



'It's nice to have a topic in both Spanish and German': Students' Perceptions of CLIL and Heritage Language Education

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Abstract: This paper focuses on a specific content and language integrated learning (CLIL) programme where the additional language, Spanish, is also the heritage language (HL) of 25% of the students. Drawing on interview data, this paper focuses on students' experiences and perceptions of this CLIL programme. The results are somewhat homogeneous; students have a high level of satisfaction with the bilingual subjects but express strong complaints about the lack of differentiation techniques in language classrooms. Accordingly, while this CLIL programme is overall very successful, with regard to HL maintenance and boosting students' self-esteem, it has yet to achieve its full potential.

„Das ist auch halt schön auf Spanisch und auf Deutsch ein Thema zu haben“: CLIL und Herkunftssprachenunterricht in der Schüler*innenwahrnehmung

Dieser Artikel befasst sich mit einem speziellen CLIL-Programm, bei dem die Zielsprache Spanisch auch die Herkunftssprache von etwa 25 % der Lernenden darstellt. Auf der Grundlage von Interviewdaten geht dieser Beitrag der Frage nach den Erfahrungen und Wahrnehmungen dieser Lernenden mit dem CLIL-Programm nach. Die Ergebnisse zeigen ein übereinstimmendes Bild mit einem hohen Maß an Zufriedenheit bezüglich der bilingualen Fächer, aber auch mit einem deutlichen Mangel an Differenzierungstechniken. Insgesamt erweist sich das CLIL-Programm zwar als äußerst erfolgreich, insbesondere was die Erhaltung der Herkunftssprache und das Selbstwertgefühl der Lernenden betrifft, sein volles Potenzial wird jedoch noch nicht ausgeschöpft.

Keywords: heritage language teaching, Spanish as a heritage language, CLIL, multilingual education | Herkunftssprachenunterricht, Spanisch als Herkunftssprache, CLIL, mehrsprachige Bildung.

1 Introduction

With its 24 official languages, multilingualism lies at the heart of the European Union (EU). A fundamental priority for member states is therefore fostering language learning from an early age and throughout one's lifespan to achieve the EU's declared goal for every European citizen, i.e., to learn – and to be able to use – at least two additional languages (cf. European Commission 2005: 4). This has also been called the Barcelona goal of „mother tongue + 2“. In pursuit of this overarching objective, the EU cooperates with two centres for research on languages: the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML) and the European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning (Mercator). It also maintains numerous initiatives for promoting language learning and awareness of linguistic diversity (such as the European Day of Languages and the European Language Label), and funds, under the umbrella of the Erasmus+ programme, a wide array of projects that aim to improve language education. Recently, the EU's commitment to a linguistically competent society has been reinforced by the "Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages" (Council of the EU 2019), a document that explicitly promotes innovative, inclusive and multilingual teaching methods.

Since 2002, all languages, not only the official languages of member states, have been recognized and included in the EU's multilingual strategy. However, efforts for supporting and maintaining the language(s) that children and young adults first acquire in their countries of origin or within their families have typically been lacking and often limited to nice words and good intentions. This is clearly evident in vague formulations, such as "different mother tongues [...] should be valued more highly" (European Commission 2008: 6), or in nonbinding statements, such as "children and/or descendants of immigrants (second and third generations) [...] should be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with their mother tongue and the culture of their country of origin, *without ruling out public funding for that purpose*" (European Parliament 2005: 5; emphasis added).

The same issues specifically inform the promotion of heritage languages¹ (HLs) in Germany. For example, as the Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) of 2013 states, schools are a central place for the acquisition of academic language competences and should therefore develop and implement measures, such as drawing on students' multilingualism to foster students' multilingual competencies through HL classes (cf. KMK 2013: 8–9). However, regarding the actual opportunities for young people to access instructed learning in their HL, the German education system is rather discouraging (cf. Küppers 2017; Lengyel/Neumann 2017; Reich 2014). The case of Spanish HL instruction, which we now turn to, is no exception.

¹ For a discussion about the term "heritage languages" and its risks, see Potowski/Shin (2019: 674–676).

2 Spanish Heritage Language Classes in Germany

There are currently approximately 400,000 people living in Germany with the nationality of a Spanish-speaking country. This gives a rather approximate idea of the number of L1 Spanish speakers, as there are only reliable statistics for citizens' nationality, not for their languages, or for how these citizens categorize them (as L1, L2... or as HL). Censuses by age group are equally unreliable. As far as nationality is concerned, only Spanish nationality offers available and complete datasets for the number of children and young people under the age of 18, which is approximately 25,000. In any case, it is clear that these figures are extremely small, far less than the numbers of HL speakers of Turkish, Russian or Serbo-Croatian and sharply different from the number of Spanish speakers in the United States. Moreover, the Spanish-speaking population in Germany is spread throughout the country, unlike, for example, Danish or Polish speakers, who are (more) concentrated in the border areas of Northeastern and Eastern Germany, respectively. Thus, the range of publicly funded Spanish HL instruction is similarly small and limited to two modalities: "mother tongue classes" organized by the regional governments of five (of sixteen) federal states, i.e., Brandenburg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony, and the language classes offered by the Spanish Embassy in its ALCE² classrooms, which are specifically for children of Spanish nationality. Thus, the possibility of attending Spanish HL classes highly depends on nationality (Spanish or not) and on residential area, with significantly higher chances in the metropolitan areas of the Ruhr area, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Berlin.

However, it is also clear that not every young person with Spanish as a HL takes advantage of the possibility of receiving language instruction. Reliable data concerning this supply – demand ratio is scarce, but in the federal state of Hamburg, for example, in 2019/20, 230 of a total of 1,200 Spanish children between 6-17 years old were enrolled in ALCE classrooms (cf. Ferre Pérez 2021: 149). That is, less than 20% of the target population is attending HL classes. The reasons for this are manifold and coincide with those given by heritage speakers of other languages (and by their parents). First, parents often complain about the locations of HL classes, which usually do not take place at the same school a child regularly attends. This entails long and complicated journeys. Second, and usually considered the main problem, HL classes are scheduled outside school hours, late in the afternoon or even on weekends, which makes them less attractive (cf. Küppers 2017; Lengyel/Neumann 2017; Mehlhorn 2021; Ramos Méndez-Sahlender 2018). These arguments seem straightforward. Notably, however, all extracurricular activities, such as sports or music classes, always take place in the afternoons and usually in locations other than the children's own school, and this does not make them any less popular. Most likely, the nature of HL classes,

² ALCE is an acronym for Aulas de Lengua y Cultura Españolas.

i.e., that they are lessons and not free time activities, also influences the decision to attend HL classes or not, because they are perceived by parents and children to be an additional workload with no connection to and, usually, no benefit for school.

Accordingly, the majority of young Spanish heritage speakers ultimately attend the regular Spanish foreign language classes that are offered as school subjects. The advantages of these are obvious: Lessons take place in the same school building during school hours and form part of a student's school curriculum. Unfortunately, the challenges that these mixed classes offer to teachers and learners (cf. Reimann 2020; Kropp forthcoming) and a lack of adequate instructional materials indicate that this is far from being the ideal solution.

3 Integrated Content and Language Learning for Heritage Speakers

The aforementioned difficulties young people face in obtaining formal instruction in their HL express a deeper, increasingly global problem related to language education in Europe:

Historically, the objectives of schools across the world have been to form homogeneous groups of people, bringing them closer to a national language standard. One of the consequences of such objectives is that minority-language students have been discouraged from using their mother tongue or even from learning new languages. At the same time, the limited selection of foreign languages offered by schools, taught in isolation from other disciplines, has prevented most students from developing effective plurilingualism (Le Pichon-Vorstman/Siarova/Szönyi 2020: 26).

A possible solution to these problems is the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) model, which combines teaching academic content or school subjects with the use and learning of two other languages: a school's official language and an additional language. This approach gives both language and nonlanguage content the same level of importance, "even if the emphasis is greater on one or the other at a given time" (Coyle/Hood/Marsh 2010: 1). Furthermore, this approach is also characterized by its emphasis on multiperspectivism, which is achieved not only through the comparison of different points of view on the same content, but also through the reflection of one's own cultural traces in the mirror of other languages and cultures (cf. Diehr 2016: 67). This aspect gives the CLIL approach added value and distinguishes it from merely teaching and learning contents in two languages.

The European Parliament (2005: 5) holds that CLIL is a "proven model" that should be implemented as a measure to "assist the integration of immigrant children and their families as well". Hence, the proposal of the political authorities consists of teaching certain subjects of the standard school curriculum in the HLs of immigrant communities in mixed classes "with children from immigrant families and families from the host country". As a matter

of fact, the number of *bilingual*³ schools with English as the additional language has grown exponentially in the last two decades under the auspices of the EU; however, CLIL in languages other than English is still very unusual in European schools. Regarding Spanish, although it is a very popular foreign language in Germany, its prestige is far lower than that of French or, of course, English. This makes it difficult to legitimize Spanish bilingual schools and to find arguments that articulate why pupils should learn, for example, German history in Spanish. Combinations of CLIL and Spanish as a HL are even more rare, with the outstanding exception of the city of Berlin and its Public Europe Schools (*Staatliche Europa Schulen Berlin*; known by its German acronym as SESB).

Accordingly, this article focuses on a school that offers a CLIL programme in Spanish for both heritage and nonheritage speakers, similar to that of the SESB. In contrast to the SESB quantitative study (cf. Möller/Hohenstein/Fleckenstein/Köller/Baumert 2017), which focused on the measurement of competencies and school achievements, the present article adopts a qualitative approach to illuminate HL students' perspectives regarding their bilingual programme. Specifically, the following research questions are addressed:

- a) How does the CLIL programme – according to its participants – contribute to the maintenance and development of participants' HL?
- b) What are the participants' experiences with CLIL subjects? What learning difficulties and benefits do they report?
- c) What conclusions can be drawn from the results of teaching an HL in other contexts?

4 Data and Methods

The study was carried out at Sophie Scholl Comprehensive School,⁴ which offers a bilingual programme in the subjects of Society⁵ (in grades 5-10), Biology (in grades 5/6 and 9/10) and Culture (music, art or performing arts in grades 5/6). Each of these subjects is double-staffed, i.e., there is one teacher responsible for German and one for Spanish, although they teach separately. The students are split into two groups and change teacher (and instruction language) after the first half of a lesson. Thus, there is a double separation of both languages and students. In addition to CLIL classes, the students attended 'normal' Spanish foreign language lessons.

This bilingual instruction is attended by three groups of children: those with a Spanish-speaking background (approximately 25%), those who have attended a bilingual primary

³ CLIL should be understood as *one* form of bilingual or plurilingual education (cf. García 2009); for simplicity, the terms bilingual and CLIL will be used interchangeably in this article when referring to subjects or school programmes.

⁴ The names of all participants are pseudonyms.

⁵ That is the term the students use to refer to Social Studies.

school in their neighbourhood and children who have not previously studied Spanish but will receive an intensive course prior to the 5th grade. The first group is called "bilingual" or "native speakers", while the second and third groups are referred to as ELE⁶ learners. The term "heritage language speakers" is not used in the school.

In 2017, 11 volunteer bilingual students from the 6th, 8th and 10th grades were interviewed about their overall multilingual experiences and their perspectives and attitudes towards the CLIL programme. The first set of questions was related to the participants' language biography and current use of Spanish in their daily life. The second block focused first on the school and aimed to obtain information about the students' understanding of what CLIL means and how it is implemented. Specifically, students were asked about their reasons for choosing the bilingual programme and their willingness to continue in it and about their favourite subjects. Second, certain aspects of learning Spanish and learning content and the relationship between these were discussed. Finally, questions related to their personal advantages and disadvantages of the bilingual model were asked. Notably, regular Spanish classes were not a subject in the interview guide.⁷

The interviews had a total length of 148 minutes and were analysed following a qualitative content analysis methodology (cf. Kuckartz 2016) that combines concept-driven codes (from the interview guide) and data-driven codes (stemming from the material).

5 Results

In contrast to previous analyses (cf. García García 2019; 2021), which have aimed to illustrate the full picture of and synergies between two student groups, i.e., "bilinguals" and "ELE learners", the present article focuses on the group of bilingual speakers to deeply analyse individual cases within each grade (6th, 8th and 10th) and the differences and similarities between them.

5.1 Grade 6

The four 6th grade students – Alina, Beatriz, Diana and Elena – are between 11 and 12 years old and were born in Germany or – as in the case of Elena – came to Germany at a very young age. All four girls use Spanish on a daily basis, mostly at home but also with friends, and they feel a very personal connection with it. They all state their Spanish is quite good, but not as good as they would like it to be. The central category of *desire to improve Spanish* thus clearly emerges from the data; for example,

⁶ ELE stands for *Español Lengua Extranjera* (Spanish as a Foreign Language).

⁷ For a more detailed description of the study, which also comprised interviews with ELE learners, see García García (2019; 2021).

Eigentlich [ist mein Spanisch] ganz okay, aber wenn ich in Spanien bin, dann wünsche ich mir auch, ich könnte besser Spanisch. Aber hier ist es okay. [Actually [my Spanish is] quite okay, but when I'm in Spain, I also wish I could speak better Spanish. But here, it's okay.⁸] (Elena, 6th, §69)

None of the students had attended a Spanish primary school or Spanish classes offered by the Spanish embassy before entering this bilingual school; it is their first contact with both Spanish classes and Spanish as the language of instruction. For Alina and Diana, this school is also their first contact with European Spanish, which is considered the standard variety, i.e., the one in which schoolbooks are written and teachers speak. Therefore, these students perceive the Latin American variety of Spanish as less valuable than European Spanish:

Der Nachteil ist, dass ich ja aus Kuba komme und da auch es etwas anders reden. Also, dass ich dann halt irgendetwas anderes benutze, dass ich Wörter auch falsch rum sage und so [...] manchmal das sind einfach nur diese Minifehler. [The disadvantage is that I come from Cuba, and they speak slightly differently there. So, I always use some different expressions, say words the wrong way around and so on [...] sometimes it's just these mini mistakes.] (Diana, 6th, §203)

Oh, ja, das kennt man ja gar nicht so, weil es ja das spanische Spanisch ist ja etwas anders als in dem amerikanischen Bereich. Und dann zum Beispiel J. kommt ja aus Nicaragua, und dann wir so, häh, was heißt das denn und so. (Lacht) Weil wir das gar nicht so kennen. [Oh, yes, sometimes you don't know the expression because Spanish from Spain is a bit different from American Spanish. And then, for example, J. comes from Nicaragua, and then we're like, uh, what does that mean and so on (laughs). Because we don't know to use it like that.] (Alina, 6th, §57)

When asked whether attending this school, in general, helps them improve their Spanish, all the students have ambivalent feelings and make clear distinctions. On the one hand, Spanish language lessons have a foreign language textbook at their core and are perceived to be undemanding, with the keywords „einfach“ [easy] and „langweilig“ [boring] clearly standing out in the interviews:

Aber mir fehlt zum Beispiel auch mal, was etwas Unterschiedliches zu lernen [...], weil ein paar vielleicht auch schon besser sind und die können ja dann auch andere Aufgaben oder so bekommen. Aber wir machen dann ja halt immer das gleiche [...] Und wir wiederholen dann auch ganz oft Sachen und das dauert dann immer. Und für uns ist das halt nicht so spannend dann. [What I miss is, for example, learning something different [...] because some of us are already better [in the language] and could get assigned different tasks. But we always do the same thing [...]] And then

⁸ Literal translation by the author.

we also repeat things quite often and that always takes time. And for us, it's just not that exciting.] (Alina, 6th, §111)

When asked if they have any suggestions for improving the CLIL programme, both Beatriz and Elena express a desire, rather unusual for a schoolchild, to be challenged more than they actually are:

Ich finde es bis jetzt eigentlich ganz gut, aber ich würde es gerne etwas schwerer und so. [...] Dann muss man was von der Tafel abschreiben, was man schon kann und das ist dann schon irgendwie langweilig. Man verbraucht Stift. [I think it's actually quite good so far, but I'd like to have it be a bit more difficult [...] you have to copy something from the blackboard that you already know and that's kind of boring. You just waste ink.] (Beatriz, 6th, §57–59)

Also, für uns Muttersprachler würde ich mir wünschen ein bisschen schwerere Aufgaben. [...] Das kriegen wir in fünf Minuten fertig und die anderen haben da irgendwie eine Stunde für Zeit. [So, for us native speakers, I would wish a bit more difficult tasks [...] We can finish in five minutes and the others somehow have an hour for it.] (Elena, 6th, §175)

Diana is the only one who does not criticize the language lessons and who underscores her writing improvements:

Ich konnte, bevor ich in diese Schule ging, nur „hallo“ schreiben im Spanischen, sonst nichts. Und jetzt habe ich mich sehr viel verbessert in der Schrift. [Before I went to this school, I could only write "hello" in Spanish, nothing else. And now, I have improved a lot in writing.] (Diana, 6th, §117)

Clearly, bilingual students are attending classes well below their level, and they could benefit much more from learning together with the ELE students if their learning needs were specifically addressed.

As explained above, with regard to bilingual subjects, half of the instruction time is in German and half is in Spanish.⁹ This leads to a perceived ‚translation‘ of content, as Elena reports:

Also, Biologie und Gesellschaft haben wir getrennt, einmal Deutsch und einmal Spanisch, und da lernen wir fast eigentlich immer das Gleiche, nur auf Spanisch oder auf Deutsch, und dann konzentriere ich mich beim Spanischunterricht, also getrennt, eher auf die spanische Sprache, weil das haben wir ja schon im Deutschen durchgeführt. [So, the Biology and Society subjects, we have them separately, once

⁹ With the exception of „Music and Culture“, which is taught only in Spanish.

in German and once in Spanish, and there, we almost always learn the same thing, only in Spanish or in German, and then I concentrate on the Spanish classes; so, separately, more on the Spanish language, because we have done it in German before.] (Elena, 6th, §149)

These two facts, the separation between languages on the one hand and the repetition of contents on the other, are not questioned by the heritage speakers. Comments generally focus on the issue of increased difficulty instead. *Having to study more* thus becomes a very frequent expression in the data when comparing CLIL and Spanish classes:

Bei Gesellschaft zum Beispiel, da kann ich noch nicht so viele Sachen. [...] Aber in Bio ist das auch noch ein bisschen schwieriger. Ein paar Sachen kann ich da auch schon, aber das meiste ist neu sozusagen. [In Society, for example, I don't know so many things yet [...] but in Bio, it's also a bit more difficult. I know a couple of things already, but the most is new, so to speak.] (Beatriz, 6th, §53–53)

Diana even complains about the general difficulty of the Spanish subjects:

Also manchmal habe ich das Gefühl, weil, wenn das nur auf Deutsch wäre, würde ich das halt irgendwie besser verstehen und die Aufgabe besser hinkriegen. Und manchmal sage ich dann so, ja, okay, dann mache ich das. Und dann ist es halt immer schneller. Also es ist immer ganz verschieden. [So, sometimes, I have the feeling, because if it were only in German, I would somehow understand it better and manage the task better. And, sometimes, I say, yes, okay, I'll do it. And then it's always faster. It's always quite different, actually.] (Diana, 6th, §195)

Although it is clear that Biology and Society are not among the students' favourite subjects, the fact that they are taught in Spanish makes them somewhat more attractive:

Also, Gesellschaft ist/ich mag sowieso nicht Gesellschaft, aber naja, ich finde durch das Spanische das schon bisschen interessanter, sozusagen. Also, da kann ich mich persönlich auf etwas freuen. [So, Society is; I don't like Society anyway, but, well, I find it, because of the Spanish language, a bit more interesting, as it were. So, I can personally look forward to something.] (Elena, 6th §101)

The students also perceive a clear difference between the nonspecialized vocabulary that they use at home and the academic language that they encounter in school subjects. This becomes very clear in Alina and Diana's accounts:

So zuhause lernt man ja eher so „hallo“, „tschüss“ und so. (Lachen) [...] aber, richtig Spanisch lernen tue ich eher hier. [...] Unterhaltung oder Texte lesen, die Aussprache und so [...] das kann man schon [...] Also was jetzt zum Beispiel Vokabeln angeht, muss ich mich schon anstrengen. Weil, irgendwann wird es auch schwerer als zuhause. [At home, you learn to say hello, bye-bye and such things

(laughs) [...] but really learning Spanish, that is what I do here [at this school] [...] Maintaining a conversation, reading texts, pronunciation [...] these are the things you already can do, but, for example, as far as vocabulary is concerned, I have to make a greater effort. Because, at some point, it also becomes more difficult than at home.] (Alina, 6th, §61; §85–89)

Also ja, das ist ein bisschen kompliziert, weil es ist manchmal/ fühlt man sich halt einfach/ weil manchmal haben wir das schon, hatte ich das schon Zuhause vor ein paar Jahren und dann weiß ich das alles. Und aber manchmal sind es ganz komische Sachen, zum Beispiel wie ein Berg. Wir mussten in Gesellschaft letztens einen Berg auf Spanisch beschriften. Und da hatte ich keinen Plan, was das ist. [...] das irritiert mich halt auch sehr. Die Wörter haben doppelte Bedeutungen und das finde ich auch sehr komisch. [So yes, it's a bit complicated, because sometimes you just feel/ because sometimes we already had that, I already had that at home a few years ago, and then I know all that. And sometimes, it's very strange things, for example, like a "mountain". In Society, the other day, we had to label a mountain in Spanish. And I had no idea what it was or what to do [...] And that irritates me a lot. The words have double meanings, and I find that very weird.] (Diana, 6th, §165)

These fragments also reveal a strong tendency to equate language learning with vocabulary. This becomes pervasive in the data, as will be shown in the analysis of the 8th and 10th grade interviews.

5.2 Grade 8

The group of 8th grade students is made up of Alejandro, Emilia and Aitana. Alejandro and Emilia were born in a Spanish-speaking country and came to Germany at the age of 5. In the case of Alejandro, both parents are Spaniards, but Emilia's mother is Peruvian and her father is German. Aitana was born in Germany and speaks Spanish with her mother and Italian with her father. These multilingual and multicultural familiar backgrounds are a clear reflection of the diversity of German society.

When asked about their language practices, all respond that they actively speak Spanish at home and, similar to the 6th grade interviewees, that learning Spanish is important for them for familial and identity reasons:

Weil ich habe ja auch Familie in Peru halt und das wäre halt schwierig für mich, also nicht mit denen kommunizieren zu können, weil, [...] also die können auch nicht Deutsch und ja, das wäre schade. [Because I also have family in Peru, and that would be just difficult for me not being able to speak with them, because, ... they can't speak German either, and yes, that would be a pity]. (Emilia, 8th, §25)

Und das ist halt auch wichtig, weil es ein Teil von mir ist auch. [And it's also important, because it's also a part of me.] (Aitana, 8th, §31)

Interestingly, they also find that speaking two or more languages is an asset that can help them find a job in the future, an aspect that was absent from the 6th grade responses. Alejandro, moreover, even mentions a concrete profession:

Weil für später, wenn ich irgendwie Dolmetscher werden möchte oder so, dann möchte ich beide Sprachen sehr gut können. [Because, for later, if I want to become an interpreter or something, I want to be very good at both languages.] (Alejandro, 8th, §33)

Gaps between their oral and written language abilities and between their everyday and academic vocabularies becomes as relevant here as it was in the 6th grade interviews. This indicates that the students still observe a difference between their Spanish knowledge as heritage speakers, which is fundamentally oral, and school demands, even two years after entering the bilingual programme:

Zum Beispiel, wenn wir Arbeiten schreiben, dann merke ich, dass ich mit den Punkten und Kommas nicht klarkomme oder mit den Akzenten. [For example, when we write class assignments, I realize that I can't cope with the dots and commas or with the accents.] (Alejandro, 8th, §60)

Also ich meine damit, dass ich das schon fließend kann so wenn ich mit meiner Mutter rede, kann ich das alles sehr gut. [...] aber bei manchen Wörtern, zum Beispiel die ich da nicht kannte oder die ich ja nicht erwähnt wurden oder so, die lerne ich dann halt erstmal neu. [So, I mean that I can already speak fluently, so when I talk to my mother, I can do it all very well [...] but with some words, for example, that I didn't know or that weren't mentioned or something, then I just relearn them.] (Aitana, 8th, §63)

The 8th grade students' perceptions of Spanish classes as „zu einfach“ [too easy], „langsam“ [slow-paced] and „manchmal ein bisschen langweilig“ [sometimes a bit boring] also coincide with those of the 6th grade students. Similarly, the interviewees rate their learning in CLIL classes as being much more satisfactory because the vocabulary and content are new to them and are taught at the ‚right‘ level of difficulty. Interestingly, Alejandro complains that in Spanish classes, the topics are just „die man normalerweise nimmt. Zum Beispiel Kleidung oder Essen“ [the usual ones, for example clothes and meals] and he suggests that the lessons should also include „etwas, was wir in Gesellschaft machen“ [something like the things we do in Society] (Alejandro, 8th, §106-107). Students report that they learn as much in Biology and Society as their peers who do not participate in the bilingual programme. That they are taught the same subject in two languages does not, in their opinion,

imply a slower learning pace. Moreover, the partial repetition of content, once in German and once in Spanish, is considered „schön“ [nice] (Emilia, 8th, §69) and useful for learning:

Und wir hatten das ja auch, sage ich mal, auf Deutsch erstmal. Und dann bearbeiten wir das so vor, und mit Spanisch machen wir ein bisschen weiter und so. Ist also nicht schwer oder so. [And we also had, I'll say, the same thing in German at first. And then, we work on it, and with Spanish, we continue a little bit and so on. So, it's not hard or anything.] (Aitana, 8th, §83)

Furthermore, they perceive the division into two groups (into bilingual or ELE learners) to be very positive:

Und ich finde es schön, dass man auch die bilingualen Schüler, also die, die wirklich fließend Spanisch können, dass die dann in einer Gruppe sind und dass wir dann das alles nur auf Spanisch machen. [And I think it's nice that the bilingual students, the ones who are really fluent in Spanish, that they are then in a group and that we then do everything only in Spanish.] (Emilia, 8th, §95)

Above, 6th grader Diana found learning *in* Spanish to be quite challenging. Here, Emilia represents Diana's opposite. Emilia changed schools in the previous year and is clearly enjoying the new multilingual, language-friendly atmosphere, which starkly contrasts with her former, non-bilingual school:

Und hier kann ich vielleicht meine Mitschüler fragen, wie das Wort nochmal auf Deutsch heißt oder wie das Wort nochmal auf Spanisch heißt und dann weiß ich es besser, ja. [And, here, maybe I can ask my classmates what the word means in German or what the word means in Spanish, and then I know it better, yeah.] (Emilia, 8th, §41)

In addition to benefiting from having L1 peers, learning *in* and *with* two languages is an advantage for her because she can make the most of both linguistic repertoires:

Und deswegen kann ich mich hier mehr konzentrieren irgendwie, weil ich das halt auf den beiden Sprachen habe und vielleicht kann ich mir das, also, ich kann das so für mich übersetzen, weil ich ja beide Sprachen kann und vielleicht verstehe ich ein Wort nicht. Aber dann kann ich das vom Spanischen oder vom Deutschen übersetzen und dann verstehe ich das. [That's why I can concentrate more here, somehow, because I have [the subject contents] in both languages, and maybe I can translate it for myself, because I can speak both languages, and maybe I don't understand a word, but then I can translate it from Spanish or from German, and then I understand it.] (Emilia, 8th, §89)

Emilia's report therefore constitutes a lively example of translinguaging practices in the classroom (cf. García/Kleyn 2016).

Thus far, we have described very similar responses in the 6th and 8th grade interviews, with the individual cases of Diana and Emilia as the ‘extremes’ among a very homogeneous set of learners. Now, we turn to the group of older students.

5.3 Grade 10

The participants in the 10th grade interviews were Mario and Lucia (simultaneous bilinguals and children of mixed couples) and Sergio and Paula, (sequential bilinguals who arrived in Germany a few years before the interviews took place). These different (linguistic) biographies determine different expectations and clearly lead to different experiences with the bilingual programme in particular and with the school system in general.

Mario and Lucia present themselves as good, self-confident students who do not have specific difficulties at school. For Paula and Sergio, the situation is quite different. Both have had the experience of leaving their home country as adolescents and have had to cope with the educational, personal and affective difficulties that this entails. Paula’s case is particularly representative of this, because she is no longer living with her mother (whom she accompanied to Germany) but with her best friend’s family. Moreover, Sergio reports that he is transferring to a vocational school at the end of the current school year.

Regarding their use of Spanish, Paula and Sergio consider themselves learners of German who feel more at ease speaking Spanish, the language they refer to as their „Muttersprache“ [mother tongue] or just „meine Sprache“ [my language]. On the other hand, Mario and Lucia refer to themselves as bilinguals who grew up with two languages. They state that their Spanish is „auf einem guten Niveau“ [at a good level] but articulate that there is always something to improve, for example, „mehr so Fachwörter“ [more so technical words] (Mario, 10th, §43) and they want to speak Spanish „perfekt, eigentlich“ [perfectly, actually]:

Also, ich glaube, Muttersprachler denken nicht so darüber nach, wie sie Sätze bauen können und so, und da möchte ich auch auf jeden Fall bleiben. [So, I think native speakers don’t think so much about how to build sentences and stuff, and that is definitely where I want to stay.] (Lucia, 10th, §17)

Spanish is also present in their daily life; they speak it at home, with their Spanish-speaking relatives and with some friends. Lucia has been attending Spanish classes organized by the embassy since 2nd grade, and they both are „sehr glücklich“ [very happy] at being bilingual, mentioning only positive aspects of this, such as having a secret code or „sich mit allen verständigen“ [communicate with everyone]. When asked about the disadvantages of or problems from living with two languages, Lucia and Mario are unable to describe any. According to Mario, to know several languages is „gut“ [good] and „das bringt auch einen im Leben weiter“ [that gets you further in life] (Mario, 8th, §37). This fully optimistic vision coincides with the generally positive and confident tone of their interviews.

Unsurprisingly and similar to their 6th and 8th grade counterparts, these four students report that the Spanish language lessons are „leicht“ and „simple“ [easy] for them:

Im Spanischunterricht ist es oft so, dass wir einfach Aufgaben im Buch oder so bearbeiten, die sind oft ein bisschen leicht. [It is often the case that we simply work on tasks in the coursebook or something like that; they are often a bit easy.] (Lucia, 10th, §67)

Es aburrido, porque la profesora nos deja así trabajos a los que somos bilingües nos deja trabajos que son... simples. Pero por una parte, también es difícil porque tienes que aprender la regla de cómo usar el subjuntivo o eso, y eso sí es un poco difícil para nosotros, los bilingües, pero igual, con tal solo leer la oración o eso ya sabemos qué va a ir ahí, pero para los de alemanes no. [It's boring, because those of us who are bilingual are given assignments that are... easy. But, it's also difficult because you have to learn the rule of how to use the subjunctive or something like that, and that's a little difficult for us bilinguals, but still, just by reading this sentence or that, we know what has to go there, but the Germans don't.] (Paula, 10th, §62)

Here, Paula makes two new and very interesting points. On the one hand, she refers to herself as belonging to the "bilinguals", although, while speaking about her linguistic biography, she never referred to herself in this way. In fact, Paula preferred the interview to be conducted in Spanish. It is therefore clear that when she speaks about herself as a bilingual, Paula refers only to the school context. In addition, it is only when she discusses the language lessons that something like self-confidence emerges from her account. The second interesting issue she addresses is her difficulty learning an explicit grammatical rule. This is a problem that neither the 6th grade nor the 8th grade participants mentioned, but it also appears in Lucia's and Mario's interviews:

Also, man redet ja nur mit den Freunden, aber diese ganzen Vergangenheitsformen und sowas/ also, die zu wissen, ist auch nicht schlecht. Deswegen verbessert das auch/ weil, ich habe das auch oft vergessen. [So, usually you only speak with the friends, but all these past tenses and things like that, well, it's not bad to know them. That's why it also improves [my skills], because I've often forgotten that.] (Mario, 10th, §63)

Although it is unclear exactly what Mario refers to regarding "knowing the past tenses", he likely refers to the specific linguistic terminology and explicit rules for using a particular past tense, which a 'native' speaker without formal grammatical instruction similar to that offered in language lessons usually does not know.

Regarding the CLIL programme, the students' focus differs depending on their linguistic backgrounds and, therefore, on their current linguistic needs and priorities. However, all

the comments about CLIL subjects are overwhelmingly positive. Paula's and Sergio's view of CLIL classes reveals how learning *in* Spanish helps them cope with general school demands. According to Lucia, supporting the "native speakers" is also „der Sinn der Bili-Klassen“ [the point of the bilingual programme] (Lucia, 10th, §39). In any other context, having a language other than German as L1 is a handicap, but at this school, this is at least partially compensated for. Nevertheless, two recurrent themes throughout the interviews – the repetition of contents in Spanish and German and the strong relation between subject content and technical vocabulary – are expressed once again:

Ich finde das ein bisschen gut, dass wir Spanisch und mit den Fächern zusammen machen. Nicht nur, dass wir nur Spanisch lernen und da war es, sondern auch Biologie und Chemie. [...] Ich glaube für mich, zum Beispiel in Chemie oder Biologie, sind Wörter jetzt auf Deutsch richtig schwer zu verstehen. Und wenn das alles noch mal alles Spanisch kommt, kann ich mehr verstehen und besser lernen. Wenn das nur auf Deutsch wäre, wäre ein bisschen schwer für mich, nur auf Deutsch. [I think it's a bit good that we learn Spanish and with the subjects together. Not only that we just learn Spanish and that's it, but also Biology and Chemistry [...] I think that for me, for example, in Chemistry or Biology, the words are now really difficult to understand in German. And, when everything is in Spanish again, I can understand more and learn better [...] If it was only in German, it would be a bit hard for me, only in German.] (Sergio, 10th, §73-75)

Lucia's and Mario's interviews convey the impression that the students truly value the lessons and, once more, the Spanish language is a decisive, appealing factor. For instance, when asked if he would prefer to have all subjects taught only in German, Mario's answer is unequivocal: „Ich glaube, das wäre mir irgendwie ein bisschen zu langweilig, immer das Gleiche zu machen, in der gleichen Sprache“ [I think it would be a bit too boring for me, to always do the same thing in the same language] (Mario, 10th, §91). Discussing the possibility of having Chemistry as a CLIL subject, Lucia expresses a keen interest, precisely because of the language:

Also, ich bin nicht so ein Fan von Chemie, aber kann sein, dass ich es bisschen interessanter finde, da es noch auf einer anderen Sprache ist. [...] Aber, ich weiß nicht, ich bin gespannt. [Well, I'm not a fan of Chemistry, but I might find it a bit more interesting because it's in another language [...] But I don't know, I'm curious]. (Lucia, 10th, §63)

Mario and Lucia, furthermore, emphasize how CLIL subjects are particularly useful for maintaining their Spanish. They state that in these lessons, they learn more, specifically, more new words and more useful vocabulary, as Lucia elaborates:

Und ich glaube, ich mag Gesellschaft mehr als Bio. Weil, in Bio lerne ich also Fachbegriffe dazu, aber die werde ich sowieso wahrscheinlich nicht so viel verwenden.

Und in Gesellschaft lernen/ Zum Beispiel jetzt haben wir über den Zweiten Weltkrieg was gemacht und im spanischen Teil dann aber über den Bürgerkrieg in Spanien. Und das hat mir schon was gebracht, weil mein Vater manchmal so darüber geredet hat oder so, und dann konnte ich nichts dazu sagen. Und jetzt weiß ich halt auch mehr über die Geschichte von Spanien. Und ich glaube, ich lerne da auch mehr Vokabular, was mir weiterhilft, als in Bio. [And, I think I like Society more than Biology. Because in Biology, I learn technical terms, but I probably won't use them that much anyway. And, in society, we learn/ For example, now we have done something about the Second World War and then, in the Spanish part, about the civil war in Spain. And that has already helped me because my father sometimes talked about it, and then I couldn't say anything about it. And now, I know more about the history of Spain. And in Society, I think I'm also learning more useful vocabulary for me than in Biology]. (Lucia, 10th, §61)

This revealing quote is the only part of any interview that mentions the key element of CLIL, i.e., teaching a subject from two different perspectives to help enrich students' understanding of the world and foster intercultural understanding. This is also the only quote that lacks a reference to the repetition of content in two languages; rather, it articulates complementing and enriching views. However, even here, the cultural dimension is overshadowed by a connection, almost an equation, between learning (of Spanish history, in this case) and vocabulary.

6 Discussion and Conclusions

CLIL programmes in languages other than English are rare in Germany and throughout Europe. Formal instruction in HLs is even more so. Thus, the present study has focused on one German school that combines both approaches to shed light on Spanish HL students' experiences with this very unique learning environment.

The results illustrate a very homogeneous picture. First, for all participants in the interviews, being able to speak Spanish, i.e., being bilingual, as they are called and call themselves, is considered an asset and closely linked to their own identity. Moreover, the vast majority of them expressed their desire to continue improving their language skills in Spanish. In this context, the models of monolingual and peninsular Spanish native speakers as ideal- and ought-to-selves exert an important influence (cf. Leeman 2015).

Closely related to these considerations is the role of the school in their learning process. Interestingly, although Spanish is the regular foreign language taught at the school and Spanish language classes are certainly not exclusive to the bilingual itinerary, students always include Spanish language classes as part of their CLIL programme. Moreover, the comments imply that there is a striking lack of differentiation techniques, as the students

usually refer to the classes in terms of ease and boredom. One recurrent positive issue the students mention is their comprehension of the writing system (spelling and punctuation), which they do not learn at home, and – in the case of the 10th grade interviewees – their explicit learning of grammatical rules, which helps them to reflect on linguistic issues and develop language awareness.

Regarding CLIL subjects (Biology, Music, Social Sciences), the results indicate that the students are quite happy with the school's separation of 'bilingual' and 'ELE-learners', as it seems to warrant the differentiation that they miss in their language classes. Nonetheless, the separation into groups would plausibly make more sense for Spanish classes, and all students would benefit more from learning together during CLIL lessons. Students also fully support the division of the bilingual classes into German and Spanish sections; however, judging by the students' responses, this is conducive to the repetition of content and highlights the extraordinary importance of vocabulary in their learning experiences. In fact, equating vocabulary to learning is a striking constant in the interviews.

The students are also aware of the distinction, made by Cummins (1984), between the basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) they acquire at home and the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) that they acquire at school. Instances of learning cognitive discourse functions (Dalton-Puffer 2013) are, however, rather scarce in the data. The same can be stated for fostering multiperspectivism, which was mentioned only once. Thus, it seems that the CLIL approach has not been developed to its full potential.

In conclusion, this content and heritage language integrated learning programme is and remains an exception, and it will be difficult to expand this model to other schools and other languages. However, the findings provide two important considerations for teaching HL. First, regarding mixed language classrooms with heritage and nonheritage language students, a language awareness approach with yet-to-be-developed differentiated tasks seems to be highly appropriate. Second, with regard to the HL classes as extracurricular activities, a CLIL approach that integrates subject contents and different cultural perspectives would be an appealing new way of fostering heritage speakers' academic and intercultural abilities, in accordance with the recommendations and demands of the European language policy.

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