Collaborating for Content and Language Integrated Learning: The Situated Character of Faculty Collaboration and Student Learning

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Globalisation, internationalization, and widening participation are trends in higher education that require efforts to foster a culture of cooperation, reflexivity and learning among lecturers as well as among students. These central forces in education call for curriculum change to respond not only to workforce and student mobility but also to indirect effects like changing requirements for teamwork in the professional world and by extension also in education. These requirements might involve an emphasis on transdisciplinary teams, an increasing amount of information distribution, and greater cultural and disciplinary variety in student or co-worker profiles. One curricular approach exploring and problematizing this 'culture of cooperation' is Integrating Content and Language (ICL), where a disciplinary focus (content) is combined with a concurrent emphasis on the corresponding communication dimensions (language).[1]

This special issue of ATD investigates understandings of Integrating Content and Language (ICL) through the exchange of knowledge and experience regarding collaboration between content (discipline-based) and language (communication / academic literacies) lecturers in higher education contexts. To date, it seems that this type of collaboration can be challenging to students and faculty alike for infrastructural, institutional, epistemological, disciplinary, rhetorical, and other reasons. The papers in this issue help us address some of these challenges and improve our understanding of ICL-collaboration.

Not surprisingly, the ways of addressing the role of and need for language and communication education as ICL are many and varied. In this issue, we offer a closer look at places where specific communication-oriented interventions are integrated with disciplinary courses and taught collaboratively. This approach, however, calls for decisions on what is required of teachers of these courses and interventions and the manner in which they collaborate. What is the division of labor and how does the team make the most of the expertise in it?

Findings from previous research conducted by the authors, a collaborative team of Swedish and South African researchers, suggest that the creation of productive institutional discursive spaces transgressing disciplinary boundaries has the potential to bridge the distance between communication specialists and disciplinary specialists (e.g. Jacobs, 2008; Wright, 2006; Räisänen, 2007). Along with related academic literacies research, we support a shift away from a 'prerequisites model', where 'communication skills' are conceptualized as prerequisites and somebody else's responsibility, as indicative of an uncritical academic and disciplinary socialization model. Instead, our research promotes a model of critical understanding of the teaching and learning of discipline-specific academic literacies (Gustafsson, 2011; Jacobs 2007; Wyrley-Birch, 2006). Such a model proposes that disciplinary specialists also need a critical, outside overview of their intrinsically situated 'insider' role. This overview can be accomplished through engaging with communication (language) lecturers who are disciplinary 'outsiders'. In this type of collaboration, the communication lecturers clearly also enjoy the same shift of perspective. Such a shift of location from a situated insider perspective, to an insider perspective from the outside, changes the perspectives of both categories of lecturers and promotes insight into the need for collaboration and effective partnerships between the disciplines and faculty involved.

To explore this collaborative focus of providing access to content knowledge through disciplinary literacies and practices, we have collaborated in a research exchange project since 2009. In the fall of 2010, we invited higher education colleagues to a colloquium in order to pursue the conversation with a broader scope and greater depth. The colloquium dialogue took place on January 17-18, 2011, on the Granger Bay campus of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) in Cape Town, South Africa. We directed the dialogue towards collaboration and we wanted to include contributions on theory, methodology, and findings with a designated respondent for each area: Chrissie Boughey, Rhodes University—theory; Michael Joseph, University of Limpopo—methodology; Michael Samuel, University of KwaZulu-Natal—findings. So, the colloquium was entitled 'Dynamic Content and Language Collaboration in Higher Education: Theory, Research, and Reflections' and set out to explore and discuss what a group of teachers and researchers from a variety of higher education systems could share to promote and improve practice in the field of integrating content and language / content and language integrated learning (ICL / CLIL)[2].

The colloquium's discussions and presentations offered great variety and included contributions from the hard sciences, economics, engineering, medicine and health sciences, and the social sciences. These contributions also provided insight into different stages of collaborative projects at different institutional levels. There were examples of six-year long projects between university departments as well as initial needs analysis projects and theorising for future implementation. There were also examples of intra-university collaboration between departments or within departments. Yet, despite the scope and variety, some issues surfaced as shared or recurring topics in the conversation. These included questions about the rationale for curricular integration; attempts to distinguish specific approaches from other strategies for promoting (language) learning; the difficulties involved in evaluating the results of collaboration; the discipline-specific affordances to be explored with each example of collaboration; and, since many collaboration projects employed action research methods, the relative difficulty of addressing university management or curriculum designers with action research findings as compared to other more immediately recognised and quantifiable research results.

Briefly Setting the CLIL/ICL Scene

Five of the nine papers in the colloquium, which we present here, offer insights into the South African CLIL/ICL scene; nevertheless, a brief introduction to European CLIL might be necessary. European

CLIL was initiated in the 1990s as a result of a series of investigations into language teaching to promote a multilingual Europe in line with the European Commission policy of plurilingualism and educational—as well as work force—mobility (Marsh, 2002). So, CLIL is largely a language policy. It is also a language movement that has largely focused on school-level interventions and reform as indicated by even a brief look at the CLIL-literature over the past 5-10 years (Dalton-Puffer & Nikkola, 2006; Smit & Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Smit, Schiftner & Dalton-Puffer, 2010). In the past three years, *The International CLIL Research Journal* has been established as an additional channel for CLIL work that includes more higher education studies and cases (Marsh and Wolff, 2008; Mehisto and Wolff, 2009; Marsh, Mehisto, and Wolff, 2010). As indicated already in 2008 by Fortanet-Goméz and Räisänen (2008), another important indication of the growth and quality of CLIL are the many high-quality CLIL-dedicated research conferences which have been convened over the years: Integrating Content and Language: Providing Access to Knowledge through Language (South Africa, 2001); Integrating Content and Language: Meeting the Challenge of a Multilingual Higher Education (Netherlands, 2003); International Conference on Immersion and CLIL Education and Language Planning (Finland 2004); CLIL Conference (Finland 2006); and Integrating Content and Llanguage in Higher Education (Netherlands, 2006). The publications from the two ICL conferences in the Netherlands (Wilkinson, 2004; Wilkinson and Zegers, 2008) are particularly useful for higher education facilitators.

So, in Europe, CLIL has an approximately 15-year long history and, like WAC programs in the US, a diverse assortment of institutional- and context-dependent instantiations in different countries. Yet, Wolff and Langé offer a flexible definition of European CLIL: "Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is a generic term and refers to any educational situation in which an additional language and therefore not the most widely used language of the environment is used for the teaching and learning of subjects other than the language itself" (Wolff and Langé, 2000, iii). Here, Wolff and Langé provide a generous definition that profiles content learning rather than language and apparently never includes the students' first language. We would like to add that 'first-language CLIL' is also necessary.

Like Wolff and Langé, David Marsh (2005) characterises European CLIL in a progressive way:

> CLIL invites a re-conceptualization of how we consider language use and learning. It enables development of an integrated educational approach which actively involves the learner in using and developing the language *of* learning; the language *for* learning; and language *through* learning. It has been referred to as education through *construction*, rather than *instruction*. (p. 6)

Marsh aptly emphasises the socio-constructivist dimensions of ICL/CLIL that we see as crucial for the success of CLIL/ICL interventions. Yet in the CLIL-literature, content and the socio-constructivist dimensions are rarely emphasised. We hope readers will find such emphasis in many of the articles of this issue.

One additional point we would like to stress in this issue is the language—content ratio and collaboration. It is true that some CLIL interventions "may be considered as primarily language teaching. Some can be seen as mainly content teaching" (Marsh, 2005, p. 6). In the literature, though, most of the publications and the research questions focus on language learning and there are few if any content teachers among the authors. Further, Hillyard concludes a review of CLIL and its relation to English language teaching (ELT) with the observation that "[w]hat is different is that the language teacher is also the subject teacher, or that the subject teacher is also able to exploit opportunities for developing language skills" (Hillyard, 2009, p. 5). First of all, we must make clear that CLIL involves other languages even if much of the literature is concerned with cases where English is the target

language. However, the definitional issue we want to stress and question is Hillyard's focus on CLIL as delivered by only one teacher. Most of the literature we have reviewed for this issue supports Hillyard's 'one-teacher model' and the exceptions have largely been linked to higher education and ICL/CLIL as indicated, for instance, in some of the contributions to the ICLHE conference in SA in 2001, which was premised on an understanding of ICL as collaboration between language and content lecturers, and the ICLHE conferences 2003 and 2006 in The Netherlands.

While Hillyard's focus on the single (language) teacher seems largely congruent with the CLIL-literature, it does not reflect the approaches described in many of the papers in this issue. Moreover, CLIL as an umbrella term is clearly associated with a European language policy which, in its turn, is connected to notions of educational—as well as work force—mobility and accreditation systems but also, and by extension, to a democracy project of widening participation. In South Africa, similarly, ICL is associated with widening participation but also with access to the academy and disciplinary knowledge. So, the CLIL/ICL variation can be seen as a response to educational context and purpose (see Boughey, 2011 on institutional differences and their impact on teaching and learning). The colloquium conversation and the papers in the collection exemplify this variation well, we believe.

Despite being worlds apart and prompted for various reasons, one focus that the papers all share to some extent is academic and/or disciplinary literacy, an aspect of ICL/CLIL work that is largely missing from current definitions. Such a focus on disciplinary communication appears central to the types of ICL/CLIL that were described and analyzed in the colloquium and, as such, this disciplinary focus also connects the colloquium discussion to, on the one hand, notions of 'academic literacies' (Lillis and Scott, 2007) as promoted to great effect in the UK for instance and, on the other hand, to notions of disciplinary communication that is perhaps more frequent in the US context of writing / communicating in the disciplines.

For an example of the latter that is tangent to the colloquium collection, Paretti and McNair introduced an IEEE special issue in 2008 on writing or communication in the disciplines for engineering education (Paretti and McNair, 2008). The articles in that issue exemplify 'first-language CLIL' and cover among other things integrated interventions across engineering programs including multiple communication intensive courses; portfolio solutions to promote communication outcomes; continuous calibrated peer review; and examples of projects with real and global audiences that require and promote both technical and communication expertise. Paretti and McNair emphasize recurring challenges in these types of interventions and these challenges recur also in this collection: issues of rhetorical versus technical expertise; issues of ownership and facilitation of integrated elements; and issues of curriculum design to avoid cramming additional components into courses without much actual integration or proper synergy effects. A third ICL-related component they mention is the accreditation-based reform impetus that is also beginning to affect the European higher education arena via the Bologna Declaration.

Given the definitional issues above and the theoretical overlap with academic literacies and disciplinary discourse as well as the issues of rhetorical versus technical expertise and accreditation, we are almost ready to turn to the colloquium papers but for one further dimension that affects many of the papers and all collaboration scenarios. The disciplinary tension or congruence between the discourses students and faculty face in a complex integrated educational environment remains a factor that must also be analysed and utilized. This issue of congruence permeated many discussions during the colloquium and is also introduced in Mike Baynham's prompt to the presenters below.

Some Preliminary Reflections Provided by Professor Mike Baynham, University of Leeds

In the colloquium, Professor Mike Baynham gave a keynote that was prefaced for the participants prior to the colloquium with a reflection piece to guide the papers and presentations. Many of the papers refer to this reflective 'think-piece' and we therefore include it here:

Content and Language Integration (ICL) poses a number of challenges for the researcher and practitioner and these are theoretical, methodological and contextual. From a theoretical perspective, it makes explicit an issue that is always present in knowledge production, whether recognized or not, which is the role of language in knowledge construction. Developments in linguistics now give us a range of tools to investigate disciplinary specific language. Methodologically however, ICL demands, as the theme of this colloquium suggests, a collaborative approach, since it is unusual, though not impossible, for knowledge about language and disciplinary knowledge to be combined in one person. So ICL demands a collaborative, team approach. Contextually this raises the question about how the collaboration between language and disciplinary specialist should be located institutionally: should the language specialist be 'embedded' in a disciplinary department, in order to maximize interaction with discipline specialists, or located in a service unit or centre, or perhaps a combination of both?

Implicit but perhaps unstated in an ICL agenda is that ICL should support widening participation and access in higher education: attention to the linguistic construction of disciplinary knowledge will make that knowledge more accessible to a wider range of students, raising educational achievement. This suggests that ICL pedagogies should be sensitive to where the students are coming from, building on home languages/literacies to transition into content area language/literacy. Recent research in the U.K. conducted by Ivanic and others has addressed this issue. Additional to the focus on where students are coming from is an emphasis on where they are going, in terms of the language practices of the workplaces for which they are being prepared. How congruent for example are the assessments on a given course with the demands of the workplace? Here again there is a role for collaboration between the language specialist and the discipline specialist.

Other factors make the ICL agenda more complex. Many content areas in higher education draw on a number of disciplines, not just one, so nursing students for example are engaging with material from sociology, psychology and philosophy as well as their clinical subjects. Our understanding of language has expanded to include the role of multimodality and new digital forms of communication. These need to be built into both research and practice in language and content integration. How does the verbal interact with the visual in content area learning and teaching? How are new digital communication means shaping interaction? What are the issues of access for students from diverse backgrounds?

The challenge of collaboration across disciplines has the potential to go further than other approaches, such as academic literacies and English/Language for academic/specific purposes, which typically assume a support and facilitating role in relation to disciplinary knowledge, with the language specialist acting as mediator and

> interpreter. But how far can ICL collaborations go before coming up against a disciplinary politics that emphasizes hard positivist knowledge, rather than its shaping, construction and interpretation through language? This is an argument that has to be engaged with and won within institutions and also in broader policy arenas. (Baynham, 2010)

In this 'think piece', Professor Baynham effectively sets the agenda for the colloquium in his emphasis on the importance of language for knowledge production and how collaboration is required to optimize learning environments or activities. Baynham also articulates how collaboration can help address the language or discourse dimension of higher education facing widening participation. Still, what is perhaps the most demanding implication in his think piece is the combined suggestion that on the one hand, ICL/CLIL might have greater potential than other approaches to language in higher education such as language for specific or academic purposes because ICL/CLIL, in his version, avoids the remedial or support position. At the same time Baynham also acknowledges the prevailing issue of addressing the degree to which the disciplines involved in any given collaboration are congruent or not.

Baynham's think piece implies that the hierarchy of epistemologies in higher education or knowledge production might present severe obstacles to ICL collaboration. This is very likely a scenario that colleagues recognize and it is present in most of the articles of this collection but not necessarily always as a definite obstacle. In some scenarios, we see how awareness of congruence helps form and design the collaboration and how collaboration therefore does not always have to be articulated as one between 'language' and 'content' but sometimes as 'perspectives on content' and how that change of approach reduces the importance of monitoring or balancing the language / content ratio. Given the disciplinary objectives of ICL/CLIL, this change of emphasis would be one of the reasons why, in Baynham's interpretation, it has greater potential than approaches like second language acquisition or language for specific / academic purposes.

Colloquium Papers in this Issue

The first three papers in the collection were invited to the colloquium to provide a methodological discussion about ICL collaboration. The next three papers provide examples of theoretical frameworks invited to generate discussion. The last set of three papers is more findings-oriented and hence more specific to individual projects.

Moragh Paxton offers the first account of ICL collaboration in the issue, and she focuses on the potential of ethnographic research to provide a deeper understanding of writing or communication behavior in new contexts than other methodologies. Paxton also emphasizes how her research has been conducted individually whereas interventions have involved various levels of collaboration. In this research stance, she introduces the notion of 'congruence' between the disciplines that interact and finds that the methodological distance between academic literacies and economics is considerable and that this distance has resulted in individual research projects on ICL collaboration.

Brenda Leibowitz provides an account of a six-year long transdisciplinary collaborative project involving two universities in disciplines such as social work and occupational therapy, and academic development. Their ICL-collaboration is the first one in the collection that exemplifies how the focus of the collaboration need not be centered on language acquisition alone, but also on professional expertise and identity development. Leibowitz also emphasizes action research methodology including a strong transformative and reflective dimension as crucial for understanding a project such as theirs. The project she describes also exemplifies how the effective approach needs

to involve a focus not only on what is taught but also 'how' the curriculum is taught and the various modalities required for effective facilitation of student learning.

Theresa Lillis and Lucy Rai account for an ongoing research project of a collaborative character that explores everyday, high-stakes writing in social work. The methodology they adopt to achieve their goals is text-oriented ethnography that enables them to explore epistemological, ideological and interventionist goals as well as establish an interface between three fields (academic literacies, social work education, and social work practice). They also isolate the value of contextuality and the practice of reflexivity as two methodological congruencies between the fields involved and discuss how their method generates rich data that is highly valued by all three fields. As a result, a fundamental dimension of their contextual, reflective ethnographical methodology is to critique the distinction between language and content.

In the fourth paper, Marie Paretti, presents interdisciplinarity as a theoretical lens informing effective ICL-partnerships and providing an ontological foundation for ICL. She reviews some of the literature on interdisciplinarity and interdisciplinary collaboration and moves on to relate interdisciplinarity to situated learning and metacognition, suggesting that facilitating ICL requires thorough interdisciplinary understanding. She further argues that the known issues of power, academic positions, and trust can be mediated with an interdisciplinary framework in ICL-contexts. An institutionally supported, interdisciplinary understanding requiring cognitive flexibility among faculty would thus enable actual integration rather than adjunct activities and compartmentalization of tasks and thereby facilitate high-quality student learning.

The fifth paper of the collection is Marcelle Harran's describing a situated mechanical engineering project that involves collaboration with applied language studies. The focus of the project is the students' acquisition of the necessary academic literacies for their academic field and their workplace, and it outlines the need for negotiation and collaboration to arrive at the literacy, discourse, and genre understandings required for the specific project and the students in it. Marcelle makes the crucial point that all collaboration practices are complex and that they require systematic and sustained collaboration to arrive at a sense of community. With long-term planning for sustained interaction, buy-in may be possible from all stakeholders.

Our sixth paper is Delia Marshall's account of a project in South African physics education that in many ways is indicative of educational policies promoting ICL for students to access disciplinary discourse. Marshall's paper outlines the collaboration between content lecturers and an academic literacies practitioner in close collaboration on a course for the duration of a year. Drawing on Gee's sociocultural understanding of discourse, she claims that a decisive aspect of the successful collaboration between the teachers was a shared understanding of themselves as 'discourse lecturers' first, and literacy or content lecturers second. This shared understanding prevents task division and compartmentalization. She also points to the institutional support that is mentioned as necessary also in Brenda Leibowitz's article.

In Susan van Schalkwyk's paper, readers get an insight into an ICL research project on objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) in a medical school. Van Schalkwyk outlines the research dimension of the collaboration and notices how the collaboration itself may be effective and work well in terms of understanding the various sets of discourses, positions, and perspectives involved but that the research community does not necessarily have an understanding for this type of collaborative research nor an appropriate forum for it. The article also discusses the implications of the collaboration both in terms of considering the learning potential of ICL collaboration but also in terms of insights for enhancing such collaboration for greater impact and efficiency.

Inma Fortanet-Gomez and her account of the institutional efforts at a Spanish university takes readers to Europe, the Bologna Declaration, and the ICL potential in the European higher education arena. Many universities choose to introduce English as the language of instruction for part of their programmes or for the second cycle, which corresponds to the masters level in most systems, and this prompts investigation into what 'teaching in English' means for learning and facilitation. In Spain, much like in South Africa, an educational system that already works with two or three languages adds a further level of complexity to the program. Inma stresses the need for a forum for dialogue between language and content teachers in this situation since profiling disciplinary discourse would be even harder in a second or third language.

John Airey closes the collection with his article from the Swedish context and bilingual physics education. His paper explores collaboration between content lecturers and language lecturers or educational researchers and the increased need for such collaboration in multilingual learning environments. Airey suggests that disciplinary literacy is an effective vehicle in such scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL). In order to get at what disciplinary literacy might mean in any given learning environment, John also presents a tool for inter-faculty discussion—the Disciplinary Literacy Discussion Matrix. The matrix, however, is only the first step and successful collaboration and education design requires additional dialogue and John proposes that the matrix has particular potential to generate that prolonged and enhanced dialogue.

Conclusion – Lessons Learned

The single most important insight from the colloquium is the importance of the conversation itself. The amazing variety and scope in the nine papers alone indicate the potential of the collaborative approach to ICL/CLIL. The respondents to the nine papers raised additional issues including the need for both language and content specialists to move out of their respective disciplinary deficits and forge a self-critical unity to mitigate the dichotomies of 'them' and 'us' (Joseph); whether ICL collaboration discourse has generally been limited to 'access' issues within the undergraduate academy, rather than concerning itself with students' eventual ability to succeed in the postgraduate community as well (Samuel); the need to theorise ICL collaborations beyond the 'micro' level and what 'macro' level features make such collaborations possible (or not) in the first place. What makes the 'ontology' of collaboration possible (Boughey)?

At least in HE contexts, ICL /CLIL appears to require collaboration not only in materials or curriculum development but also in course design, learning activities, teaching and assessment. In short, effective ICL/CLIL requires collaborative delivery. The colloquium's papers and conversations also emphasise how ICL/CLIL can facilitate student achievement in contexts of widening participation, and in some interventions we see how it is used to enhance disciplinary discourse depth and confidence. This great variety and scope makes comparative studies of collaborative ICL/CLIL challenging, but at the same time argues for their importance. As a consequence, a great deal of critical context analysis and adaption to one's situatedness is required for any teacher or institution interested in adopting ICL/CLIL pedagogy.

Collaborative ICL/CLIL also presents its practitioners with significant challenges. Some of these challenges, such as the different forms and levels of ICL collaboration, were raised in a workshop at the colloquium. The workshop also suggested some enabling mechanisms for ICL collaboration, such as discursive spaces in which collaborating lecturers can reflect on what they are doing differently and theorise why they are doing it differently. There are also issues of buy-in, of course, and the related difficulties of arriving at actual integration beyond skills or socialisation levels of academic literacy (cf. Lea & Street, 2004). Note, however, that the challenge in the symposium title for dynamic

collaboration has indeed been met. The papers do not describe interventions that settle for skills delivery, as it were. (Not to say that such work should not take place but that it is not the primary focus of ICL/CLIL work, which, instead, focuses on disciplinary discourse as access to disciplinary content knowledge.)

The matter of buy-in is also connected to the challenge of longevity and sustainability. On the one hand, long-term collaboration is necessary to begin to see results and thereby improve buy-in. Yet, the long-term collaboration tends to involve post-project stages where the collaboration is no longer funded by a specific project or central funding but must generate its own funding. If, in addition to this difficulty of sustaining any ICL/CLIL intervention, we also consider our ambition to scale-up any given collaboration, then institutional commitment becomes a challenge indeed.

We need to be aware of more theoretically oriented challenges as well. At one level, our colleagues articulate a definitional challenge inherent in the acronyms themselves. Any attempt to make a distinction between language and content is going to appear self-contradictory with a disciplinary discourse approach. The same holds true for distinctions between ICL/CLIL work and that of second language acquisition, language for academic or specific purposes, lingua franca approaches, and possibly academic literacies approaches also. For the approaches described here, maybe we need a name that emphasizes discourse and disciplinarity. We need conceptualisations of ICL/CLIL that do justice to a 'discourse curriculum' in higher education.

A final theoretical/methodological challenge is the action research dimension of these types of interventions. It is sometimes difficult to convince faculty and institutions of the need for programmatic change with action research findings. The colloquium and its nine papers might be low on unequivocal findings about post-university success rates or improved student learning as a result of ICL/CLIL interventions. However, the 2011 colloquium was focused primarily on faculty perspectives. Student experiences with collaborative ICL/CLIL is a topic we hope to explore in our next colloquium (summer 2012 in Gothenburg, Sweden at Chalmers University of Technology). We hope to continue the conversation about communal issues and concerns that our participants found so useful and helpful in designing future collaborative projects.

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Notes

[2] A note on the acronym: The nine papers from the colloquium use the acronyms ICL and CLIL more or less interchangeably. While CLIL is a language agenda initiated by the European Commission in the 1990s and may still be more frequently used to refer to school-based accounts of integration, ICL is largely synonymous but tends to be more often used for higher education level examples of integrated practice. As some of the papers indicate, neither acronym is perfect for our conversation.

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