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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes. I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine language anxiety, or fear experienced by learners when using a foreign language in the content and language integrated (CLIL) classroom. Although CLIL has been rising in popularity in Croatia in recent years, there has been little research on the CLIL classroom. Furthermore, most studies on language anxiety have focused on the foreign language classroom. Given that the pressure of learning subject content and using a second language simultaneously can cause distress, it is vital to ensure that students feel confident and comfortable to achieve the best possible results.

The data for this study were gathered using a questionnaire which surveyd 48 CLIL high school students' perceptions of potential stressors and anxiety-inducing factors, such as speaking activities, the teacher's attitude, and their motivation. The findings show that most of the students do not feel anxious in the CLIL classroom, while those that do, mostly fel anxious during speaking activities.

In summary, understanding language anxiety in CLIL is essential for creating a safe and comfortable language-learning environment since it can negatively affect confidence, communication, and the learning process.

Keywords: anxiety, language anxiety, nervousness, CLIL, EFL, language, learning

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1. Introduction

Anxiety, nervousness, and fear are known to be major hurdles for students, because of various class activities that can trigger them. Anxiety can manifest in many different ways, depending on its type. Language anxiety, more specifically second or foreign language anxiety (for the purpose of this paper, these terms will be used interchangeably) is a specific type of anxiety that can seriously delay and hinder language learners and their progress. Although language anxiety has attracted many scholars and has been discussed thoroughly over the years (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012; Woodrow, 2006; Horwitz et al., 1986), there is a research gap on how it is manifestated in the content and language integrated (CLIL). In fact, few studies have analysed language anxiety with respect to CLIL (Papaja, 2019; Simons et al., 2019; De Smet et al., 2018; Ohlberger & Wegner, 2019).

The biggest motivation for choosing this topic was my ever-growing interest in psycholinguistics and psychology of the language learner and how they are reflected in the classroom. Additionally, through many encounters with young learners, as well as my colleagues, I had an opportunity to notice many of them suffered from anxiety at some point, mostly during speaking activities or presentations. It has become clear that language anxiety is not discussed often as it seems many students, teachers, and professors attribute such behavior to social, performance, or general anxiety. Moreover, based on my personal experience, I have come to realize that language anxiety is very specific and could be alleviated even if an individual still experiences other types of anxiety.

Given that language anxiety in foreign language classes has been a topic of many studies and there is far less data and research on language anxiety in the CLIL classroom, there is a need to bridge the research gap and provide insights on the intersection of language anxiety and CLIL. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the current situation regarding language anxiety among Croatian students enrolled in a CLIL high school program. The aim of the study is to provide a better understanding of the students' perspective on how language affects them in the (CLIL) classroom. By investigating different factors contributing to language anxiety, this thesis seeks to shed light on the intricate relationship between the learner and the teacher, while taking into consideration previous relevant research.

CLIL offers a unique method of language learning, as it proposes an approach that combines language acquisition with content learning. This method, as rewarding as it can be,

may also put additional pressure on the learner. Therefore, language anxiety in CLIL can be caused by fear or apprehension related to language, content, or both. The cognitive processes simultaneously needed for both content and second language learning can be very demanding and challenging. Comprehending subject-specific terminology can lead to self-doubt and avoidance, further leading to negative evaluation. Furthermore, just like in any other classroom environment, fear of making mistakes and being judged by teachers and peers can trigger language anxiety in CLIL classes as well.

Therefore, this discussion is of great importance as CLIL students need to be provided with a safe and supportive environment for learning. Classroom social dynamics can certainly act as an additional element that could potentially lead to anxiety. To exemplify, CLIL classes might illustrate a gap between students concerning language proficiency as well as differences in content knowledge.

This paper is divided into four main parts, including the analysis of language anxiety, language anxiety with a focus on the CLIL classroom, the present study, and the findings of the research, as well as a discussion of its implications. The first part deals with language anxiety. More specifically, in this part, I define types of anxiety relevant to the topic and analyze pertinent previous research to provide a deeper insight into the understanding of language anxiety. Additionally, I conduct a review of relevant theories and concepts describing the causes and effects of language anxiety, focusing mostly on the experience of young students.

The second part begins by laying out the background of CLIL. It aims to present the specific theoretical approach of CLIL, and looks at how language and content learning is integrated in a CLIL classroom in practice. This chapter also aims to specify language anxiety and narrow the scope of the discussion within the CLIL framework.

The third part describes the methodology of the present study, presents the perspectives of Croatian students on language anxiety, and analyzes the results of the questionnaire. As my current study focuses on the CLIL framework, I aim to detail the research method and approach, including the questionnaire as an instrument for data collection.

The fourth part presents the findings, discussed with respect to existing literature and research questions. This section allows for a broad discussion of the findings within the scope of the topic regarding the theoretical approaches mentioned in the literature review. Additionally, it presents the conclusion of the study, and highlights the relevant similarities and differences in regard to the existing studies cited.

2. Language anxiety

Anxiety is a term susceptible to various interpretations and can be defined differently on an individual level. However, these definitions and classifications can be used to research its causes and symptoms, as well as the similarities and differences between them. Prior to recognizing types of anxiety, anxiety as a general term needs to be defined.

According to Roy-Byrne (2022), anxiety was defined as a distressing experience that warranted professional mental health treatment. Anxiety is a challenging issue for many mental health practitioners, as individuals often seek immediate relief, which gets in the way of proper assessment and further work. Therefore, the author states that many anxious individuals often get prescribed medication to be able to manage their symptoms. Anxiety was previously defined by Spielberger (1983) as "a state of subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry, as well as by activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system."

When discussing symptoms of anxiety, it is crucial not to confuse justified fear and nervousness with a condition that is the same as anxiety (Woodrow, 2006). However, it is also important to note that personality traits, age, or gender can make a difference in what anxiety can be for someone (Lewinsohn et al., 1998). Spence (1998) noticed it was difficult to identify specific causes of anxiety in children and therefore used The Spence Children's Anxiety Scale (SCAS). This specialized scale might be useful for detecting language anxiety in young students if modified, unlike the FLCAS, which is not fully adapted for younger learners.

The main classification in educational research includes anxiety in the form of either a state or a trait. These two types form the foundation for understanding the differences between causes and environments that trigger episodes of anxious behavior. State anxiety can be defined as a condition that is generally temporary and can be experienced in isolated situations (Leal et al., 2017). Contraty to state anxiety, trait anxiety is explained as a personality trait; this type of anxiety can arise in many different situations or be a constant state of mind, to a degree (Woodrow, 2006).

To exemplify, trait anxiety is a tendency to feel a high degree of stress during everyday situations and can ultimately affect the perception of mundane tasks. A person with trait anxiety can feel emotions more strongly or see danger where others do not. This includes overthinking in situations others will not even remember as important. Trait anxiety can often be perceived as neuroticism and can depend on both the nature and nurture aspects of an individual. State anxiety, on the other hand, can refer to intense stress or fear in certain situations. For example,

one might feel highly anxious when attending a work meeting but can feel calmer if they prepared well or once the meeting starts.

The third type of anxiety, situation-specific anxiety, is of the greatest relevance to this paper. According to Alzamil (2022), this type of anxiety is triggered by fear of judgment in the present moment every time the person finds themselves in a specific situation. While it is considered normal to feel nervous before and during a job interview, an exam, or public speaking, individuals with situational anxiety will feel high levels of nervousness, which can prevent them from performing tasks they would not have issues with were it not for the anxiety they fail to control. Although anxiety can be facilitative and help some students to be more prepared and organized for the language classroom, it can also have a debilitating role, causing the students to avoid attending classes, doing homework, or using the foreign language in general (Zheng, 2008). Williams (1991) also found that nervousness helped some students "do better," while others claimed nervousness "prevented them from doing well". This is a clear example of how situation-specific anxiety can have both a facilitating and debilitating role for students experiencing it.

Therefore, it is not odd that language anxiety is categorized as situation-specific anxiety. Woodrow (2006) classifies language anxiety as debilitative anxiety rather than facilitative anxiety (also referred to as debilitating and facilitating anxiety). While facilitative anxiety sounds much more positive and can improve language performance, debilitative anxiety can hinder performance and cause one's skills to appear reduced (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012). However, facilitative anxiety can oftentimes serve as a mitigating circumstance. It can push an individual to prepare better for an exam or organize notes in a helpful way—all due to fear of potential failure or judgment. This is an important dichotomy to consider when discussing anxiety in students, as the ways of coping with these two types of anxiety might be considerably different. While these types of anxiety will not be discussed in greater detail here, they will be revisited at the very end of the paper to confirm which type seems prevalent in this study.

Language anxiety has been connected to both motivation and language skills, as many seem to experience a "mental block" when learning a new language. However, this can depend on the attitude of both the learner and the teacher, the teaching approach, error correction techniques, motivation to study a language, and confidence (Sato, 2003). But what happens when a confident, motivated learner experiences a block despite possessing confidence as a tool for successful performance? Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that it is precisely language anxiety

that stimulates the nervous system, leading to unwanted symptoms and behaviors that prevent the learner from overcoming learning obstacles. Language anxiety can directly affect the learner's process by causing poor focus, avoidance, and a momentary loss of short-term memory. These specific symptoms directly prevent learners from performing well during exams, as exams test memory and focus in addition to language.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) define it as an emotional experience of worry and having a negative reaction to FL (foreign language) learning. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has also been described as an intricate system that arises when using a foreign language causes negative feelings, behaviors, and beliefs that are triggered by certain situations in the language classroom (Horwitz & Young, 1991). In short, anxiety can trigger physiological, behavioral, and cognitive reactions (Woodrow, 2006). Physiological symptoms are visible responses to a trigger and can happen even if no cognitive reactions occur, such as worry or fear, while behavioral reactions can be observed and are the most obvious signs of nervousness. Many have probably witnessed a presenter stuttering, walking, avoiding eye contact, or fidgeting. We can often conclude the person is nervous when they exhibit signs like these, especially if they behave much more calmly in other social situations.

Young (1991) identified potential sources of language anxiety: "personal and interpersonal anxieties, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing." According to Young, competitiveness and low confidence are some of the most important sources of anxiety, as many learners report fear of poor performance and their peers' opinions. It follows that students with low self-esteem have the potential to develop language anxiety in a classroom setting. However, social anxiety and audience anxiety can have a significant impact on language anxiety because many language activities involve a group of people who occasionally form an audience for one's presentations or oral exams.

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), this type of anxiety most often manifests as a fear of oral performance or difficulty speaking in class. This is best illustrated by the fact that students with language anxiety frequently do well when they have prepared in advance, but fail when they have to improvise. This seems very plausible, as anxiety can often trigger a fight-or-flight response, which can be translated to emotional meltdowns or freezing when being forced to abandon the prepared material. Students would often report they were unable to recall the correct answer even though they knew it before the test, or they would be caught making

mistakes in an area they were very skilled at due to stress or poor focus. If a student realizes this is happening repeatedly, they might overstudy in order to try to prevent such mistakes (Horwitz et al., 1986). Overstudying can be related to facilitative anxiety, implying that facilitative anxiety might cause even more frustration and overstimulation, which could potentially lead to worse results and harm students in the process, both physically and mentally.

When faced with the fear of making mistakes, students could further delay their learning progress. That is, if a student cannot speak a foreign language without ever making a mistake, they will not want to use it. If the student does not use a foreign language, they will not be able to improve their language skills. If the student does not make progress in the language, they will continue to make mistakes that can turn into errors when forced to use the foreign language. This anxiety-ridden journey quickly turns into a vicious circle that prevents the student from correcting their mistakes, but it also blocks out all other potential benefits they can reap from using multiple languages, whether in a social or academic environment.

To corroborate this discussion further and to isolate some linguistic-type outcomes of language anxiety, the Achievement Anxiety Test research should be mentioned. This study offers insight into how anxiety influences the use of grammar (Alpert & Haber, 1960). The learners of English that were compared in this study were native speakers of Portuguese and Arabic who were tested for facilitative anxiety. The results showed both groups avoided some grammatical structures, especially those that do not exist in the learners' first language.

However, it was found that students with a higher level of facilitative anxiety used those structures more often than those with a lower level (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012). This idea raises the question of whether teachers should use facilitative anxiety to alleviate the language learning process for their students. However, Horwitz (2017) claims language learning is already very difficult and demanding, particularly because it can be a big step in one's career or education. This, according to Horwitz, is reason enough to prevent using facilitative anxiety in class, as it can lead to avoidance of classes, poor language use, and fear (Horwitz, 2017). It is very plausible that students would use familiar structures, primarily when faced with debilitative language anxiety. Familiar environments seem to be less anxiety-inducing than new situations. Therefore, the more teachers can prevent anxiety in class, the higher the chance their students will be open to using more difficult and challenging structures. This seems like an ideal basis for language learning in class, as non-anxious students have been shown to challenge themselves more in this area.

The classroom context is often performance-based in terms of language classes. For example, students often read aloud, speak, present different topics in front of the teacher and class, and frequently answer questions, as well as take oral tests that can combine those skills. Within this context, it seems important to elaborate on three types of performance anxiety narrowly related to language anxiety: a) communication apprehension, b) test anxiety, and c) fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986).

The first type, communication apprehension, refers to the anxiety felt when communicating in a social context. This type can be limited to a particular form of communication, such as communication about a certain topic with a specific person or even communication in a specific language. This illustrates the point that performance anxiety is very similar in its manifestation to language anxiety, as using a language is largely a performative action. Specifically, the speaking, writing, and even reading skills assessed in class rely heavily on performance. It follows that people who struggle with communication have greater chances of experiencing anxiety related to a foreign language. Communication apprehension refers to anxiety related to communication with another person that can be real or "anticipated" (McCroskey, 1977). While state communication apprehension refers to a situation involving oral communication and is quite common, trait communication apprehension is more specific and refers to any such situation involving oral communication, and is considered extreme.

The second type of performance anxiety is test anxiety, which is relevant for this discussion since testing is common practice in language classes. This specific type of anxiety is often caused by a fear of failure, which encompasses different meanings. For some, it may be the fear of receiving a poor grade; for others, it may be the realization that they lack talent and will be mocked (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Overstudying, as previously discussed, has a big impact on triggering even greater anxiety and is often caused by the relationship between language anxiety and test anxiety. The third type of performance anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, can be an additional catalyst for test anxiety, as well as vice versa (Horwitz et al., 1986). Fear of negative evaluation mostly refers to the fear of making mistakes. Although many learners experience this phenomenon no matter the area of learning, some learners experience very high levels of fear and stress when unsure if they have enough knowledge or if they will have the correct answer prepared for the teacher (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

Fear of negative evaluation is not limited to bad grades or error correction, but extends to the social aspect; learners can experience extreme fear and nervousness because they do not wish to be negatively assessed by their peers, which can refer to teasing or go as far as bullying (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002). These two factors, if they are mixed, make it very difficult for students to feel accepted. They might feel a lot of pressure to do well, but also want to fit in with their peers, which is why they might avoid answering questions or volunteering in class. This potentially leads to students avoiding language classes altogether and developing resentment toward a language or the act of learning.

It is important to note that these types of performance anxiety are not the same as language anxiety, nor does language anxiety consist of these types, which are also explored further in Horwitz (2017). However, performance anxiety can influence language anxiety, and the two cannot always be delineated. Although types of anxiety can be very specific, they often manifest similarly and can overlap. Therefore, the intention is not to make a distinction between language and performance anxiety, but rather to illustrate how they can influence each other and manifest in students of a foreign language.

As language learning is in itself a very stressful process for some learners, which can lead to unwanted student behavior, we must be able to speak of a specific type of anxiety manifesting during that process (Horwitz, 2017). Furthermore, if some learners cannot feel authentic when connecting socially, emotionally, or intellectually to others while speaking a foreign language, it seems language anxiety runs much deeper than performance anxiety and can only be compared to performance anxiety due to the fact they can often, at least seemingly, affect a person simultaneously.

Although most studies focus on speaking ability, it is important to note that language anxiety is not limited to oral performance. This is likely due to the fact that most types of anxiety relate to performance and oral interaction, as stated above. Zhang and Zhong (2012) and Jalongo and Hirsh (2010) discovered that writing and reading can be equally anxiety-inducing. Writing allows students to prepare and organize their thoughts, but it can also cause anxiety and stress in some students, whether they are high-ability perfectionists or low-ability learners who are unsure of their writing abilities. Similarly, reading can put a learner in an uncomfortable situation if the learner is not familiar with most of the vocabulary or the topic of the text in general (Dewaele, 2017). The findings about similarities in anxiety in high and low-ability students have also been corroborated by Tóth (2017), who noticed high anxiety levels are not

strictly specific to students with a certain level of proficiency, as high-ability students often set high expectations for themselves.

2.1.Research on language anxiety

The relationship between speaking performance and language anxiety, as well as major stressors in learning English as a second language, were analyzed by Woodrow (2006). The participants of the study were Asian students of English in Australia who were in their final year of studying English before attending university. The results showed a strong negative correlation between oral performance and second language speaking anxiety, i.e., as one variable increased, the other decreased. The students also recognized that communication with native speakers of English was one of the main stressors causing anxiety, as well as communication with the teacher and performing oral activities in front of the class (Woodrow, 2006).

The association between anxiety and foreign language use has been further investigated by He (2018), who conducted a similar study with participants from China learning English as a foreign language. The results showed many participants experienced language anxiety. To exemplify, 47% of participants stated they did not feel confident when speaking in class, and 66% noted they experienced physical symptoms of anxiety when being called out or before being called out by the teacher. Half of the students admitted they felt nervous if they did not prepare for the teacher's questions and explained they did not feel confident due to the fear of being negatively evaluated by their peers or the fear of not being as good as them, which could be related to the fear of failure and the fear of negative evaluation. Additionally, almost half of them feared they were worse than their peers.

These results suggest that specific language anxiety differs from general anxiety, as it refers to specific actions and situations that always include a foreign language. However, the correlation between language anxiety and performance is evident, since many students reported that they feared making mistakes because they felt they were judged by their peers or the teacher during class activities. Some participants agreed with the statement that they worried the teacher would correct every mistake they made, which would lead to embarrassment and judgment. Furthermore, anxious students confirmed they believed they needed to understand every word in English to be able to comprehend the main point, and many stated they felt fear when they did not understand the teacher (He, 2018). Although a comparison was not made between students of different knowledge levels, it seems entirely possible that low-level students, who understood less, might feel more nervous than high-level students.

However, the difference in anxiety among high-level and low-level students was analyzed by Hewitt and Stephenson (2012), who replicated Elaine Philips's 1992 study. The results showed that both debilitative and facilitative anxiety had an effect on students, although high-ability students stated they experienced more facilitative anxiety than low-ability students. The results were not much different than those obtained in the previously mentioned studies. The students who showed higher levels of language anxiety performed worse on the oral exam than those who displayed significantly lower levels of anxiety. Since this study divided the participants into low-ability and high-ability students, it is important to note that low-ability students with high anxiety levels reported feeling fear and nervousness during testing, but also mentioned they could not fight off the anxiety. On the other hand, high-ability students with high levels of anxiety reported nervousness, but some mentioned that anxiety created an overall beneficial experience, i.e., a facilitative effect. Therefore, the study was able to show a significant correlation between language anxiety and oral performance, once again connecting performance and language anxiety (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012).

A study conducted by Santos et al. (2015) confirms many students experience language anxiety—the fear of speaking English as a third language. Some students felt a fear of failure and were afraid to make mistakes in class. Similarly, these results match the findings of Aichhorn and Puck (2017), who noticed that foreign language anxiety affected almost all participants of their study. The group consisted of elder and lower-level learners who stated they felt high levels of stress, frustration, helplessness, and exhaustion. The group consisted of younger, highly educated learners who assessed their fluency as considerably higher than the first group. They reported lower levels of anxiety, however, "despite their advanced English competence, they associated English with feeling handicapped, not feeling confident, being tongue-tied and restricted, and feeling inhibited" (Aichhorn & Puck, 2017). The authors have also discovered language anxiety is tightly related to the fear of negative evaluation due to poor performance, as even more proficient and higher-educated participants exhibited fear of performing well and felt inadequate in their language skills. The information they have discovered, not covered in the previously mentioned studies, shows even individuals who have used English for a long time still experience discomfort and anxiety when using it.

Machida (2016) took a different approach and researched Japanese elementary school teachers as learners of English. Due to a lack of preparation and confidence, many English teachers felt uncomfortable using English in the classroom. Eighty percent of teachers stated

they did not feel comfortable communicating in English unless greeting someone, while 97% stated they did not feel proficient enough to hold a conversation. The study indicated the teachers' anxiety was alleviated by formal training, as they realized they did not have to be perfectly fluent or have native-like proficiency to communicate in English. Similarly, Kondo (2004) discovered coping strategies that help with language anxiety as well: preparation, relaxation, peer seeking, positive thinking, and resignation—all attempts to alleviate anxiety.

Additionally, according to Pappamihiel (2002), female students often felt higher levels of language anxiety than male students. Female students were found to be more anxious in a study by Tristeza & Tristeza (2021) as well, as female students were categorized as fairly anxious, while male students were categorized as slightly anxious. This implies that both age and gender can be potential contributing factors to language anxiety.

This section has attempted to provide an introduction to language anxiety and a summary of the literature concerning the relationship between language anxiety and the oral use of a second or foreign language. This type of anxiety triggered by specific situations is not just an abundant field of study, but also important for further research that can benefit students whose performance is hindered due to anxiety.. In most cases, it appears that the majority of students who experience anxiety experience debilitative anxiety rather than facilitative anxiety.

As some authors claim, the process of language learning is not easy and can be stressful even for a student who has never experienced language anxiety (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2012). This can lead to poor performance, avoidance, and low self-esteem, which may consequently have an impact on other areas of the students' personalities. Given that language anxiety is situation-specific, it may emerge only among some students (Teimouri et al., 2019). As some people tend to be anxious most of the time due to trait anxiety, their modus operandi makes the process of learning a new language all the more difficult. Therefore, research on language anxiety can help learners recognize their anxiety types as well as help teachers alleviate the process of language learning by creating a less stressful environment.

2.2.Language anxiety in the Croatian context

Didović Baranac (2020) researched researched foreign language anxiety in Croatian learners of English as their first and German as their second target foreign language. The participants did not exhibit high levels of fear when reading in those languages; however, it is important to consider even the low level of fear in the language classroom, according to the

author. Significant differences between anxiety when reading in English and German were found—the participants experienced a higher level of fear when reading in German than in English, which could be a consequence of English being a lingua franca, which is often used both in class and outside (Didović Baranac, 2020). This study also supports the idea that motivation is a major influence on the levels of stress the students may feel in this setting. According to the author, the fear the participants exhibited could be alleviated by using coping strategies while maintaining motivation in the classroom. These results match those of Martinović and Sorić (2018), as both male and female students felt some pressure during language classes due to equating learning English with career opportunities. The results also showed female students had a stronger intrinsic motivation for learning English.

It is worth considering that there are some differences between monolingual and bilingual learners when it comes to language anxiety. Legac (2007) noticed monolingual learners experienced higher levels of anxiety when speaking a foreign language than bilingual learners. The results of both studies confirmed that monolingual learners experienced higher levels of FL anxiety. It appears bilingual learners benefit from already being exposed to more than one language, which could be one of the deciding factors for language anxiety. This corroborates the idea that children should be introduced to a second language early, as they could have more potential to develop linguistic confidence and are less likely to develop language anxiety (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

Additionally, English is not the only foreign language investigated within the scope of anxiety. According to Kauzlarić (2019), Croatian students of Japanese expressed feelings of anxiety when speaking Japanese for the same reasons stated so far: fear of making mistakes. The students showed greater knowledge of Japanese than they perceived it to be. After the students ranked the activities based on their level of enjoyment, it was clear that activities in pairs or groups, as well as only necessary error correction, could make a positive difference for students with language anxiety.

3. Overview of CLIL

3.1.Background to CLIL

While substantial research has been carried out on foreign language anxiety in the English language classroom, so far little attention has been given to foreign language anxiety in the content and language integrated (CLIL) classroom. Despite the expansion of CLIL in the

European and Croatian contexts, most studies to date have tended to focus on language anxiety in the foreign language classroom rather than the CLIL classroom.

CLIL, or Content and Language Integrated Learning, has been defined as "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Coyle et al., 2010). That is, the focus is not solely on language or content. Instead, the two are integrated, even if one of the elements is emphasized in certain situations. As Coyle (2007) put it, "a non-language subject is not taught in a foreign language but with and through a foreign language."

However, the CLIL classroom setting is very specific and carries its challenges. Although it was not always called CLIL, a type of bilingual education similar to it existed long before the term was defined. Hanesová (2015) describes the process of learning content in a foreign language as a historic practice, reserved mostly for wealthy families who could send their children abroad or hire foreign tutors. However, the term CLIL came into existence when David Marsh captured the idea of teaching content through foreign languages (Marsh, 2001).

The authors do state that CLIL is content-driven, which has certain benefits: the students have an opportunity to extend their language learning experience as well as experience methods different from those in the EFL classroom. As believed by Coyle et al. (2010), it is no wonder CLIL reached popularity, as the opportunities and demands always look for the best educational practice. Due to globalization, as well as socio-economical changes, the need for language learners is dictated by the present day.

There are two major ideas for implementing CLIL: "strong" or "hard" CLIL and "weak" or "soft" CLIL. While the "hard" model focuses primarily on content, the "soft" model puts more emphasis on language learning (Ball, 2009; Bentley, 2009). When it comes to CLIL in Croatia, it follows the "hard" model. Most CLIL teachers are non-native speakers of English and are not required to major in English, but rather in the area of content they teach. As a consequence, the native language, in this case Croatian, can be used freely for multiple purposes: explanation, definition, and direct translation. The primary goal set for learners is to focus on content instead of more demanding English structures or vocabulary.

The benefits of CLIL have been studied by Brewster (1999) and Navés (2009). According to the authors, CLIL offers a variety of positive outcomes, such as cognitive

development, holistic language learning, a direct real-life purpose for language learning, and higher confidence in learners. This statement is confirmed by Nikula et al. (2013), as it implies what she discovered - CLIL students show more courage and initiative in using the target language.

According to Brown (2015), Japanese students noticed they were able to draw comparisons between CLIL content and their other classes, which helped them acquire content knowledge. Some students decided to attend CLIL classes because they wished to be challenged, even if they were uninterested in the content; they reported they would not take the same class if it was in Japanese. Students reported their speaking and reading skills improved, and they noted that learning English helped them think from a different perspective. The motivation for some students was to challenge themselves, to do well in class, and to try something new. Both language and content were motivators for these students to take up CLIL classes. This affirms the ideas stated above, as the students truly noticed the benefits of CLIL classes on all fronts.

For instance, Debogović (2019) wished to investigate the differences between the students' anxiety in EFL and Croatian language classrooms. She was able to conclude the students were less stressed and frightened in the Croatian learning environment than in their FLA classroom, i.e., they felt more comfortable using their native language. A majority of students stated they felt anxious in the EFL classroom as they were not confident in their English skills. The fact that many students experienced fear in the EFL classroom indicates they would feel more anxious in the CLIL classroom as well. Tantihachai (2016) also found that students who were proficient in English still felt anxiety in the EFL classroom, implying that self-esteem plays a major role in self-assessment and the fear of making mistakes.

Multiple factors affect the learners' anxiety, as discovered by Al Hakim (2019), which could be applied to the CLIL classroom as well. Learners felt more nervous in an environment that used traditional learning methods and claimed to prefer interactive and group activities as they did not trigger the same level of stress. Another activity that was very anxiety-inducing for the learners was giving presentations in front of the class and the teacher. However, the teaching methods are not the only factor affecting anxiety, as Hakim (2019) writes. The learners' beliefs and social values showed to impact the learners' language anxiety. Therefore, this socio-cultural aspect should be taken into consideration in the CLIL classroom as well.

Additionally, there is a major status gap between the students and the teacher in the classroom setting—the teacher acts as an authority figure who assesses students based on their every interaction (Pica, 1987). Consequently, Hakim (2019) made a list of strategies for students on how to reduce language anxiety, which is appropriate for both the EFL and CLIL classrooms. He states that teachers need to be aware of language anxiety and the environment's role in contributing to anxiety in learners. Also, students should be provided with more opportunities to develop their speaking skills in a relaxed classroom setting that reduces the gap between the student and teacher. Teachers should, therefore, be cooperative and understanding, and they should offer support to anxious learners by encouraging them and allowing them to make mistakes.

3.2.Language in CLIL

According to Coyle (2008), CLIL classes should consist of 4 key elements categorized as the "4Cs Framework": content, communication, cognition, and culture. The goals of CLIL are manifold, but should include, among others, the development of subject-specific terminology, the improvement of language competencies, and the development of oral skills. Navés (2009) also concluded there are even more factors to consider when perfecting the CLIL method, stating the focus should be on meaningful input that is challenging and comes from various sources, as well as topic familiarity. Therefore, young learners have a chance to learn a language without focusing on it directly, which can alleviate stress and language anxiety.

The CLIL classroom encompasses natural language learning through content as well as direct language learning. Given that CLIL creates real communicative situations, language learning takes place in a more meaningful and efficient environment (Lasagabaster, 2008). Its aim is not to "equip learners with the language they need to transact everyday life tasks" (Llinares et al., 2012).

Rather, learners can learn the everyday language in such an environment as a by-product. The ability to express one's opinion, argument, or attitude in a foreign language is essential for content learning. Students would ideally acquire the target language in both aspects, to gain content knowledge and insight into the elements of discussion and argumentation, as well as expression. To further analyze language learning within the scope of CLIL, it is relevant to differentiate the three elements of the Language Triptych (Coyle et al., 2010). The Language Triptych is described as "a conceptual representation to connect both

content objectives and language objectives" (Martín del Pozo, 2016). This concept allows us to analyze the CLIL language from three different standpoints.

1. Language *of* learning
2. Language *for* learning
3. Language *through* learning

Language *of* learning refers to the language necessary for acquiring skills or concepts of a certain content (Martín del Pozo, 2016). To exemplify, this would refer to the vocabulary needed for a specific subject. For example, in ethics and philosophy classes, this would mean the student needs the language access concepts to be able to comprehend and express certain theories and ideas such as positivism, logical fallacy, utilitarianism, or categorical imperatives. Without these terms, it is impossible to describe and discuss the main topics of ethics or philosophy. The language *of* learning is, in simple terms, the language necessary for understanding content.

Language *for* learning refers to the language needed to function in the classroom, such as speech acts, vocabulary, and grammatical structures for an activity or task completion. This includes the language needed for discussion, argumentation, or instructions. It makes the learner "functional" in the CLIL classroom. This can refer to both academic terms and various speech acts such as greeting, instructing, ordering, etc. (Martín del Pozo, 2016).

In philosophy class, for instance, arguments have a specific definition and flow. A conclusion has a different meaning in that aspect than in everyday language. An excellent example of language for learning is conditionals, as if-clauses are often used in thought experiments, which are then regularly used in philosophical debates.

Finally, language *through* learning refers to the consequence of content learning. As explained by Coyle et al. (2010), this refers to the language acquired in the learning process. Following my example, this applies to vocabulary or grammatical structures the students would acquire as a consequence of learning content in the target language. They would be able to understand the deeper or double meaning of some terms, as well as naturally use some structures they have not used before in a content-specific class. Therefore, CLIL balances content and language, i.e., language can be taught in many ways using a plethora of teaching methods and learning instruments. Consequently, according to this model made by Coyle et al. (2010),

Martín del Pozo (2016) summarizes the Language Triptych as "providing the means to analyze language across different CLIL contents, differentiating between types of linguistic demands in CLIL, and conceptualizing language use as a language for knowledge construction."

As stated by Llinares et al. (2012), one of the crucial elements in CLIL organization is the concept of register. This concept defines the variety of language usage, depending on the social situation. It encompasses three additional concepts: field, tenor, and mode. While the field pertains to the type of activity in the classroom. The tenor is the person taking part in the activity, usually the teacher or some other authority figure in the classroom. Finally, mode refers to the "part the language is playing" (Llinares et al., 2012).

For instance, the chosen activity for one class is a debate. Paggiaro (2015) described the importance of context, scaffolding, and reflection on the performance by taking into consideration the elements of register. Furthermore, reflection would then encompass intonation, vocabulary, grammar, and accent, as well as para-linguistic and extra-linguistic signs. To clarify, take the example of a philosophy class in which the teacher writes a word on the board and explains the categorization of ethics theories using a Venn diagram. In this instance, the field would be philosophy, the tenor would be the teacher taking part in the activity, and the mode would be spoken language, referring to the categorization explained using the Venn diagram. In other words, in the CLIL classroom, language is used to "make sense of the experience" (Llinares et al., 2012).

In addition, it is used to create and define relationships between participants, as well as having a textual role—connecting utterances to other utterances and building a story or context for the topic in question. Having defined the most important elements of the CLIL environment, it is now necessary to differentiate between the CLIL classroom and the SLA classroom. It is also worth mentioning the distinction between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1984). The first is used in everyday conversations, while the latter is used in the classroom as students should be able to express in oral and written form, the constructs and processes that are relevant to the content of a subject. For instance, while BICS is used for the purpose of social interactions, CALP is used in an academic or "professional" sense.

According to Cummins (1984), the dichotomy between BICS and CALP relates to the learners' competencies. Both concepts are important and should be developed for a learner to

thrive in a bilingual environment. The main difference the author states is the fact that everyday, "casual," language is different from academic language. Additionally, academic language cannot be acquired "naturally" as everyday language can. Cummins (1999) also states that it is crucial to understand that BICS and CALP are conceptually different and separate, as cognitive skills are important for most social interactions. This means that, when it comes to development, both BICS and CALP are similarly acquired – through interactions.

The European CLIL bases its framework on second language acquisition. Language is continually present in the CLIL classroom, but not as the primary focus (Llinares et al., 2012). In this environment, CLIL sees second language acquisition as more than just a cognitive process. The social aspect of SLA is a crucial factor in content learning through CLIL. The concept of register is one of the differentiating factors between ESL and CLIL classrooms. The field in CLIL always pertains to content that is not strictly related to the language, which is why the language and content scope are both much larger than in SLA (Lasagabaster & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2010).

In summary, the language in SLA is both the means and the goal of the class, while in CLIL, language usage is a means to an end. That is, language is used as a tool to achieve the main goal, which is solving content problems using the target language. This appears to be the opposite of the SLA learning process; however, CLIL can be viewed as a very practical way of learning through "doing,", thus covering a large portion of language without focusing on it explicitly most of the time.

3.3.Language anxiety in CLIL classrooms

Although there is less research on students' language anxiety specific to CLIL, as previously stated, the studies on CLIL-specific language anxiety often compare the second language classroom anxiety to CLIL anxiety. As I discussed in the previous chapters, it has been shown that motivation plays a significant role in learners' anxiety.

According to Sylvén and Thompson (2015), motivation has a major impact on the learners' success. Their study was conducted in Sweden, a country considered to have high L2 English proficiency. The authors agree with Dörnyei (2009), claiming motivation is necessary for learning, especially when it comes to languages. In some cases, CLIL students have a much more positive and open attitude toward language learning than non-CLIL students

(Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009). Sylvén and Thompson (2015) found that CLIL students are indeed more motivated than non-CLIL students and have lower levels of anxiety; however, personality and background should not be excluded as potential causes for this.

These findings have been corroborated by Arnaiz Castro (2016) and De Smet et al. (2018) as well. De Smet (2018) also found male students to be less anxious than female students. Similarly, bilingual students reported less anxiety than monolingual students. The authors also noted many students feel motivated before starting CLIL, which implies they are excited to try a type of education that is relatively new for many of them.

But are CLIL students truly more motivated than non-CLIL students? Navarro Pablo and García Jiménez (2018) asked the same question and their study answered affirmatively. However, they found no significant differences between CLIL and non-CLIL students in regards to anxiety or self-esteem, and both groups felt some anxiety when having to speak English, while CLIL students outperformed the other group in their interest and motivation despite displaying a similar level of anxiety.

However, sometimes CLIL classes have a negative impact on the learners' anxiety. According to Papaja (2019), students were more nervous during their CLIL classes than in regular English classes. But students' anxiety decreased over time in regard to the CLIL classroom. It appears the students were nervous when starting CLIL, but did not keep the same levels. According to Papaja (2019), many students were afraid to make mistakes, especially if they had to speak about certain content topics, which are not limited to CLIL. It is possible the students were nervous because the CLIL context was new to them, but there is no hard evidence that CLIL itself triggered their anxiety.

The statement that language anxiety is present in CLIL students was researched previously as well, when Pihko (2007) showed anxiety is a problem for many CLIL students in Finland. Still, participants reported less anxiety in CLIL classes than in regular English classes. The CLIL vs. non-CLIL students' responses were somewhat similar regarding statements such as "I often feel nervous when I speak English in class" or when asked about fear of negative evaluation, such as "When I speak English in classes, I am afraid that teachers are looking for errors in my speech" (Pihko, 2007).

Roiha and Mäntylä (2022) observed 24 CLIL students and discovered a majority of them claimed CLIL had an impact on their positive attitudes toward their language skills, and most of them confirmed they had high confidence after 9 years of CLIL classes. It is important to note that the students also emphasized the teachers' methods: error correction and scaffolding, early introduction to CLIL, and the social environment.

In summary, CLIL students often display a similar or lower level of anxiety when compared to non-CLIL students. CLIL appears to be mostly motivational in its methods, which is likely connected to the fact that it is still very new for many students. The CLIL classroom does not seem to be a specifically anxious environment; however, some students are still impacted by language anxiety. In my study, I wish to focus on CLIL students and their language anxiety reports. In the following chapter, I will offer my findings and compare them to the studies I have discussed in the previous chapters, as I am interested in investigating the attitudes of CLIL students in Croatia and discussing the similarities and differences with the previous research.

4. The present study

4.1. Aims

The study aims to investigate students' perceptions of language anxiety in the CLIL classroom. More specifically, the aim is to examine the causes of language anxiety, the potential remedies for language anxiety, and the similarities and differences between language anxiety in CLIL and English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms.

4.2. Research questions

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

a. What causes FLA anxiety in CLIL students?

b. Do students feel more anxious in the CLIL classroom or the EFL classroom?

c. Do students with better grades experience the same degree of anxiety as students with lower grades?

d. What could reduce students' feelings of anxiety in the CLIL classroom?

4.3. Context and participants

The following research was conducted in the private secondary school Srednja škola Andrije Ljudevita Adamića in Rijeka. Srednja škola Andrije Ljudevita Adamića is the first

secondary school in Rijeka to offer the CLIL program, and until 2022, it was the only school offering CLIL in the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. The school was founded in 2005 and counts 116 students in 2023. On average, one class consists of 20 students. As for the type of programs offered, they include general (gymnasium), pharmaceutical technology, and physiotherapy. eight subjects are taught through CLIL in English in the general program.

The study was conducted among 48 students, aged 15 to 19. Out of 48 participants, 33% were in the first grade, 31% in the second, 31% in the third, and 5% in the fourth grade. The majority of the participants (60% were male, while 40% were female participants. Forty-five participants learned English as their first foreign language and three learned it as a second foreign language. The participants took the following CLIL subjects in English: Art, Computer Science, Psychology (introduced in the second grade), Ethics, and Geography.

4.4.Method

The study was conducted using a questionnaire, which was written in Croatian. The purpose of this was to ensure all the questions were clear and easy to comprehend for the students. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of the literature on language anxiety and partially adapted from Hewitt and Stephenson (2012). Before administration, the questionnaire was sent to one of the CLIL teachers at the school for feedback and was then piloted on a small sample of students. The questionnaire was administered to the students by the respective teachers during CLIL classes. The questions used words such as nervousness, stress, and fear, in order to avoid the students' subjective understanding of anxiety, as well as circularity.

The questionnaire consisted of five parts and 55 questions: a) background information about the participants, b) foreign language anxiety-specific questions, c) CLIL classes-specific questions, d) CLIL program motivation-related questions, and e) general open-ended questions. The majority (36) of questions consisted of Likert-scale statements with which the participants ranked their agreement (1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - neither agree nor disagree, 4 - agree, 5 - strongly agree). In addition, five open-ended questions and two multiple-choice questions were used to elicit the participants' perceptions about certain topics.

a) background information about the participants

In the first part, the students were asked to answer 17 general questions about their age, gender, language background (first and second language), and experience with CLIL. They

were also asked to rate on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) their listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills in English.

b) foreign language anxiety-specific questions

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 16 Likert-scale questions about language anxiety. Specifically, the students were asked to assess their levels of anxiety concerning CLIL classes and English as a foreign language classes, as well as their anxiety with respect to the teacher and teaching methods. They were asked about anxiety symptoms they might feel when speaking English or being called out in class, as well as about the causes of potential stress and nervousness during classes.

c) CLIL classes-specific questions

The third part consisted of 12 questions, 11 Likert-scale, and one multiple-choice question. The students were asked about anxiety experienced during CLIL classes and the causes of stress. They were also asked to compare their nervousness and stress in EFL and CLIL classes. The students' answers provided in this section were translated into English for this paper.

d) CLIL program motivation-related questions

Part four consisted of 5 short Likert-scale questions about motivation and their perception of acquired knowledge of English in EFL vs. CLIL classes. More specifically, the students were asked if they felt like they learned more about the English language in EFL or CLIL classes.

e) general open-ended questions

In part five, 5 open-ended questions were introduced. The purpose of these questions was to allow the students to freely express their opinions. They were invited to explain a) what caused language anxiety and what helped alleviated it, b) what the teachers could do to alleviate their anxiety, c) what the students did to relax, and d) what techniques they could use independently to alleviate language anxiety and navigate its symptoms. They were also invited to write additional comments.

4.5.Results

When the participants were asked about their final grades in EFL, the results showed the participating students had a very high percentage of excellent and very good grades in the subject English as a foreign language, as no student noted having a final grade lower than 3. The majority of the students achieved an excellent or very good grade, with the following statistics of grades (section a):

In first grade, 57% earned a 5, 31% a 4, 8% a 3, while 4% reported this as non-applicable. In second grade, 31% received a 5, 21% a 4, 4% a 3, while 44% reported this as non-applicable. In third grade, 21% of participants had a 5, 6% a 4, while this could not be applied to the rest of the students. Similarly, in fourth grade, thirteen participants expected a 5, while the rest reported this as not applicable. Given that the questionnaire was administered in April 2023, the students had not yet obtained their final grade point average for the year.

When asked to self-assess language skills, the students mostly perceived their language skills as either excellent or very good. Fifty percent of students rated their skills in listening, reading, writing, and speaking as very good and excellent. The students self-assessed their listening skills the highest, as 56% rated it as excellent, and 31% as very good. Additionally, 54% considered their reading skills as excellent, and 30% as very good. Forty-eight percent of the students graded their speaking as excellent, and 38% as very good. In regards to writing skills, 48% of participants consider their skills to be very good, and 33% as excellent. Out of all the participants, no one assessed their four skills as very low, i.e., for all four skills, no participants chose the lowest value (1-bad), while the remaining students chose the middle value (3-average).

In the following sections (sections b and c), the students were asked to rate their agreement or disagreement on a Likert scale with statements about language anxiety. When asked about the levels of anxiety triggered during EFL and CLIL classes, the results showed that 79% strongly disagreed and disagreed, but 8% agreed and strongly agreed that CLIL classes were more stressful than EFL classes. Furthermore, while 79% strongly disagreed and disagreed, 6% of participants stated they felt nervous in EFL classes because they focused on language rather than content. Ten percent agreed and strongly agreed that they felt nervous during CLIL due to not understanding the language, while the majority (84%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this claim. While 54% felt confident, 21% agreed or strongly agreed

with the statement that they did not feel confident when speaking English during CLIL classes. The remaining students neither agreed nor disagreed.

Additionally, while 71% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement and 19% were indifferent, 10% agreed and strongly agreed that they felt nervous because they did not understand CLIL content. The vast majority (82%) did not consider the use of complex language stressful, while 4% experienced nervousness during CLIL classes because the teacher used complex language. In addition, 48% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more comfortable when the teacher used a combination of Croatian and English, and 12% of the students felt uncomfortable when the teacher used only English during class. Eighty-eight percent stated the teachers used a combination of both languages during CLIL classes.

In terms of error correction in CLIL, the majority (73%) did not agree that it makes them uncomfortable, while 18% identified it as one of the stressors. Twenty percent of the students were more worried about making content mistakes than language mistakes, while 57% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement. Forty-two percent did not feel their fear of mistakes depended on the subject rather than language, while 31% reported it did. However, 17% neither agreed nor disagreed. Thirty-three percent of the students stated the teachers corrected their mistakes during CLIL, which did not bother 73% of the students but made 19% of the participants uncomfortable. The rest of the students neither agreed nor disagreed.

In regards to test anxiety, 80% of the students did not worry about making mistakes on tests, while 69% did not feel stressed about making content mistakes during exams. Therefore, 10% were worried about making language mistakes in exams, while 8% agreed to be stressed about making content mistakes in exams. The rest of the participants chose the middle option of neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

When discussing physical manifestations of anxiety, the results show most of the students did not experience them. A small number of students acknowledged they would feel certain symptoms. More specifically, 79% would not start shaking when expecting the teacher to call on them, while 16% would experience this. Similarly, while 60% did not experience their heart beating faster when the teacher would call on them in class, 24% did. Finally, 66% reported not being embarrassed to volunteer answers in class, even if they were correct, but 25% did. Finally, the majority (64%) did not report feeling stressed during presentations in English, while 21% did. Moreover, while 71% were not stressed during presentations in Croatian, 14% reported feeling stressed during those activities. The remaining students neither

agreed nor disagreed. In regards to activities in the CLIL classroom, 82% strongly disagreed and disagreed that listening activities cause them nervousness, 85% strongly disagreed and disagreed that reading activities cause them nervousness due to not understanding most of the words, 66% also did not feel nervous during speaking activities, and 85% did not feel nervous during writing activities. However, 6% agreed and strongly agreed that listening activities caused them to be nervous, while 6% reported the same for reading activities, 14% for speaking activities, and 6% for writing activities.

In the following section (d) the participants were asked to assess their agreement in regard to being motivated by the CLIL program. Sixty-one percent of the students were happy to be enrolled in this program, while 12% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement. Fifty-two percent stated they enjoyed using English in CLIL classes, while 21% stated they did not enjoy it. Fifty-six percent enjoyed using English in EFL classes, while the minority of 23% did not. When asked whether they learned more about the English language in CLIL classes than in EFL classes, 38% neither agreed nor disagreed, 29% agreed or strongly agreed, while 33% strongly disagreed and disagreed. When asked the question the other way around, i.e., whether they learn more about the English language in EFL than in CLIL classes, 38% agreed or strongly agreed, while 35% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 27% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

The final part of the questionnaire (section e) consisted of open-ended questions that elicited the students' opinions on anxiety-inducing activities and the actions they would take to alleviate anxiety.

When asked what made them the most nervous during CLIL classes in English, the students offered rather similar responses. Sixteen students stated that nothing induced anxiety. As for the skills, speaking seems to be the most stressful, which was reported by ten students, while for two students it was related to listening comprehension challenges if the teacher mispronounced certain words. Exams and fear of making mistakes and not being able to understand the material were also mentioned. Three students reported exams caused them stress, three noted making mistakes was stressful, while two students answered with *not understanding the content/subject.*

When asked which activities helped them relax in CLIL classes in English, the majority did not mention any activities and actions. Fifteen students responded with *nothing*. The

suggestions they offered included *teachers being less strict, teachers speaking English well, simple tasks, translation, entertainment, and using both Croatian and English.*

When asked about the ways the teacher could help lower their anxiety during CLIL classes, twenty-three students noted there was no need for that Among the suggestions offered, several students mentioned the use of their mother tongue and teacher qualities: *using Croatian, being approachable, refraining from correcting mistakes, and not calling on students in class.*

When asked how they could calm themselves when feeling nervous during CLIL classes in English, the students mostly did not need to calm themselves. The techniques they suggested included *breathing deeply, taking a break, listening to music, using the phone, or drawing*.

The (optional) final question provided opportunities for additional comments. The students that did respond stated *they loved English, the questions from the questionnaire were odd, and they would like to write more essays and stories in CLIL classes.*

4.6.Discussion

In summary, the results indicate that most of the participating students do not experience language anxiety. Their assessment and self-assessment are very positive, as most of the students achieved high grades in English.

Therefore, it appears FLA does not manifest often in Croatian CLIL students who participated in this study. They have shown low levels of language anxiety in a sample of forty-eight students. The majority did not experience language anxiety, which is clear from open-ended questions alone. To exemplify, when asked about causes of nervousness during CLIL classes, the majority of the students reported nothing caused their nervousness, and added they did not need any specific strategies to relax, while only a few students stated they used some techniques and behaviors to alleviate any nervousness. The students themselves could alleviate their nervousness by talking about familiar topics that are in their comfort zone, breathing, taking a break from a class, or distracting themselves by drawing, listening to music, and translating unknown words.

The students that did report some language anxiety in CLIL classes reported they felt nervous due to not understanding the language, and due to the use of language that is too complex. This is understandable, as different school subjects use specialized vocabulary and forms, which is often not used even by people who are fluent in English but have not had experience with certain topics. It is not surprising only a small percentage reported this, as a vast majority achieved very good grades in EFL. However, it is understandable some students

experienced some anxiety caused by not understanding the content. Surprisingly, the same percentage (10%) of the students reported they felt some anxiety in CLIL classes caused by the language and content, however, it is intriguing to compare the two causes in regards to the specialized language used in school subjects as mentioned. It would seem content would cause those students some anxiety even if it was taught in Croatian, therefore, English does not make a noticeable difference.

In regards to test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, it can be concluded that the majority of the students do not experience fear of exams, and only a small number do, but not significantly. A majority of the students reported teachers do not correct their language mistakes during class, and teachers themselves state they do not feel it is their place to correct English (Vodopija-Krstanović & Badurina, 2020), which could impact the students' attitude towards language mistakes during exams as well. If CLIL incorporates content and language outcomes, then CLIL exams should focus on both areas. However, as stated previously, in strong CLIL, such as the one introduced in Croatia, this is not the case as the CLIL curriculum is identical to the Croatian curriculum and driven by the subject, hence language is not formally addressed.

As stated before, the majority of the students did not consider the use of complex language stressful, which is not surprising, as almost all of them self-assessed their knowledge of English as very high. Additionally, most of the teachers use both English and Croatian. This code-switching seems to alleviate the students' anxiety as it could help their understanding and accommodate different language proficiency levels. This would imply that scaffolding techniques and multimodal support can help the students grasp the technical language relevant to the subject. The students themselves stated translation to Croatian helps lower their anxiety, and claimed they would feel more relaxed if the teacher used more Croatian, as opposed to only English. As discussed, Hakim (2019) learned that traditional teaching methods cause learners to feel more anxious. The "hard" model of CLIL used in Croatia allows the students to focus on content rather than language. Therefore, it is understandable that the majority of the students do not feel worried about making language mistakes in tests, likely due to teachers not focusing on language mistakes unless they affect the meaning of answers. Some CLIL teachers do correct language mistakes in written exams, but choose not to have it impact their grades (Vodopija-Krstanović & Badurina, 2020).

Although classroom dynamics should allow the students to correct their teachers, this is not acceptable in all contexts (Hofstede, 2001). If this practice was normalized, perhaps error

correction would not seem as stressful or as scary to students. Based on the present study, the participants revealed that less error correction would alleviate their anxiety in CLIL classes. When asked how teachers could help them lower anxiety, the students who felt their anxiety needed to be alleviated agreed the teachers should be less strict, have high English skills, use Croatian more, but correct language errors less. Some students also reported the teachers' odd pronunciation adds to their anxiety. This does not mean teachers need to be native speakers of English. For further research, it would be interesting to examine the teachers' perspective concerning stress and confidence, as Machida (2016) has done. In this specific case, teachers could model the behavior of accepting correction or criticism, which would in theory remove the negative connotations surrounding criticism as discussed by Sato (2003).

Accommodating different language proficiency levels is very possible with CLIL. It is not entirely clear if students with lower grades feel different levels of anxiety, as the students rated themselves highly in skills, which is confirmed by their high grades as well. It is, however, possible to state that students with high grades experience very little to no language anxiety. It is important to note certain schools and programs may allow the teachers to focus on students more individually, as classes in this school consist of about twenty students. The school also offers additional lessons held by the teachers, which allows for a further individualistic approach and builds a stronger connection between the students and their teachers.

It could be hypothesized that the availability of additional individual lessons could affect the students' anxiety levels, as the students would feel less stressed and anxious if feeling more comfortable with their teachers. Additionally, these factors could also affect the students' grades. If learners feel more comfortable and have access to private lessons, while teachers can dedicate more of their time to each student, it is expected those students would feel supported and motivated, and consequently earn higher grades and broaden their knowledge. The relationship between small classes and academic achievement was studied by Finn et al. (2005), whose study showed small classes were associated with a higher likelihood of graduating high school. Earlier research by Barker (1986) showed smaller classes tend to raise productivity and interest, as well as allow for more attention to the individual needs of the students, while also raising teacher morale.

Furthermore, a majority of the students feel motivated and pleased by the CLIL program. CLIL offers a unique opportunity to polish language skills through a different perspective. Traditional methods for FL learning tend to separate language learning from

cognitive development. Therefore, a language should be learned with a purpose and through meaningful communication and socialization, as language and content integration offers a motivational and interesting path to learning. CLIL is directed towards „supportive contexts", where the goal is to be comfortable and natural (Marsh, 2013). Consequently, it is apparent that this study exemplifies that the CLIL program can achieve motivation and comfort as most of the students were happy to be enrolled in this program, and a majority of them enjoy using English in CLIL classes as well.

As discussed by Sylvén and Thompson (2015) and Dörnyei (2009), motivated students perform better, and have lower levels of anxiety. The participants in this study are high-ability, mostly non-anxious students, who seem very pleased and motivated by the CLIL program, as more than half feel happy to be enrolled in CLIL and enjoy using English in CLIL classes. It should be noted here that CLIL can be beneficial not only to high-ability students, but also to students of different ability levels (Coyle, 2008).

Moreover, the students might achieve better results due to this kind of approach, as well as build higher confidence. This element can be seen as circular, as higher confidence can lead to better results, but achieving good results builds confidence further. This implies that high-ability students indeed feel less anxious in class and further corroborates Hewitt and Stephenson's study results (2012). However, the limitations of the present study are clear from the lack of low-ability students needed for comparison.

As illustrated in the studies cited, students achieve better results and gain confidence if motivation is high and anxiety low. Of course, fluency might be the end goal in any language classroom, but even more importantly, young learners need to feel comfortable and relaxed to express their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and attitudes. This could not only improve their language skills, but their social and emotional skills, communication skills, and self-regulation. In a safe and comfortable setting, those students could polish their speaking and presentation skills without fear and avoidance, which could be highly beneficial long-term.

The majority of the students did not feel high levels of anxiety in the EFL classroom either. However, some did state their stress levels would depend on the teacher and the subject. Once again, English does not make a noticeable difference. Interestingly, 80% of the students stated that CLIL classes are not more stressful than FL classes. This could be due to the fact that they have both high grades in English, and self-assess their knowledge as very good and excellent. Before the study, it was expected the students would report higher levels of anxiety

in CLIL classes due to the technical terms necessary for learning the content and having to employ two different cognitive processes at the same time. Despite the expected results, the English language and the use of a foreign language in general do not make a significant difference.

According to Papaja (2019), students show higher levels of nervousness during CLIL classes than in EFL classes, but Pihko (2007) was able to conclude that Finnish students were less anxious during CLIL than EFL classes. The present study challenges this idea and does not illustrate a major difference between CLIL and EFL anxiety. Most of the students do not feel anxious during CLIL or EFL classes, although a very small percentage feel more stressed during CLIL classes, mostly when they do not understand the language. In contrast, Papaja's study from 2019 revealed the students felt nervous at the beginning, but much less after some time had passed. It seems reasonable to assume that the students would feel less anxious if properly introduced to the CLIL program and if they had access to information about it at all times.

Even though most of the students reported no physical manifestations of anxiety, the percentage did seem significant, considering the number of participants. It appears some students experience a fast heartbeat (24%), shaking (16%), or feeling stressed during presentations in front of the class (21% in English, 14% in Croatian), which can be related to speaking performance anxiety, as investigated by Woodrow (2006). In addition, 25% felt embarrassed to volunteer answers, even if correct. This is hardly surprising as any form of public presentation can be very anxiety-inducing (Hakim, 2019), as it is tightly related to communication apprehension.

Being placed in the center of attention or physically singled out and separated from the group does not necessarily imply anxiety. The fear of public speaking could be a consequence of our herding instincts as well (Li & Zeng, 2017), and can be perceived as a threat. This suggests that some nervousness is normal in such situations, which could be more uncomfortable for students who are more introverted or shy. As expected, the study found that speaking activities appear to cause the most distress among the students, which corroborates the findings by Horwitz et al. (1986), and He (2018).

The discussed factors contributing to high or low anxiety may have an effect on students' language anxiety in the present study. It would appear that confidence, motivation, and an individualistic approach are very present in the CLIL classroom.

5. Concluding remarks

This study aimed to examine Croatian CLIL students' levels of language anxiety during CLIL classes and gain a deeper insight into the causes and triggering factors affecting language anxiety, as well as learn how the students can alleviate or even eliminate language anxiety on their own or with the help of their teachers. This study has found that, generally speaking, language anxiety levels are very low among Croatian CLIL students, and that most of them do not feel the need for relaxing techniques. There is no noticeable difference between language anxiety in CLIL and EFL classes, however, certain activities and situations induce greater anxiety in students. The situations that seem to be more stressful include speaking, being called on in class, error correction, and oral presentations.

In addition, it was intriguing to notice that the target language is not a significant factor in anxiety-inducing situations – the mentioned activities cause nervousness and anxiety in Croatian as well. The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that students with high grades who self-assess their language skills as very good or excellent show low language anxiety levels. The findings of this investigation complement those of earlier studies, such as studies on language anxiety by Hewitt and Stephenson (2012), and the influence of motivation by Sylvén and Thompson (2015). Another interesting finding is that there is no noticeable difference between language anxiety in CLIL and EFL classes, however, it is clear that certain activities and situations induce greater anxiety in anxious students.

The findings from this study make several contributions to the current literature on CLIL in the Croatian context, as these findings may have significant practical implications for the understanding of language anxiety in a CLIL classroom, in a specific setting involving a private school and high-ability students. This study can shed light on the CLIL classroom environment in terms of the factors that might help create a supportive environment for the students, as well as illustrate the need for teacher training regarding language anxiety.

Both teachers and learners could benefit from learning about and understanding language anxiety, as they would be able to employ strategies and activities that resonate with the students. Similarly, teachers might try alternative assessment methods to alleviate some of the anxiety felt during oral exams and presentations. The students who do experience language anxiety would be able to reflect on their behavior and emotions if educated on the topic. Overall, studies focused on language anxiety in CLIL have significance for educating both students and teachers, improving teaching methods, and creating a more relaxed and comfortable environment for everyone involved. Educators need to recognize the students could benefit

greatly from lowering overall anxiety in the classroom. Not only should learners feel comfortable in the classroom, but could also excel academically if less anxious and more motivated. An inclusive and supportive atmosphere can encourage motivation and participation, as well as cooperation among the students, and also between students and their teachers.

Some limitations of this study include the rather small sample and single context, as well as the inability to compare high-ability and low-ability students, as the vast majority of participants received high marks and self-assessed their skills positively. Furthermore, a school setting in which teachers can provide their students with more time per student, organize various activities, and offer a more individualized approach due to the small number of students is bound to create a more comfortable environment, while lowering anxiety among them as well. It is difficult to assume what the results would be if that was not the case. This study was conducted on a small sample, which is understandable since not many students have the opportunity enrolled in this program, and not many schools offer CLIL. Therefore, it was conducted in only one private high school. Additionally, the study does not offer teachers' perspectives to corroborate some of the students' claims, which, as discussed, could be a perspective examined in future studies. Finally, the majority of schools in Croatia are public, which implies that this school is not representative of mainstream educational contexts. . To summarize, a weakness of this study relates to the fact that it is based on a very specific case, as it was conducted in a private school, and on a small sample of students.

Therefore, the study could be replicated using a larger sample to compare different schools and CLIL programs, include more students and teachers, and even compare the students' achievements to broaden the scope of the study. As mentioned, further research could be done across different schools to compare the results and findings among high-ability and low-ability students. It would be interesting to include differences between simultaneous and sequential bilingual (or multilingual) CLIL students, thus investigating the social and linguistic implications, as students who are fluent in the language used in CLIL classes might experience different levels of anxiety than students who started learning the second language much later in life. Further research could also incorporate differences across school subjects more in-depth, to analyze the specifics related to different school subjects, which might contribute to anxiety. Therefore, this would be a fruitful area for further work.

Although the vast majority of participants showed very little to no language anxiety, perceptions of the few students who do experience language anxiety and offer insights into their sugestions on how to alleviate it. According to the findings, teachers might focus more on their methods and approach than on the students' personality traits. They might include entertaining content, while normalizing and modeling error correction and speaking activities.

In summary, it does not seem possible to create a program that would be equally suited for everyone, and it is not plausible to believe language anxiety can be overall eliminated from the classroom. Nervousness and fear, which can manifest similarly to specific anxiety types, are bound to be present among young students who are often put in uncomfortable or stressful situations in class. Nonetheless, teachers could help their students feel more comfortable and to create the best possible environment for learning and socializing in which it is safe for students to interact in a foreign language and make mistakes.

6. References

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7. Appendix

7.1.Questionnaire

The questionnaire has been conducted in Croatian and translated to English for the purpose of this thesis.

Dear students,

I am conducting short research for the needs of my M.A. thesis. Please fill out this questionnaire about your opinion on CLIL classes. There are no correct or incorrect answers in this questionnaire, and this is not a test of knowledge. The questionnaire is completely anonymous, so feel free to honestly express your opinion. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Age:

Gender:

Grade:

First foreign language:

Second foreign language:

How long have you been learning English?

Grade	Average grade for English as a foreign language
1st grade	1 2 3 4 5 N/A (N/A – not applicable)
2nd grade	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
3rd grade	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
4th grade	1 2 3 4 5 N/A

How many CLIL sujects have you had in secondary school??

Which CLIL subjects do you attend this year?

Which language/s does the teacher use in CLIL classes? Please choose one.

a) Croatian
b) CLIL class language
c) A combination of both

How would you rate your English skills: 1-5 (1-poor, 5-excellent)

Listening	1 2 3 4 5
Reading	1 2 3 4 5
Writing	1 2 3 4 5
Speaking	1 2 3 4 5

Please assess how much you agree with the following statements (1-strongly disagree-5-strongly agree).

English as a foreign language class make me nervous because it focuses on the language instead of content.	1 2 3 4 5
I worry about making language mistakes in front of my teacher and other students.	1 2 3 4 5
I worry about making content mistakes more than language mistakes.	1 2 3 4 5
My fear of mistakes doesn't depend on the language, but on the subject.	1 2 3 4 5
I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in class.	1 2 3 4 5
I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in class.	1 2 3 4 5
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers even when they are correct.	1 2 3 4 5
I am stressed during tests because I will make language mistakes.	1 2 3 4 5
I am stressed during tests because I will make content mistakes.	1 2 3 4 5
It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	1 2 3 4 5
I am not comfortable when communication in class is only in English.	1 2 3 4 5
I feel comfortable when both Croatian and English are used during classes.	1 2 3 4 5
Presentations done in English make me stressed.	1 2 3 4 5
Presentations done in Croatian make me stressed.	1 2 3 4 5
The fear I feel during classes depends on the teacher.	1 2 3 4 5
The stress I feel during classes depends more on the subject than the language the teacher is using.	1 2 3 4 5

I don't feel confident speaking English in CLIL classes.	1 2 3 4 5
Some CLIL classes make me more nervous because I don't understand the subject.	1 2 3 4 5
Some CLIL classes make me more nervous because I don't understand the language.	1 2 3 4 5
Some CLIL classes make me more nervous because they use complex language.	1 2 3 4 5
CLIL classes are more stressful to me than foreign language classes.	1 2 3 4 5
CLIL classes are more stressful to me than foreign language classes (choose the one that applies to you) a) English b) German c) Italian d) It is not more stressful e) Other	
I feel nervous about writing assignments in English during class.	1 2 3 4 5
I feel nervous about listening assignments in English during class.	1 2 3 4 5
I feel nervous about reading assignments in English during class.	1 2 3 4 5
I feel nervous about speaking assignments in English during class.	1 2 3 4 5
The teacher corrects my mistakes during CLIL classes.	1 2 3 4 5
I am uncomfortable when the teacher corrects my mistakes in front of the class.	1 2 3 4 5
I am happy to be enrolled in this programme.	1 2 3 4 5
I enjoy using English in CLIL classes.	1 2 3 4 5
I enjoy using English in English as a foreign language classes.	1 2 3 4 5
I learn more about the English language in CLIL classes than English as a foreign language classes.	1 2 3 4 5
I learn more about the English language in English as a foreign language classes than CLIL classes.	1 2 3 4 5

Please answer the following questions in short:

What makes you the most nervous during CLIL classes in English?

Which activities make you relaxed in CLIL class in English?

How can the teacher help lower your anxiety during CLIL classes in English?

How can you calm yourself when you're feeling nervous during CLIL classes in English?

Additional comments: