ideological. Both categorizations highlight how important and complex language awareness is in teaching.

While Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen (2022) focus on language-aware classroom practices, Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty (2019) focus on what language awareness looks like for students. Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty (2019) combine different aspects of language awareness and present five categories for student language awareness: noticing of language, linguistic creativity, metalinguistic knowledge, metalinguistic consideration and attitudes related to languages and

language communities. Linguistic noticing happens in a situation where the student or teacher focuses on a linguistic form or the connection between form and content instead of focusing on meaning (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). Linguistic creativity means playing with language, language form or the connection between form and meaning by breaking the norms of language (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). Metalinguistic knowledge includes knowledge about language as a system and what the rules of language use are (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). Metalinguistic consideration refers to the language user actively reasoning language and thinking about answers (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). Attitudes about languages and language communities can be seen as prejudices children and adults have toward certain languages (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty (2019) mention that addressing and discussing these attitudes can make students more aware of the meaning of language to individuals and societies. They highlight that all these categories need to be a part of corporate culture in order to improve language awareness in the workplace. These categories present examples of what language awareness can be in the classroom.

Language awareness can bring many benefits to teaching for all students. In an ideal situation, language awareness helps teachers and students observe, interpret and use all their linguistic resources and teaches them to appreciate their languages as well as others' (Honko & Skinnari, 2020). This was seen in a case study done by Andersen & Daugaard (2023) where they found that a student, Abshir, with a minority language background grew more confident in his language skills throughout the language weeks. The students in the classroom also grew more appreciative towards other languages and started to use terms to describe language, like the rolling r (Andersen & Daugaard, 2023). When one student started to use the term, many others followed by example and were more aware of that specific linguistic item. This also increased the students' interest in other languages, which culminated in Abshir teaching a group of students Somali (Andersen & Daugaard, 2023).

In this way language awareness unlocks the students' prior knowledge and skills that they have gained from school and outside of school, formally and informally (Young, 2018, p. 24 & 30). Thus, language awareness promotes multilingualism, which is needed in today's increasingly global world. Students can also notice how language is a system and languages have similarities and differences and being able to speak different languages can open doors to new worlds (Young, 2018, p. 30). As key adults in children's lives, parents and teachers are in an important role to encourage children to be curious and analyze language (Young, 2018, p. 30).

An important part of language awareness and promoting it is the teachers' willingness to discuss language in their classroom (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). The teacher does not have to be an expert in the language they want to discuss but

they do need to be curious, critical and constantly ready to learn new things about language (Andersen & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2019). This often changes the teacher's role from being the expert to being the novice and learning together with the students, which can be difficult for some teachers to adjust to (Young, 2018, pp. 31-32).

Not only do teachers need to reconsider their role in the classroom, but they also have to become more aware of their own language ideologies. Language ideologies are abstract and often implicit beliefs related to language and language behavior (Silverstein, 1998, cited in Young, 2014). Some teachers might enforce a classroom practice that only allows for the language of the schooling to be used (Young, 2018). This can come from the thought that students need as much input in that language as possible and that the majority who speak the language of instruction should not be alienated by the use of other languages (Young, 2018). However, this way of thinking can then alienate students who speak minority languages and are not proficient in the language of schooling (Young, 2018). Ağirdağ et al. (2014, cited in Young, 2018) found that some teachers had negative attitudes towards the use of Turkish at home or in schools. This can lead to the students having a similar attitude of ethnocentrism and lead to the embarrassment of minority languages and their speaker (Young, 2018). This is one of the reasons why language awareness projects are needed.

Young (2018) introduces some language awareness programs that have been used in primary schools. Firstly, there is the Didenheim project, which aimed to promote the acceptance of difference and breaking stereotypes by learning about others (Hélot and Young, 2006, cited in Young, 2018). The program also promoted cultural knowledge by having parts that focus on culturally appropriate nonverbal behavior, culinary specialties and artistic practices (Hélot and Young, 2006, cited in Young, 2018). This project showed how valuable collaboration between teachers and parents is in raising awareness of languages and cultures within a school. Some other prominent projects in Europe are EVLANG, Ja-Ling ([http:// jaling.ecml.at/](http://jaling.ecml.at/)) and CARAP/FREPA (<http:// carap.ecml.at/>) (cited in Young, 2018). These programs have been used overall in 16 European countries and have helped primary school students reflect on their attitudes about languages. They also offered multilingual students safe spaces to express their identities.

There have been less international language aware projects aimed at Finland specifically. However, the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (2016) highly encourages language awareness (Alisaari, Vigren & Mäkelä, 2019). Alisaari, Vigren & Mäkelä (2019) highlight that in the FNCCBE (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016) languages and multilingualism are seen as a resource. In Finnish schools, every teacher is seen as a linguistic model for the students (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016), making language awareness every teacher's job. This thought comes from the idea that every school subject has field-specific

vocabulary and text conventions that can be difficult even for native speakers of the language to understand (Aalto, 2013). Thus, these text conventions and field-specific language need to be explicitly taught in schools so the students can truly understand the subjects they are learning. With this, Aalto (2013) argues that subject teachers and class teachers need to work together to plan lessons that support the learning of the subject languages. This will not only benefit multilingual students, but all students.

The focus of this study is on teacher language awareness, how the term language awareness is understood by teachers and what ways of supporting students' language awareness teachers have. In this study, teacher language awareness will be defined by using Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen's (2022) categories. This means that teacher language awareness will be seen as consisting of metalinguistic awareness, practical language awareness and critical language awareness. This definition encapsulates many aspects of teacher language awareness, including both theoretical and practical knowledge and being critical of language and language use.

## **2 TEACHING IN FINLAND**

In this section, I will explain what teaching entails in Finland according to the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education and previous studies. The target groups of this current study are class teachers and CLIL teachers and so I will start by discussing each of these groups separately. I will first talk about class teachers and then move to the principles of CLIL teaching in general and in Finland.

### **2.1 Class and CLIL teaching in basic education**

Finnish teacher education has been a responsibility of universities since 1971 (Paksuniemi & Uusiautti, 2013). Finnish teacher education is built on a research-based approach. This means that teacher students in Finnish universities read research literature, write essays and portfolios and become familiar with research methods since the beginning of their studies (Toom, Kynäslähti, Krokfors, Jyrhämä, Byman, Stenbergm Maaranen & Kansanen, 2010). This all leads to the students writing a Bachelor's and Master's theses (Toom et al., 2010). So, in order to become a certified teacher in Finland one needs to attain a Master's degree, which takes approximately five years (Paksuniemi & Uusiautti, 2013). The goal of this is to educate autonomous and reflective teachers that can base their decision-making on a theoretical foundation (Toom et al., 2010). This amount of studies is required from all teacher students, including class teachers. Finnish National Board of Education (2022) states that a class teacher is someone who teaches multiple subjects to grades one to six in elementary school. A CLIL teacher, on the other hand, is a teacher who teaches multiple school subjects, either as a class teacher or a subject teacher, in a foreign language (Nikula, 2016). The biggest difference is the language of instruction.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) can be understood as using an additional, target language as the language of instruction in non-language school



subjects (Nikula, 2016). It has spread in Europe since the mid-1990s and has received support from the European Union (Nikula, 2016). The European Union thought CLIL could be a way to foster EU citizens' bilingual and multilingual skills (Nikula, 2016). This was seen as particularly important to areas of Europe where there was no bilingual education and where L1 instruction was the norm (Nikula, 2016).

CLIL brings together language and content (Paraná, Siqueira & Landau, 2023) by highlighting both language and content in learning. Language is seen to mediate both content and language learning as well as the relationship between these goals (Moate, 2010, cited in Paraná, Siqueira & Landau, 2023). The basis of CLIL is the four Cs developed by Coyle (1999, 2007, cited in Nikula, 2016) which refer to content, culture, communication and cognition. Content is the starting point of learning, which relates to communication (language), cognition (thinking) and culture (awareness of self and others) (Coyle 1999, 2007, cited in Nikula, 2016).

CLIL as an approach has some features from immersion and content-based instruction. What makes CLIL different from these two other approaches is that often the language of instruction in CLIL is English or another lingua franca compared to a locally significant language (Nikula, 2016). Often CLIL teachers are also content specialists rather than language specialists (Nikula, 2016). Another interesting feature of CLIL is that the target language continues to be taught as a foreign language alongside CLIL lessons, which allows the students more exposure to the target language (Nikula, 2016).

There have been some positive results from studies related to CLIL. Nikula (2016) mentions that in some studies content learning was not affected by the instruction being in a foreign language. CLIL students' vocabulary has been proven to be broader than non-CLIL students' since CLIL gives the students specialized language through subject areas (Nikula, 2016). CLIL students were also seen to become more confident and motivated through learning and used higher levels of communicative competence and flexibility (Ruiz de Zarobe, 2017, cited in Nikula, 2016). These are skills that can be related to language awareness, since CLIL teaching involves two languages and the students can use their skills in both languages to compare and communicate. In this way, it could be said that CLIL teaching has the potential to improve both students' and teachers' language awareness better than non-CLIL teaching. After all, CLIL students and teachers are learning and teaching in a multilingual environment. Thus, the teachers must use more time in planning what kind of language they use to enhance the students' language and content skills than for example monolingual class teachers.

Despite CLIL having great results, there are also some concerns. Some studies (see Lim Falk, 2008, cited in Nikula, 2016) have pointed out the possibility of students learning less subject-based language in their first language. Also, the availability of

CLIL to all students has been a concern. Even though Finnish education highlights equity and same opportunities to all students, CLIL programs in Finland are centered around bigger cities and municipalities (Nikula, 2016). CLIL programs also often have language skill screenings that might rule out this approach from some students and make CLIL elitist (Nikula, 2016). Even if there is no screening, linguistically motivated students are more likely to apply to these programs, which could create some unreliability to results from CLIL studies (Nikula, 2016). A final concern is that often CLIL is centered around English so CLIL itself does not necessarily diversify language skills but rather just strengthens English skills (Nikula, 2016).

CLIL is often seen just as a form of bilingual education, but in reality, it can be used to describe any teaching that combines language and content elements (Nikula, 2016). This can happen in subject classes by having parts of the lessons dedicated to learning language related to the subject at hand. However, language is often seen by teachers as difficult to integrate into content lessons, since it requires reshaping of their teacher identity from being a subject teacher to a language teacher as well (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012, cited in Nikula, 2016). In this study, CLIL is seen as mostly a method of bilingual education and so the terms CLIL and bilingual education might be used interchangeably.

## **2.2 CLIL teaching in Finland**

The language of instruction in Finnish schools is mainly either Finnish or Swedish, sometimes Sámi, Roma or sign language (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016). Instruction can also be provided in another language if it is seen not to risk the students' ability to follow instruction. This form of teaching can be given mainly or fully in some other language and is seen as bilingual education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 93).

The main goal of bilingual education in Finland is to achieve "solid and versatile language skills both in the language of instruction and in the target language" (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 93). This highlights the importance of maintaining a proficient skillset in both languages for the student's future. Bilingual education is thus seen to promote lifelong language learning and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 93). Bilingual education offers the students an authentic language use environment where languages are used both separately and also entwined in schools and outside of lessons (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 93). Before this kind of environment is achieved, there are many practicalities that schools and regions need to consider.

The Finnish National Board of Education (2016) divides bilingual education in to two categories: large-scale bilingual education and small-scale bilingual education. Large-scale bilingual education can be early total immersion that starts at the latest in pre-primary school and continues to the end of basic education with instruction being fully in the immersion language and gradually the share becomes on average 50% of instruction (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, pp. 95-96). Other large-scale bilingual education has at least 25% of the basic education syllabus in the target language (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 94) and the program might be from pre-primary school to the end of basic education or the program might only be used for a part of these years (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, pp. 96-97). Small-scale bilingual education on the other hand has less than 25% of the content of subjects taught in another language (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 97). The participants in this study were large-scale and small-scale English bilingual education teachers and their beliefs were compared to class teachers' beliefs. However, local differences in bilingual education practices need to also be addressed.

In Finland, the basic requirements of bilingual education are given by the Finnish National Board of Education but many of the practicalities are decided by local education providers. Local education providers have most of the power to decide on the practical parts of bilingual education in schools. Education providers decide what is the exact distribution of lesson hours for the target language and the language of instruction in the school and what subjects are instructed in each language (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, pp. 96-97). This is seen as a very important job as education providers need to make sure the students can continue their studies after the program and have good capabilities to be a part of the Finnish society (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 96).

Local educational providers also decide the key linguistic objectives in the subjects taught in the target language and what are the objectives and contents of the target language in each grade (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 97). All these factors affect the way bilingual education is executed in practice. In this study, I focus on the context of a fairly large city in Finland and thus the results and practices might be different than in other smaller contexts.

To conclude this chapter on teaching in Finland, see Table 1 to illustrate the similarities and differences of CLIL teachers and class teachers in Finland.

TABLE 1 The similarities and differences of CLIL and class teachers in Finland.

Job	Students	Language of instruction	What do they teach?
Class teacher	A heterogeneous group	Finnish or Swedish	multiple subjects to grades 1-6

CLIL teacher	Group selected through an exam	A target language (such as English) and Finnish or Swedish for some lessons	multiple subjects to grades 1-6 (some in the target language, some in the first language)
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### **3 BELIEFS**

Since the current study investigates teacher beliefs, it is necessary to outline what beliefs are. In this section, I will give different definitions of beliefs through research and define how they will be understood in this study. I will start by defining beliefs and their features, focusing on teacher beliefs. Then I will discuss different approaches to researching beliefs and how these different approaches define beliefs and, thus, give background to this study.

#### **3.1 Defining teacher beliefs and their features**

Defining beliefs can be seen as a “messy” construct (Parajes, 1992). There have been many ways of seeing beliefs and, thus, there is not a clear one definition for beliefs. From a biological and neuropsychological perspective Newberg & Walman (2006, cited in Shealy, 2015) conclude that a belief is “any perception, cognition, or emotion that the brain assumes, consciously or unconsciously, to be true” (Newberg & Walman, 2006, pp. 20-21, cited in Shealy, 2015). This definition emphasizes that beliefs are related to the brain and are assumed to be true. Newberg & Walman (2006, cited in Shealy, 2015) emphasize that beliefs are rarely challenged or changed even when there is contradictory evidence. Borg (2011, pp. 370-371) shares similar viewpoints on beliefs and defines beliefs as propositions individuals believe to be true and which are difficult to change and which have an evaluative and affective dimension. Borg (2011) sees them as the basis for action. These two are a few examples of how different fields define beliefs.

Beliefs have many features and it is not an easy task to give a definite list of features or a clear definition for beliefs. However, Ruohotie-Lyhty et al. (2016, pp. 88-89) give some features of beliefs. First, beliefs are the result of a particular place or time. This relates to the importance of beliefs to be seen or analyzed in context. Second,

beliefs are constructed through language. This makes language an essential part of constructing beliefs. Third, beliefs are developed through social interaction. Social interactions can also make a difference in our beliefs. Fourth, beliefs are both individual and shared. Individuals can have their own beliefs about certain things and, for example, have beliefs that align with the opinions of teachers in general or in a particular school. Lastly, there might be contradictory and conflicting beliefs. This means that one's beliefs might not be logical or the same in every situation. All these features are a part of beliefs and depict the multifaceted nature of beliefs. The above-listed features can be summarized by saying that beliefs are mental but also cultural and social (Barcelos, 2003, p. 8).

Shealy (2015) has also listed ten features of beliefs, of which I will discuss a few. Firstly, a belief is subjectively experienced to be true or false and good or bad. Secondly, a belief may or may not be empirically verifiable. Lastly, a belief may or may not be consciously accessible. This is supported by Newberg & Walman (2006, cited in Shealy, 2015) definition of beliefs as being consciously or unconsciously assumed to be true and it implies that beliefs are not always something believed, acted on or said on purpose. These features expand on those presented by Ruohotie-Lyhty et. al (2016), although both lists of features share some similarities.

It is also relevant to consider what teacher beliefs are, since teachers are the focus group of this study. Teacher beliefs can be seen as convictions teachers hold about teaching (Ruohotie-Lyhty, Ullakonoja, Moate & Haapakangas, 2016). Teachers use them to make sense of and act in their environment (Barcelos & Kajala, 2011, cited in Ruohotie-Lyhty et. al, 2016). To summarize, teacher beliefs have the same features of beliefs that have previously been listed but the beliefs relate to teaching and how teachers teach in a classroom. Borg (2011) studied the impact of in-service teacher education on teacher beliefs and found that although teacher's beliefs did change, becoming aware of this change was more difficult. There is evidence that teacher beliefs can affect teachers' behavior but the relationship between beliefs and practices is reciprocal (Borg, 2018). This means that beliefs can influence practice but also practices can influence beliefs. My study focuses on understanding teacher beliefs and actions related to them as described by the participants. These beliefs could be different from the actual practices in the classrooms but beliefs are the focus of this study rather than the relationship between beliefs and practices.

A relevant question to address at this point is why beliefs matter. Parajes (1992) offers many different reasons for the importance of beliefs. Firstly, beliefs help people understand themselves and their place in the world. Secondly, beliefs help determine what is relevant to people. Thirdly, beliefs help people identify with each other and form social groups and systems. And lastly, beliefs can offer structure, order, direction and shared values which help people to be less confused and be more connected. All

these reasons mentioned by Parajes (1992) highlight the fact that beliefs are something deeply relevant to people's lives, their identity and their social environment as a whole.

In this study, beliefs will be defined as preconceived propositions individuals believe to be true and which are mental, cultural and social in nature. This definition considers Ruohotie-Lyhty et al. (2016) and Shealy's (2015) list of belief features. Especially important points are beliefs being something subjectively believed to be true or false, good or bad; beliefs being consciously available or not available; the importance of language and interaction in the creation and development of beliefs; beliefs being both individual and shared among communities and that beliefs can be contradictory and conflicting. In the present study, teacher beliefs are the particular focus and so these features of beliefs are related to teaching.

All these aspects will be relevant to the present study as they give a wider context to the participants' answers. Beliefs are then understood to be a complex concept that affects how people see the world and act in it. Beliefs are mostly seen as something expressed through words and so the data will be analyzed to see any possible representations of beliefs. The definition or understanding of beliefs presented above will be considered in the interview topics by asking the participants about their work and study contexts and in the interviewing process by paying attention to how things are expressed and what that tells about the individual and the teaching community. There might be contradictions between the teachers' words and how they describe their action or classroom as language aware and this will be paid attention to and possibly noted in the results. In order to study beliefs, it is important to be aware of common approaches in beliefs research.

### **3.2 Research on beliefs**

Barcelos (2003) gives an overview of different research approaches to beliefs found in language learning research. Even though these approaches are connected to language learning and students, they are still relevant to the present study as language has a noticeable role, whether it be first or second language learning. There are three main approaches presented in the article: normative, metacognitive and contextual (Barcelos, 2003). While these are seen as separate research approaches, they are not always distinct in practice. Next, I will discuss each approach briefly.

The first research approach, the normative approach, sees beliefs as synonymous with preconceived notions, misconceptions and opinions (Barcelos, 2003). The main connotation of this approach is that a learner's, or anyone's, beliefs are misunderstandings or that they do not have the correct way of seeing, for example, learning. Often this approach uses questionnaires for data collection. This approach

helps get data on beliefs of large samples without the constraints of specific time for the study or contexts. However, this approach does not allow the participants to further express their opinions on relevant topics but instead it has predetermined statements that the participants must choose from. This is almost in contrast to the metacognitive approach.

The second approach, the metacognitive approach, defines beliefs as metacognitive knowledge, meaning stable and sometimes open to error knowledge learners have about language learning (Barcelos, 2003). This approach focuses on using interviews and self-reports as data collection methods to allow participants to explain things in their own words and elaborate on their points. It could be said that this kind of an approach was taken by Borg (2011), since they utilized semi-structured interviews and coursework to see if there was a change in the participants' beliefs. While it is valuable that the participants get to talk about their experiences, the beliefs are only seen or concluded from the participants' own statements that might not be truthful. So, it seems that this approach too has good aspects but does not cover all the information needed to reach an understanding of what the participants' beliefs are.

The last approach, the contextual approach, sees beliefs as a part of the culture of learning and beliefs being representations of language learning in a given society (Barcelos, 2003). This approach emphasizes the importance of context in researching beliefs. This contextual nature of beliefs was also emphasized by Ruohotie-Lyhty et al (2016), who found that teachers had certain beliefs in certain contexts. The contextual approach uses many data collection methods to get a broad understanding of the contexts of learners. The main methods are observations, interviews, diaries, life stories, case studies and metaphor analysis, which can be used together to support the reliability of the results. This approach gives a broad understanding of beliefs in their contexts but it is very time-consuming.

As can be seen from the description of these three approaches, none of them can alone encompass all aspects of beliefs. They all bring something different to the area of belief research. The normative approach brings an opportunity to investigate large sample sizes, the metacognitive approach the thought of the participants' own reflection and words to be important and the contextual approach a broader understanding of beliefs in context. While there are differences in the details, all three approaches suggest that beliefs have an influence on learners' behavior (Barcelos, 2003, p. 28). This study will follow a contextual approach and thus the beliefs stated are understood to be said in a specific language context and society. Barcelos (2003) emphasizes that research on beliefs should be done interactively by seeing the environments the students are in and seeing their intentions and actions on top of their own statements. While the present study is limited due to resources, the participants' teaching environments will be taken into account during the interviews.



## **4 THE PRESENT STUDY**

### **4.1 Aims of the study and research questions**

The aim of this study is to investigate CLIL and class teachers' beliefs about language awareness. The focus is on both the practical side of teaching according to what the participants describe and on the ideological side of how the teachers see language awareness in general. Thus, the research questions are as follows:

1. How do CLIL teachers and class teachers define language awareness?
2. How do CLIL teachers and class teachers see languages and language awareness as a part of their teaching in the classroom?
3. What do CLIL teachers and class teachers see as their role in language-aware education?
4. What similarities and differences can be seen between the teachers according to their own words?

Firstly, the aim is to find out how the teachers define language awareness in their own words. This is essential because, as mentioned in the background of this study, there is not one specific definition of language awareness that is used. The term itself is complex and is related to many areas of research. Thus, this study offers an interesting opportunity to let teachers explain how they understand the term 'language awareness' by answering questions related to language awareness.

Secondly, the aim is to find out how teachers see languages and language awareness in their teaching. This question is essential in order to find out about the practices the teachers use in their classrooms, at least according to their own words. This can offer teachers new ideas on how to bring language awareness into their own

classrooms and help them reflect on if they are already using language-aware practices.

Thirdly, it is central to see what the teachers see as their role in language-aware education. This ties the topic to the participants on a more personal level and possibly shows what the teachers would like to be like in their classroom. This is highly related to teacher beliefs of what should be done to advance language awareness.

Lastly, comparing the two teacher pairs can offer a new viewpoint to this study, even though the number of participants from each group is small. Since CLIL teachers and class teachers are both content teachers but teach in different languages, there could be some overlap and differences in their beliefs. It will be beneficial to find out if there are any similarities or differences between the pairs or are the results more related to the individual teachers, no matter what their profession is.

## **4.2 Data collection methods and data**

The data in this study was collected by conducting four semi-structured interviews. Interviews were used since they are fitting when studying opinions, feelings, emotions and experiences (Denscombe, 2014), which can be connected to beliefs. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has topics or questions that will be discussed but the overall order and way of presenting them is free (Denscombe, 2014). In this study, there were general themes that were covered in the interviews but not all aspects of them were relevant to all interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow the participants to expand on points they want to expand on. This is fitting for the present study as it allowed the interviewer some freedom to ask further questions and try to understand the participants. This is particularly important when studying beliefs, as they can sometimes be hidden.

In terms of beliefs research, this study was mostly aligned with the contextual research approach since it studied teachers' beliefs in a specific context. The contextual approach sees beliefs as a part of the culture of learning and as representations of language learning in a given community. The present study investigated two different teacher groups, taking their different jobs and teaching contexts into account and also saw the teachers' beliefs as a representation of not only their individual beliefs but also the teaching community's beliefs. Thus, the contextual approach to studying beliefs was appropriate.

The interviews were conducted in January and February of 2024. The interviews were mostly done in person but one was done through Zoom due to scheduling issues. The interviews were recorded and turned into transcripts.

### 4.3 The participants

There were four interviews conducted, each with a different participant. All four participants are working as teachers in Finland, two as elementary school English CLIL teachers and two as class teachers. The participants live and work as a teacher in a fairly large city in Finland. They all have experience of working as teachers for decades, ranging from a little over 20 to 30 years. Currently, they teach grades ranging from first grade to sixth grade. Two of the teachers are from a big school where a lot of research is done and the other school is smaller but more multilingualism oriented. This context might affect the results of this study, as the teachers might be more prone to language awareness, which is a prominent topic of research nowadays.

### 4.4 Data analysis

The data in this study was analyzed through categorizing the data into themes by using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a 'method of identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Although thematic analysis is widely used, there are not any clear rules on how to do it (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, I will clarify now how the data and analysis was approached. Firstly, I gave a more detailed look into certain themes rather than giving a rich description of the data as a whole (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This allowed me to give a deeper analysis of the results. Secondly, this study used a loosely theoretical thematic analysis. This means that the analysis was driven by the researcher's prior theoretical understanding of language awareness and beliefs, that have been presented in the previous chapters, and by the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, there was not a specific theory that guided the conduction of this study. Thirdly, this study was done on the semantic level, meaning themes were identified within the surface level of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, I did not look beyond what the participants said and why they said what they said. Lastly, epistemologically this study followed an essentialist or realist thematic analysis. In essentialist or realist thematic analysis motivations, experience and meaning can be theorized in a straightforward way, being interested in individuals (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These are some things to note when reading the analysis of the results.

Now I will explain how the analysis process itself went, according to Braun & Clarke's (2006, pp. 87-94) instructions. The analysis had six stages: familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the first stage, the audio

from the interviews was transcribed. All the interviews were done in Finnish, and so the transcriptions were in Finnish as well. The data was then read thoroughly and initial thoughts were written down in a separate file with extracts that support the notes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then, the initial list of ideas from the data were read and initial codes were made based on the data. The whole data was read to find interesting aspects and I marked them down with highlights and comments. The coded data was then put into meaningful groups in different files. In the next stage, the codes were sorted into potential themes alongside extracts from the data that fitted those themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89). In thematic analysis, themes are not seen as emerging from the data itself but they are something in the researcher's mind and they are guided by what the researcher deems interesting (Braun & Clarke, 2006). So, these themes were based on what I as the researcher found to be relevant from the data. Then the themes were reviewed by looking at how cohesive they are with the extracts and the data as a whole. For this, the data was read again from the mindset of whether the themes represented the data well.

The last two stages were done somewhat simultaneously. The fifth stage concerns defining and naming the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I defined what was the essence of each theme and why the data extracts are particularly interesting. I created a story to each theme and made sure they related to the story of the data as a whole and to the research questions. The themes were named to be easily accessible and still interesting to the reader. The final stage included writing the report itself (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For this, I clarified for myself what kind of a story the themes convey about the data, how they relate to previous research and how I wanted to present the results. At this stage the excerpts used were translated into English with the help of a translator site called [kaantaja.org](http://kaantaja.org). The translations were then modified if needed. The results can be seen in the following chapter, which has a description of each theme and extracts that support and expand on each theme. The themes will thus answer the research questions.

## **4.5 Ethical considerations**

This study was based on consent. Before the interviews themselves, the participants were sent a notice of the study and a privacy notice and they were encouraged to ask if they had any questions about those forms. The researcher confirmed that they had read the forms and did not have any questions about them. The participants were then reminded that they were free to give or retreat their consent at any time. The participants were then asked for their informed consent audibly through recorded interviews.

The only personal information collected were the recorded interviews and interview notes. All identifiable information about the participants was deleted before the transcripts were stored in Word and Windows 365. The personally identifiable data was anonymized to ensure confidentiality.

No physical, social, psychological or any other types of harm were expected from this study.

## 5 RESULTS

Overall, the participants had a generally broad understanding of what language awareness is both in theory and in practice. They expressed that languages are important to them and that language and languages are focused on in their teaching. In this section I will discuss the main overall themes that were found to be relevant in terms of the research questions. The first part focuses on answering the first research question of how teachers define language awareness. The second part addresses the second research question of how language awareness is a part of the classroom. The third part talks about a teacher's role in language awareness and whether the teachers feel like they are developing their students' language awareness. The last part brings all these results together and compares the two pairs of teachers and their answers, thus answering the fourth research question. Each part has extracts from the transcripts in Finnish and English. The full Finnish interview extracts can be seen in the Appendices.

### 5.1 Language awareness is...

All the teachers had a broad understanding of what language awareness means in practice and agreed that the term language awareness is complex and hard to define. Despite differences described by the teachers, some commonalities were found between the teachers' definitions. This theme describes these common definitions. The most prominent notion was that language awareness is about recognizing, accepting and considering language or languages in and outside of the school environment.

### 5.1.1 Recognizing, accepting and considering language

All of the teachers agreed that language awareness means recognizing, accepting and considering language. CLIL teacher 1 expressed this view of considering the multilingual backgrounds of students:

- (1) "se on sen huomioimista, että jokainen, monen siis usealla oppilaalla on erilainen kielitausta" CLIL teacher 1

"it is to consider that every, many, I mean many students have a different language background" CLIL teacher 1

This brings forth the idea that for language awareness to become a reality, the students' language backgrounds need to be considered. CLIL teacher 2 expands on this by expressing that there is a need to accept different languages and to see what is important in each situation:

- (2) "-- hyväksytään kaikki kielet ja ja sitä että ja mietitään sitä että mikä milloinkin on niin kun tärkeitä." CLIL teacher 2

"- Let's accept all languages and and think about what is important at that time." CLIL teacher 2

By saying this, CLIL teacher 2 highlights the importance of context in language use situations. The class teachers also expressed that acknowledging language or languages around them is essential in language awareness. In particular, class teacher 2 expressed the importance of not only acknowledging language but also culture and how expressions and words can mean different things in different languages:

- (3) "-- tiedostaa sen, että on erilaisia kieliä ja erilaisia kulttuureita ja sitten miten kieliä käytetään ja sitten se just että eri kielellä eri asiat voi tarkoittaa eriä." Class teacher 2

"Be aware that there are different languages and different cultures and then how languages are used and then just that in different languages different things can have varying meanings." Class teacher 2

This example shows that to class teacher 2 language and culture are closely related. Class teacher 2 also highlighted how language awareness includes acknowledging how languages are used, which is close to what CLIL teacher 2 mentioned above. Language use was also mentioned by the other participants, particularly relating to communicating through language.

### 5.1.2 Communicating depending on the situation

In addition to seeing language awareness as accepting different languages, CLIL teacher 2 and class teacher 2 mentioned that to them language awareness is about

communicating in different contexts. Especially CLIL teacher 2 highlighted the importance of acknowledging different communication ways in language awareness:

- (4) "No sitä, että sinä tiedostat, että on olemassa eri tapoja kommunikoida että että ja ja kaikki tavat ovat ihan hyväksyttäviä niin kauan kun ne eivät loukkaa ketään ja ja sä saat asiiasi ymmärretyksi." CLIL teacher 2

"Well that you recognize that there are different ways to communicate that and, and all ways are quite acceptable as long as they do not offend anyone and, and you are understood." CLIL teacher 2

In this example, CLIL teacher 2 continues the theme of accepting different kinds of language use but connects it specifically to communication methods. The example also illustrates a common pattern in CLIL teacher 2's answers: being understandable is more important than what language is used. This means that CLIL teacher 2 has a general belief that different ways of communicating are acceptable as long as they do not hurt someone else and what is said is understandable. When asked about how language manifests in teaching, class teacher 2 expressed that it is a way to communicate:

- (5) "Täähän on tota jokapäiväinen että se on meidän vuorovaikutuksen väline, se on meidän ilmasuväline. Se on kirjoitettu kieli ja sit on luettu kieli et se tulee niinku tosi kokonaisvaltasesti." Class teacher 2

"This is everyday that it is a tool for our interaction, it is our tool of self-expression. It is written language and it is read language, so it shows up really holistically." Class teacher 2

This example shows that language is seen by class teacher 2 as a means to communicate one's thoughts and ideas. It also related language to actions and language use. In this way, language awareness was seen by these two teachers as something active that the students and teachers need to consider while communicating with each other.

### 5.1.3 All-encompassing

Three of the participants expressed that to them language awareness is a complex phenomenon that cannot be restricted to specific subjects or people. Instead, it was seen as something that is a part of everything and is all-encompassing:

- (6) "Se semmosta kokonaisvaltasta lähestymistapaa. Että mä pystyn kommunikoimaan ja ymmärtämään." Class teacher 1

"It's a comprehensive approach. That I can communicate and understand." Class teacher 1

- (7) "Se on kyllä laaja, laaja käsite ja hirmu mielenkiintonen." Class teacher 2

"It is a broad, broad concept and extremely interesting." Class teacher 2



Example 6 illustrates how Class teacher 1 saw language awareness as all-encompassing, particularly related to themselves and their actions. In Example 7, Class teacher 2 expressed how they thought the term was a broad and interesting one. Class teacher 2 similarly mentioned language awareness being all-encompassing and related it to school subjects:

- (8) "-- kielitietoisuus on mun mielestä niinku just semmonen kokonaisuus, että sitä ei voi sitoo johonkin tietyille, vaikka nyt englannin kielen tunnilla tai espanjan kielen tunnilla vaan se on niinku kokonaan täs läsnä." Class teacher 2

"-- language awareness is, in my opinion, just like an ensemble that it cannot be bound to some certain, for example now in an English or Spanish lesson but it is completely present here." Class teacher 2

This shows that the teachers acknowledged the central role that language awareness has in teaching. CLIL teacher 2 mentions that language awareness is not just a matter of foreign language lessons but it is a part of every lesson in school. The term language awareness was connected by the teachers to both multilingual students and the language of instruction through multiliteracy. For example, CLIL teacher 1 and class teacher 2 state that language awareness is highlighted in multilingual classrooms:

- (9) "Meillä on tosi montaa eri kieltä siellä. Ja nyt oon sillä tavalla jännässä tilanteessa, että tota niin enemmän just enemmän, ehkä niin kun joutuu opettamaan tämmöistä tai niinku tää kieli tämmöinen tietoisuus ja eri kielten huomioiminen on siinä niinku keskeistä --" CLIL teacher 1

"We have many different languages there. And now I am in an interesting situation that it is more and more, maybe I have to teach this or like this language such awareness and consideration of different languages is central to it --" CLIL teacher 1

- (10) "Se, se niinku tässä työssä varmaankin, että tulee näkyviin että tai siis enemmän ja enemmän tää kielitietoisuus tulee tota näkyviin sitten kun on eri kulttuureista lapsia niin sen myötä kyllä." Class teacher 2

"The, the thing about this job is that it will appear that or more and more this language awareness will appear when there are children from different cultures, so through it yes." Class teacher 2

This shows that while they acknowledge in other aspects that language awareness is important in other facets of teaching, these teachers see language awareness as instinctively related to multilingualism or highlighted in it. In the case of CLIL teacher 1, they might be more inclined to mention multilingual students due to their years long experience of being a bilingual teacher. Class teacher 2 also has experience in teaching a multilingual classroom, so this might affect their beliefs. In contrast, class teacher 1 mentions examples of language awareness in relation to subject-specific language and the language of instruction, some of which will be

presented in more detail in the second theme. In this example class teacher 1 connects language awareness to multiliteracy:

(11) "Kun ajattelee että monilukutaito on, että me voidaan, että meidän ympärillä kaikki, kaikki voidaan nähdä niinku sellasina, että me luetaan ympäristöä, kuvia, symboleja tuon kirjoitetun kielen lisäksi esimerkiksi. Ja vielä laajemmin ja sit jos sitä mennään vielä laajemmin, niin voiaan nähä, että kaikki kehollinen viestintä." Class teacher 1

" When you think that multiliteracy is that we can, that everything around us, everything can be seen in such a way that we read the environment, pictures, symbols in addition to that written language, for example. And even more widespread and if it goes even more extensively, you can see all bodily communication." Class teacher 1

What can be deducted from this example is that to class teacher 1 language awareness as a term seems close to multiliteracy. Multiliteracy was also mentioned by class teacher 2. Multiliteracy is a term highlighted in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (2016), so it is not surprising that this connection was made by the teachers. In fact, multiliteracy can be seen as relating to language awareness since multiliteracy focuses on seeing and acknowledging different kinds of language in the surroundings. In this case and in the example, the definition of language is very broad, encompassing written language, pictures, body language and symbols. The class teachers connecting language awareness and multiliteracy shows that they are familiar with both terms and see their value and connections.

Overall, it could be said that the teachers saw language awareness as acknowledging and appreciating different languages and as ways of communicating in varying contexts. This relates closely to the ALA (1992) definition of language awareness, which highlights the conscious and sensitive nature of language awareness. The teachers' definitions of language awareness also relate to Donmall's (1985, cited in Donmall-Hicks, 1997) definition since the teachers also discuss the nature of language and how language use changes depending on the situation. Language awareness was also seen by the teachers as something all-encompassing and complex in nature and practice. However, language awareness was not necessarily described as a skill that could and should be improved by both students and teachers. This indicates that while teachers have a broad understanding of what language awareness is, there is need to critically discuss how exactly language awareness can be consciously improved. Next, there will be more specific examples of language awareness in practice.

## 5.2 Language awareness becomes apparent in diverse ways in classrooms

This theme describes how language awareness was seen as a part of the teachers' classrooms. Overall, all the participants described different language-aware practices that were used in their classroom. They all believed or at least hoped that they are improving their students' language awareness. Next, I will describe the overall thoughts found in the participants' answers regarding bringing languages and language awareness into their classrooms.

### 5.2.1 Languages used as richness and a resource

A very common theme among the participants' answers was that languages were seen as something positive and used in the classrooms as a resource for learning. Class teacher 2 encapsulates this subtheme while discussing how they see their role in language awareness:

(12) "No sitä pidän tärkeänä että niinku jokainen kieli on yhtä tärkeä, niitä arvostetaan, ja tota se on rikkaus." Class teacher 2

"Well, I think it's important that every language is equally important, they are appreciated and they are a richness." Class teacher 2

Example 12 illustrates that class teacher 2 clearly sees languages as a richness and something that should be appreciated. CLIL teacher 1 also agrees that languages are a richness and relates this richness to culture as well, referring to their multicultural and multilingual students. This belief of languages being a richness can also be seen when the teachers describe their reactions to using multiple languages in the classroom:

(13) "-- kaikki me, nämä kielet täällä olemme yhtä ihanassa sekamelskassa, eikä se haittaa, haittaa ketään." CLIL teacher 2

"- All of us, these languages here are in a wonderful mess, and it doesn't bother anyone." CLIL teacher 2

This shows that using different language resources in the classroom was seen as something natural to CLIL teacher 2. They also expressed that the thought that only English should be used in the CLIL classroom is very old-fashioned. Many other teachers also described languages being a natural part of their classroom. CLIL teacher 1 gives an example of comparing languages and making deductions based on them:

(14) "-- Ja sitten me huomattiin, että missään muussa kielessä se ei ollut samanlainen kun englannissa ja ruotsissa. Ja sit me alettiin miettiä että okei et ne on niinku germaania

kieliä -- että sit me missään muissa niin ne oli ihan erilaiset sanat. Että sit niinku alettiin miettimään että OK että nää englanti ja ruotsi on sukukieliä ja sen takii niissä se sana oli samanlainen että tämmöstä se niinku käytännössä on." CLIL teacher 1

"And then we noticed that in any other language it was not the same as in English and Swedish. And then we started thinking that okay they are like Germanic languages -- that then in no other so they were completely different words. So, then we started to think that okay English and Swedish are language relatives and that is why that word was similar, so this is what it is like this in practice." CLIL teacher 1

This example was from a Swedish lesson where they were learning about the plural in Swedish and a student made a connection between Swedish and English. The teacher supported this thinking by helping the students compare different languages. This situation shows that to CLIL teacher 1 using students' linguistic resources is a natural thing to do in the classroom. It also gives a good example of language awareness in terms of using knowledge of different languages and their structures to relate them to each other. CLIL teacher 2 and class teacher 2 also described comparing different languages in their classrooms. Comparing languages often came first from the students and their realizations, which the teachers then discussed with the whole class. This shows that comparing languages to each other is a common practice in classrooms, especially CLIL classrooms where multiple languages are naturally present. Another natural practice of bringing different languages to classrooms was having routines in multiple languages. This was specifically noticeable in CLIL teacher 1 and class teacher 2's answers:

(15)"-- me katotaan päivämäärä eri kielillä. Katotaan ruokalista, se voi olla englanniksi. Päivänavauksiin harjoitellaan esimerkiksi jos meillä on päivänavaus pidettävänä, niin siellä on kaikki kielet mukana ja mä kyselen niiltä." CLIL teacher 1

"- we look at the date in different languages. We look at the menu, which can be in English. For morning assemblies we practice, for example if we have to do the morning assembly, so there all the languages are included and I ask them (about their languages)." CLIL teacher 1

(16)"Meillä on esimerkiksi nuo viikon päivät tuolla englanniksi tuolla taululla ja sitten välillä aina puhutaan tai käytetään sitä englantia." Class teacher 2

"For example, we have those days of the week over there in English on that board and then sometimes we speak or use English." Class teacher 2

Examples 15 and 16 show that it was common to have the days of the week in different languages in the classroom. Other languages, such as students' mother tongues and sign language, were also used in morning assemblies and in greetings. This was seen to grow students' confidence and curiosity towards languages. Many of the participants also mentioned using different languages on special occasions, like birthdays or with visitors from foreign countries:

(17) "Se on semmonen perinteinen, että että on kun syntymäpäivä niin sitten no niillä kielilläkin sitten lauletaan ne syntymäpäivälaulut -- 9 kielellä." Class teacher 1

"It's like a tradition that when there is a birthday, then well in those languages then we sing the birthday songs - in 9 languages." Class teacher 1

Example 17 shows that multiple languages were used to sing birthday songs. This makes languages more noticeable in the school environment and exposes the students to different languages and how concepts are expressed in them. Teachers described these practices of showcasing different languages as practices that improve the students' language awareness. Examples from this section show that languages are appreciated and taken into account in teaching and on special occasions. In this way students get to use all their language skills and see them used in action. Saying the same thing in different languages was also seen as important in language-aware education, for example through birthday songs. In this way, the students were seen to learn more about the similarities and differences between languages. This is closely related to Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen's (2022) metalinguistic awareness in the sense that the same meaning was conveyed differently in different languages and this was shown and discussed with the students.

## 5.2.2 The language of schooling and subject-specific language are highlighted

So far language-aware practices have been discussed from a multilingual perspective and how using foreign languages was seen as important. But something additionally apparent in the participants' answers was that language awareness is not just about foreign languages but also about subject-specific languages and the language of instruction. This can be seen from CLIL teacher 1's description of how every subject is about teaching language:

(18) "-- tänä päivänä on semmoinen tilanne että tää kieli on läsnä niinku joka ikisessä, kaikki oppiaineet on niinku kielenopetusta. Matematiikasta lähtien että, et se ei ole vaan joku enkun tunti ja ruotsin tunti, ei todellakaan, vaan se on ihan niinkun. Se on niinku siinä koko viikossa läsnä." CLIL teacher 1

"-- these days, the situation is such that this language is present in each and every, all subjects are like language teaching. From math so it is not just some English lesson and a Swedish lesson, not really, but it's just. It's like present all week." CLIL teacher 1

This example highlights that language is a part of every single lesson in schools. Language was thus not limited to foreign language lessons but seen to be a part of everything in schools. CLIL teacher 1 also thought it would be good to have materials to support the learning of subject-specific language, for example through using pictures, for all students. Here they are talking about teaching words of historical objects through pictures:

(19) "Semmonen missä olis kuvat ja sitten ne sanat siellä niinku ne keskeiset sanat ihan kuvina. Ja se ei siis olis huono tietenkään suomalaisillekaan lapsille koska ne sanat, niin ei ole siellä käytössä." CLIL teacher 1

"Something like where there would be pictures and then those words like those key words in pictures. And of course, it wouldn't be bad even for Finnish children because those words are not in use." CLIL teacher 1

CLIL teacher 1 brings up an important point about subject-specific language teaching being concrete benefits also the students who have a Finnish background. Since many historical terms or objects are not something students use in their everyday life, it is important to use time to explain them. The concreteness of teaching words and their meanings was also apparent in class teacher 1's answers, but instead of pictures they mentioned using movements to support language learning:

(20) "-- me aina keksitään itse sitten niihin sanoihin niitä liikkeitä ja mitäs tää, mitäs tää tarkoittaa ja mitä tässä vois tehdä tässä, tässä kohdalla--" Class teacher 1

"-- we always come up with movements for those words and what this, what does this mean, and what could be done here, at this point-- " Class teacher 1

Class teacher 1 said that being creative with language is important for them, as illustrated by example 20. This was described in the ways mentioned above, by using movement as well as songs to ponder the meaning of words and terms. Class teacher 1 thought this was an important opportunity to teach the students to think about language and what words mean in all subjects. Class teacher 1 also described the students naturally being creative with the language of instruction by using rhymes and made-up words:

(21) "Ne on niitä semmoisia spontaaneja juttuja että voi tulla just tämmösiä no tän ikäset ku rakastaa riimejä niin sieltä voi tulla vaikka sellasia tai sitten tulee niitä omia semmoisia -- epäsanoja-- ." Class teacher 1

"They are those kinds of spontaneous stuff that can come just like this, so children of this age love rhymes so you can get those (from them) or those kinds of - made-up words." Class teacher 1

This example illustrates how students naturally wonder about language and try to break the boundaries of language in classrooms. Class teacher 1 said that they support this kind of creativity and in that way want to help their students understand language better. Students using rhymes was also mentioned by class teacher 2 so it seems to be a common way to try language use in new ways.

All of the above examples show how important language was to the teachers and their teaching. Especially the class teachers thought teaching the language of instruction and subject-specific language was essential for teaching. Class teacher 1 highlighted the importance of slowing down and spending time on discussing language:

(22) "Niin niitä me kovasti niinku siis maistellaan niitä sanoja ja laajennetaan niistä niitä, niitä merkityksiä sillon kun jotenkin on se, että tuntuu, että tässä on se kohta." Class teacher 1

"So those we really like taste those words and expand them, those meanings from them when somehow it feels like this is the spot." Class teacher 1

This slowing down was a particularly important thing for all the teachers in order to make sure the students understood what had been taught. This subtheme as a whole shows that language awareness was seen as a part of every teacher's job, no matter if the language of instruction is a foreign language or not. It also shows that the participants were aware of the need to consciously teach subject-specific language in different ways.

### 5.2.3 Language awareness is a central part of a teacher's job

As the previous subthemes have shown, the participants thought language awareness is an important part of a teacher's job and they spent time focusing on language awareness during their lessons. This is summarized by class teacher 1:

(23) "(kielitietoisuus) -- se on semmonen opettajana niin semmonen sisäänrakennettu ajatusmaailma --" Class teacher 1

"(language awareness) -- it is as a teacher such a built-in mindset-- " Class teacher 1

Class teacher 1 brings forth an idea that language awareness is built into a teacher's job. This was also mentioned by other participants when they expressed examining the language in textbooks and explaining them when needed. Class teacher 1 expressed that explaining terms to students is essential as a teacher:

(24) "-- keskiössä, se just se ymmärtäminen ja sitten siinä se, että miten avataan sanoja, käsitteitä miten tulkitaan ja miten siihen ohjataan --" Class teacher 1

"-- at the center, is that understanding, and then within that how we open words, concepts, how we interpret and guide to it--" Class teacher 1

All of the participants agreed that it is important as a teacher to explain any new terms or expressions to the students. This shows that as a teacher, it is important to be aware of language and how it can be used to support learning. Class teacher 2 mentions that sometimes language awareness is not conscious but rather something that comes naturally as a teacher. This was also supported by class teacher 1. As a whole, it can be said that the participants in this study described many language-aware practices that are a part of their classrooms and seemed to have a broad understanding of why language awareness is important to them as teachers. For example, class teacher 1 expresses how important language awareness is and how languages are all around us:

(25) "Mulle tuli ensin mielestä, mieleen tämmönen, että kielitietoisuus on laajasti kaikkialla. Kieli ympäröi meitä." Class teacher 1

"At first I thought, I thought that language awareness is widely everywhere. Language surrounds us." Class teacher 1

In this example, class teacher 1 highlights that language is all around us. This shows a level of language awareness, as they acknowledge that language is a part of everything we do. Seeing languages as important was also apparent in the other teachers' classroom practices.

The teachers' understanding of language-aware practices is largely in line with Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen's (2022) metalinguistic and practical language awareness. Metalinguistic language awareness is related to any activity that is related to the metalevel of language, for example linguistic form or meaning (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). Practical language awareness on the other hand is any activity that indicates awareness of language, such as language play or creativity (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). Both of these forms of language awareness were indicated in the teachers' answers while critical language awareness was not mentioned as directly. The next section will elaborate on what the participants saw as their role in language awareness.

### **5.3 A teacher's role in furthering language awareness is central**

From the interviews it was observed that all the participants thought a teacher's role in language awareness was important and central. This could be seen from their actions in their classrooms to acknowledge languages, as described in the previous theme, and from their own words. In particular, class teacher 1 highlighted the central role of a teacher in advancing their students' language awareness:

(26) "No, se on keskeinen. Ja se on tämmönen opetussuunnitelmallinen asia myöskin että niin ja, ja kyllähän meitä opettajia niin kyl me myös ollaan saatu koulutusta tähän –"  
Class teacher 1

"Well, it's central. And it is this kind of curriculum thing and also we teachers have received training for this --" Class teacher 1

Example 26 shows that Class teacher 1 sees a teacher's role in language awareness as central not only personally but also because of the national curriculum. In this way, they connect language awareness as a term to a broader context than just their own viewpoint and also justify their opinion. The main two themes related to



the teacher's role found in the data were to enrich students with languages and to be a model of language use which will be discussed next.

### 5.3.1 Teachers need to enrich students with languages

Three teachers mentioned that a teacher's role in language awareness is to enrich students with languages. This also became apparent in the teachers' descriptions of their classroom practices that brought forth the students' linguistic skills. This enrichment thinking was especially prominent in CLIL teacher 1's answers:

(27) "-- mä oon avoimella mielellä suhtaudun kaikkiin kieliin, oon kiinnostunut niistä. Haluan rikastaa oppilaitten kielimaailmaa. Ja pidän sitä kielitaitoa niinku tärkeänä asiana opetuksessa." CLIL teacher 1

-- I am open-minded to all languages, I am interested in them. I want to enrich the students' linguistic landscape. And I think that language skills are an important thing in teaching." CLIL teacher 1

In this example, CLIL teacher 1 describes that their role in language awareness is to be open-minded and to enrich the students' linguistic landscape. Example 27 also showcases that they think language skills are an important part of teaching. By the teacher being interested in languages and showcasing different languages in their classroom, they want to improve their students' language skills and views of the world. CLIL teacher 1 showcases different languages by, for example, asking students to teach others a word or expression in another language. Talking about enriching students to languages, other participants add that it is important to guide students to seeing languages around them and seeing them as interesting:

(28) "-- kun on ympäristössä on monia eri kieliä, miten, miten niistä tulee kokemuksia tai miten ohjataan. Miten herätellään kiinnostusta tai tuetaan kiinnostusta tai päästään sinne mukaan kokemaan." Class teacher 1

-- when there are many different languages in the environment, how, how to get experiences of them or how to guide (students). How to awaken interest or support interest or get there to experience with them." Class teacher 1

This example highlights the importance of consciously teaching students to understand different languages and supporting students' curiosity towards them. This is a thought that was seen as important: the teacher should be able to guide the students and give them linguistic input from multiple languages. This first subtheme shows that most of the participants thought it was important to give students opportunities to experience different languages, for example through the examples noted in the second overall theme, and to guide them through their experiences. In this way, students can grow to appreciate the linguistic diversity around them and remain curious about languages.

### 5.3.2 Teachers are a model of language use

The second subtheme that was related to a teacher's role in language awareness was that a teacher is a model of language use. Half of the teachers expressed that a teacher is someone who by their example shows the students how they should react, use or see languages. This thinking was noticeable with the CLIL teachers, which can be explained by them using a foreign language in their teaching on a regular basis and thus being models of using the target language. Here CLIL teacher 1 talks about using a language they are not confident in to show students that one can manage with little language skills:

(29)“ -- mutta mä jotenkin ajattelin että se on hyvä koska tota oppilaillekin mallia siitä, että vajavaisella kielitaidollakin sä selviät.” CLIL teacher 1

"- But somehow I thought it would be good because the students get an example that you can also survive with lacking language skills." CLIL teacher 1

This quote illustrates the overall thought that it is essential that a teacher uses languages bravely in their classroom even though they are not confident in their language skills. This thought was also shared by CLIL teacher 2, who mentions that it is important to encourage the students to speak no matter what:

(30)“Ja sitten myös se, että että rohkeasti saa sanoa vaikkei aina ihan tiedäkään että mitä tämä tarkoittaisi.” CLIL teacher 2

"And then also that you can say something boldly even though you don't always know what this means." CLIL teacher 2

CLIL teacher 2 focuses on foreign languages and using them in the classroom. In particular, they thought it was important to encourage the students to use all their linguistic skills to their advantage even when not completely certain of the language use. From this, it can be seen that the CLIL teachers reflect on their own language use in the classroom as being a model of language use. However, they did not think that only fluent language use should be seen as an ideal model but also language use that is related to not familiar languages. In this way, the teachers want to encourage the students to use even the little language skills they have.

Overall, the teachers saw a teacher's role as enriching to different languages and to be an open-minded and brave example of language use. They saw teachers as having an important role in improving students' language awareness and believed or at least hoped they are improving their own students' language awareness.

## **5.4 Comparing CLIL and class teachers: many similarities but also some differences**

Now that the overall results have been described, it is beneficial to compare the teacher pairs, CLIL teachers and class teachers, and see if there are any similarities and differences between them. However, it should be noted that since the number of participants is small, no big conclusions can be made about the similarities and differences between the overall teacher groups. Thus, this comparison is only to be taken to describe the participating teacher pairs as a small part of their teacher groups.

Overall, it can be said that the two pairs at points focused on different things. For example, the CLIL teachers talked about being models of language use but the class teachers focused on a teacher's role to enrich students to languages and to guide them to notice the languages around them. This shows that the CLIL teachers were more oriented to think about using foreign languages than the class teachers. The CLIL teachers also talked about themselves as active language users more than the class teachers. This is likely due to the CLIL teachers teaching part of the time in a foreign language. The class teachers also mentioned language awareness being all-encompassing, which the CLIL teachers did not mention as directly. Another thing that the class teachers mentioned was the term multiliteracy. It is interesting that the CLIL teachers did not mention this even though multiliteracy is mentioned multiple times in the FNCCBE (2016). It could be that the class teachers come across this term more since there is much research done in their school.

Even though there were some points where the CLIL teachers and class teachers focused on different things, there were also many similarities between the pairs. All the teachers talked about language awareness being about acknowledging and accepting languages. They also shared some language-aware practices, such as multilingual routines and allowing the students to use all their linguistic resources in the classroom. They were all also interested in languages, either through their university studies or through doing research on them. Also in some cases, like in language awareness being about communicating and language awareness being connected to multilingualism, there was one CLIL teacher and one class teacher that particularly highlighted the topic. In this way, the teachers also had differences with their colleagues of the same teacher profession.

To conclude, it can be said that the differences of these two teacher pairs can be seen through the overall orientation of the answers. However, there is also some overlap between the group and the general opinions of all the teachers aligned fairly well. For example, all the teachers saw languages and language awareness as something positive and needed in schools. Each teacher group discussed the topic from their own perspective and offered valuable information about their viewpoints.

While there are some similarities within the teacher pairs, general notions about how each teacher group thinks cannot be reasonably made. It seems that the beliefs depend largely on the individual teacher even though the general direction might be similar to their colleagues.

## 6 CONCLUSION

In this study, my focus was on how CLIL teachers and class teachers define language awareness, see it as a part of their teaching and what they see as their role in promoting language awareness. I was also interested to see if there were any similarities or differences between the teacher pairs and their beliefs.

The results of this study show that the participating teachers had a broad understanding of the term 'language awareness'. In their definitions the teachers emphasized how important it is to accept, acknowledge and showcase different languages. They also highlighted linguistic and cultural sensitivity and the communicative nature of language. This is in line with ALA's (1992) and Donmall's (1985, cited in Donmall-Hicks, 1997) definitions of language awareness that highlight the conscious and sensitive side of language awareness. The results also indicated that the teachers had to some degree teacher language awareness, as defined by Thornbury (1997, p. x, cited in Andrews, 2007). Thornbury (1997, p. x, cited in Andrews, 2007) states that teacher language awareness includes knowledge of the underlying systems of language that allows teachers to teach effectively. The teachers in this study were aware of the importance of language in teaching and communication. However, the participating teachers did not directly describe or did not emphasize language awareness as a skill. They focused more on language awareness being about sensitivity to languages and how languages can be showcased in classrooms. Class teacher 1 mentioned guiding students to understand subject-specific language and both class teachers mentioned multiliteracy as a skill that can be related to language awareness. This indicates that while there were signs of language awareness being seen as a skill, it was not emphasized as much as sensitivity to languages and cultures. This raises the question of how well-equipped teachers are to enhance their language awareness in practice. There seems to be knowledge of what language awareness is but there needs to be more emphasis on how teachers can improve their students' language awareness as a skill.

Another point from the results is that the teachers described using many language-aware practices, such as showcasing the students' language backgrounds and having discussions about languages and their differences. They mostly leaned on the metalinguistic part of teacher language awareness (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). The teachers gave many examples of comparing different languages to each other and making students aware of how something can be expressed in different languages. There was also mentions of how language play and creativity were important to both the students and at least one of the teachers. This indicated that practical language awareness can also be seen in classroom practices (Daryai-Hansen, Drachmann & Krogager Andersen, 2022). In contrast, critical language awareness was not indicated as such a vital part of the teachers' classroom practices. It was also indicated that two of the teachers thought language awareness was especially highlighted in multilingual classrooms. However, even though multilingualism was highlighted, language awareness was seen by three participants to be related to all students, teaching and school subjects. This shows that to the teachers, language awareness is an everyday occurrence and something that they take into account in their teaching in every school subject.

The results of this study are important to the current discussions of language teaching and creating a language-aware school system in Finland. Since in the FNCCBE (2016) every teacher is seen as a language teacher, it is important that every teacher takes on this role. This study shows that some teachers have embraced their role as language teachers on top of being content teachers. While some participants described getting training in language awareness, there needs to be more conscious effort from schools to address the current needs of increasingly multilingual classrooms. Language awareness was seen by the teachers as being related to both multilingualism and the language of instruction. This highlights the vital role of language awareness in every classroom. Only by addressing this diversity can schools be truly language aware. Teachers also need to evaluate their own beliefs about languages critically and realize which languages are considered in their teaching and which ones are not. This will not only be beneficial for the teachers' professional growth but also for changing classroom practices to include more focus on language and languages. As was mentioned by the participants, every subject has its own language and teachers need to take this into account if they want the students to fully understand what they are learning.

As this study only had four participants, two CLIL teachers and two class teachers, the results cannot be generalized or used to describe a larger context. The results indicate how some teachers see language awareness but it does not apply to every teacher. However, it does give some indication as to how language awareness is focused on in the participating teachers' communities. The teachers in this study

were teaching in a fairly large city in Finland, which might affect the results. Something else to note is that the results of this study might be affected by the participants' own interest in languages and their multilingual workplaces. Many of the participants did university level studies in languages or did research on language matters at one point in their career so this might affect how they see language awareness and its importance. This study only used interviews as the data collection method and in order to fully understand someone's beliefs, further data collection methods should be used or more interviews with each participant should be conducted. Thus, this study only shows a small part of the participants' beliefs and classroom practices.

In the future it would be interesting to study how CLIL and class teachers' beliefs about language awareness translate into practice. This could help get a more realistic picture of what actions are done in classrooms to address language awareness and what kind of practical knowledge is still needed. It would also be beneficial to study a larger number of participants to possibly gain more generalizable results and to have better opportunities to compare the two teacher groups. It would also be of interest to study how different kinds of CLIL teachers see language awareness. The CLIL teachers in this study were both elementary school English CLIL teachers and it would be interesting to see if for example CLIL subject teachers or Swedish CLIL program teachers have similar beliefs compared to the ones in this study. This study also has the possibility to be done in other countries with different teacher education systems and CLIL implementations. This kind of research could offer an international viewpoint on language awareness and how its importance is seen or not seen in different educational contexts.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 (INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN FINNISH AND ENGLISH)

#### Haastattelukysymykset

1. **Lämmittelykysymyksiä:** Mitä kuuluu? Voitko kertoa vapaasti itsestäsi ja luokastasi? (Mikä on erityistä CLIL-opettamisessa?)

#### **Täydennä lauseet sopivilla sanoilla**

2. Täydennä lauseet sanoilla jotka tulevat ensin mieleen:
  - a. Kielitietoisuus on...
  - b. Kielitietoisuus tarkoittaa minulle...
  - c. Roolini opettajana kielitietoisuudessa on...

#### **Kielitietoisuuden määritelmä + kieli käytännössä**

3. Miten määrittelisit kielitietoisuuden?
4. Miten kielitietoisuus tai **kieli tulee esille työssäsi** opettajana?

#### **Oppilaiden kielitaustat**

5. Minkälaisia erilaisia **kielitaustoja oppilaillasi** on? Miten otat ne huomioon opetuksessa?

#### **Kielet luokahuoneessa (käytössä, näkyvissä, opettaja ja oppilaat, leikittelyä)**

6. Mitä kieliä luokahuoneessasi käytetään oppituntien aikana?
  - a. Käytätkö opetuksen aikana useita **kieliä puheessasi** tai oppituntin tehtävissä?
  - b. Mitä kieliä **luokahuoneessasi näkyy**? **Miksi** juuri nämä kielet?
  - c. Mitä kieliä **oppilaat käyttävät** oppitunneilla?
    - i. Miten reagoit jos oppilaat käyttävät oppitunneilla monia, mahdollisesti itsellesi tuntemattomia kieliä?
  - d. **Leikittelevätkö** oppilaat kielellä? esim. käyttäen sanoja eri merkityksissä, muuttaen sanontoja hieman
7. **Kannustatko** oppilaita käyttämään kieliä **luovasti**? (yhdistellen, vaihdellen, sanontoja käyttäen)

8. Keskusteletteko luokassa eri **kieliin liittyvistä asenteista**?

#### **Oppikirjojen kielen tarkastelu**

9. **Tarkasteletko** oppikirjojen kieltä tai **selitätkö** sanoja/ilmauksia auki?

**Luokan kielitietoisuuden edistäminen**

10. **Koetko edistäväsi luokkasi kielitietoisuutta?** Miksi tai miksi ei?

a. Haluaisitko muuttaa toimintaasi tässä suhteessa?

**Lopetus: muuta lisättävää?**

11. Onko jotain **muuta lisättävää**, mistä en puhunut vielä?

Research questions

1. Warm-up questions: How are you? Can you tell me freely about yourself and your class? How is CLIL teaching special/different?

**Fill-in questions**

2. Fill in these sentences with words that first come to mind:

a. Language awareness is...

b. Language awareness is to me..

c. My role in language awareness is...

**Defining language awareness and what it is in practice**

3. How would you define language awareness?

4. How is language awareness or language a part of your job as a teacher?

5. Do you feel like you promote/advance your class's language awareness?

Why or why not?

**The students' language backgrounds**

6. What kinds of language backgrounds do your students have? How do you take them into account in teaching?

**Languages in the classroom (in use and what can be seen)**

7. What languages are used in your classroom during lessons?

a. Do you use multiple languages while teaching or in the tasks done during lessons?

b. What languages can be seen in your classroom? Why these languages specifically?

c. What languages do students use during lessons?

- d. Do students play/have fun with language? (rhymes, similar words with different meanings, dad jokes)
8. How do you react if students use many languages during lessons that you are possibly not familiar with?
9. Do you talk about attitudes related to different languages in your classroom?

**The language of textbooks**

10. Do you look closely at the texts in textbooks or explain some expressions or phrases from there?

**The ending: anything to add?**

11. Do you have anything to add? Maybe something I didn't ask?

**APPENDIX 2 (FULL INTERVIEW EXTRACTS IN FINNISH)**

- (1) "Kielitietoisuus on sitä, että ensinnäkin, että se on jokainen jokainen. Läsne jokaisella oppitunnilla ja se on sen huomioimista, että jokainen monen siis usealla oppilaalla on erilainen kielitausta." CLIL teacher 1
- (2) " No juuri tätä samaa asiaa, että se voi olla vaikka, vaikka viittomakieltä jos sanotaanko, että kun sä saat asiiasi ymmärretyksi ja sen että hyväksytään kaikki kielet ja ja sitä että ja mietitään sitä että mikä milloinkin on niin kun tärkeitä." CLIL teacher 2
- (3) "No sehän (kielitietoisuus) on monenlaista mutta tota tässä kontekstissa niin sitä että tiedostaa, tiedostaa sen, että on erilaisia kieliä ja erilaisia kulttuureita ja sitten miten kieliä käytetään ja sitten se just että eri kielellä eri asiat voi tarkoittaa eriä." Class teacher 2
- (4) "No sitä, että sinä tiedostat, että on olemassa eri tapoja kommunikoida että että ja ja kaikki tavat ovat ihan hyväksyttäviä niin kauan kun ne eivät loukkaa ketään ja ja sä saat asiiasi ymmärretyksi." CLIL teacher 2
- (5) "Täähän on tota jokapäiväinen että se on meidän vuorovaikutuksen väline, se on meidän ilmasuväline. Se on kirjoitettu kieli ja sit on luettu kieli et se tulee niinku tosi kokonaisvaltasesti." Class teacher 2

- (6) "Se semmosta kokonaisvaltasta lähestymistapaa. Että mä pystyn kommunikoimaan ja ymmärtämään." Class teacher 1
- (7) "Se on kyllä laaja, laaja käsite ja hirmu mielenkiintonen." Class teacher 2
- (8) "Mutta tota niin joo ja sitten kielitietoisuus on mun mielestä niinku just semmonen kokonaisuus, että sitä ei voi sitoo johonkin tietyille, vaikka nyt englannin kielen tunnilla tai espanjan kielen tunnilla vaan se on niinku kokonaan täs läsnä." Class teacher 2
- (9) "Meillä on tosi montaa eri kieltä siellä. Ja nyt oon sillä tavalla jännä sitä tilanteessa, että tota niin enemmän just enemmän, ehkä niin kun joutuu opettamaan tämmöistä tai niinku tää kieli tämmöinen tietoisuus ja eri kielten huomioiminen on siinä niinku keskeistä ja tota." CLIL teacher 1
- (10) "Se, se niinku tässä työssä varmaankin, että tulee näkyviin että tai siis enemmän ja enemmän. Tää kielitietoisuus tulee tota näkyviin sitten kun on eri kulttuureista lapsia niin sen myötä kyllä." Class teacher 2
- (11) "Kun ajattelee että monilukutaito on, että me voidaan, että meidän ympärillä kaikki, kaikki voidaan nähdä niinku sellasina, että me luetaan ympäristöä, kuvia, symboleja tuon kirjoitetun kielen lisäksi esimerkiksi. Ja vielä laajemmin ja sit jos sitä mennään vielä laajemmin, niin voiaan nähä, että kaikki kehollinen viestintä." Class teacher 1
- (12) "No sitä pidän tärkeenä että niinku jokainen kieli on yhtä tärkeä, niitä arvostetaan, ja tota se on rikkaus." Class teacher 2
- (13) "Siis niinku et ja ja kaikki me kaikki me, nämä kielet täällä olemme yhtä ihanassa sekamelskassa, eikä se haittaa, haittaa ketään." CLIL teacher 2
- (14) "Miten mä sitä niinku niinku teen niin esimerkiksi eilen alettiin keskustella kun meillä oli ruotsissa toi... Niinku monikko ja se oli pallo sana yksinkertaisesti ja sitten me ruvettiin miettimään mikä kun on niinku en boll niin että sitten joku sanoi että no toi on vähän niinku englannissa. Sit mä sanoin no niin onkin. Ja sit me alettiin miettimään että missä muissa että mitä te niillä muilla kielillä on? Ja sitten me huomattiin, että missään muussa kielessä se ei ollut samanlainen kun englannissa ja ruotsissa. Ja sit me alettiin miettiä että

okei et ne on niinku germaanisia kieliä että jossain uk-. Ai niin ukraina on yksi äidinkieli, sen mä unohdin mainita. Niin niin, että sit me missään muissa niin ne oli ihan erilaiset sanat. Että sit niinku alettiin miettimään että OK että nää englanti ja ruotsi on sukukieliä ja sen takii niissä se sana oli samanlainen että tämmöstä se niinku käytännössä on.” CLIL teacher 1

(15) “No kyllä mä koen, että mä edistän esimerkiksi sillä että me katotaan päivämäärä eri kielillä. Katotaan ruokalista, se voi olla englanniksi. Päivänavauksiin harjoitellaan esimerkiksi jos meillä on päivänavaus pidettävänä, niin siellä on kaikki kielet mukana ja mä kyselen niiltä.” CLIL teacher 1

(16) “Meillä on esimerkiksi nuo viikon päivät tuolla englanniks tuolla taululla ja sitten välillä aina puhutaan tai käydään sitä englantia.” Class teacher 2

(17) “Se on semmonen perinteinen, että että on kun syntymäpäivä niin sitten no niillä kielilläkin sitten lauletaan ne syntymäpäivälaulut. Siinä edellisessä luokassa, niin me laulettiin... Mites me laulettiin... Me laulettiin syntymäpäivälaulut aina suomeksi, englanniksi, ruotsiksi, saksaksi, espanjaksi, ranskaksi, venäjäksi ja kiinaksi ja intiaksi. 9 kielellä.” Class teacher 1

(18) “Kyllä että se ja enhän mä voi semmosta opetusta tehdä et mä käännän monelle kielelle ja etsin, mutta lapset tietysti voi käyttää kääntäjää tarvittaessa ja muuta, mutta että kyllä se niinku tänä päivänä on semmoinen tilanne että tää kieli on läsnä niinku jokaikisessä, kaikki oppiaineet on niinku kielenopetusta. Matematiikasta lähtien että, et se ei ole vaan joku enkun tunti ja ruotsin tunti, ei todellakaan, vaan se on ihan niinkun. Se on niinku siinä koko viikossa läsnä.” CLIL teacher 1

(19) “Semmonen missä olis kuvat ja sitten ne sanat siellä niinku ne keskeiset sanat ihan kuvina. Ja se ei siis olis huono tietenkään suomalaisillekaan lapsille koska ne sanat, niin ei ole siellä käytössä.” CLIL teacher 1

(20) “Ja sitten kielellä leikittely voihan sen näin, että kun me aina keksitään itse sitten niihin sanoihin niitä liikkeitä ja mitäs tää, mitäs tää tarkoittaa ja mitä

tässä vois tehdä tässä, tässä kohdalla, että se, se on myös sitä niinku ohjattua leikittelyä hyvin.” Class teacher 1

(21) “Ne on niitä semmoisia spontaaneja juttuja että voi tulla just tämmösiä no tän ikäset ku rakastaa riimejä niin sieltä voi tulla vaikka sellasia tai sitten tulee niitä omia semmoisia. No sit voi tulla vaikka... No nytkin on vaikka vierasperäisiä kirjaimia tai näin, niin sitten he voi keksiä tavallaan omia niitä sanoja, jotka on tämmösiä epäsanoina, mutta jotka, joissa on niit kirjaimia ja ja sitten on sitä kautta myöskin niinku.” Class teacher 1

(22) “Niin niitä me kovasti niinku siis maistellaan niitä sanoja ja laajennetaan niistä niitä, niitä merkityksiä silloin kun jotenkin on se, että tuntuu, että tässä on se kohta.” Class teacher 1

(23) “Mä nyt tästä opettajan näkökulmasta ja (H: kyllä) niinku tarkastelen että se on semmonen opettajana niin semmonen sisäänrakennettu ajatusmaailma että mä hahmotan...” Class teacher 1

(24) “Mä nyt lähestyn, jos mä lähestyn opettajan näkökulmasta niin se että mikä mulla siinä ytimessä on, on se mikä että miten on keskiössä, se just se ymmärtäminen ja sitten siinä se, että miten avataan sanoja, käsitteitä miten tulkitaan ja miten siihen ohjataan, mut myös sitten se just tää...” Class teacher 1

(25) “Kielitietoisuus on... laajasti... Mulle tuli ensin mielestä, mieleen tämmönen, että kielitietoisuus on laajasti kaikkialla. Kieli ympäröi meitä.” Class teacher 1

(26) “No, se on keskeinen. Ja se on tämmönen opetussuunnitelmallinen asia myöskin että niin ja, ja kyllähän meitä opettajia niin kyl me myös ollaan saatu koulutusta tähän ja sitten.” Class teacher 1

(27) “Se (kielitietoisuus) tarkoittaa minulle, että mä oon avoimella mielellä suhtaudun kaikkiin kieliin, oon kiinnostunut niistä. Haluan rikastaa oppilaitten kielimaailmaa. Ja pidän sitä kielitaitoa niinku tärkeänä asiana opetuksessa.” CLIL teacher 1

- (28) "Tämä moninaisuus just mikä tuli tuos edellisessä kun kysyit näitä että miten kun on ympäristössä on monia eri kieliä, miten, miten niistä tulee kokemuksia tai miten ohjataan. Miten herätellään kiinnostusta tai tuetaan kiinnostusta tai päästään sinne mukaan kokemaan." Class teacher 1
- (29) "Mutta mutta mä jotenkin ajattelin että se on hyvä koska tota oppilaillekin mallia siitä, että vajavaisella kielitaidollakin sä selviät." CLIL teacher 1
- (30) "Ja sitten myös se, että että rohkeasti saa sanoa vaikkei aina ihan tiedäkään että mitä tämä tarkoittaisi." CLIL teacher 2



