This paper presents an exploration of CLIL teacher identity from an investment perspective (Norton, 1995, 2000, 2013) and considers the links with teachers’ language and curricular choices in a CLIL curriculum involving teaching one’s subject in a foreign language. It reports the findings of a qualitative study investigating CLIL teacher (N=16) attitudes, beliefs and experiences in a framework of initial mandatory CLIL implementation. Italian secondary school teachers were administered semi-structured interviews in the first year of mandatory implementation. In this context CLIL teachers are regarded as both teachers and learners, as they had chosen to undergo language and methodological training in order to be able to teach their subject in a foreign language. Moreover, to add to the complexity, teachers are also implementers of language policy in a context that requires them to proactively choose materials and methods. The exploratory design of the study allowed to capture emergent themes. Teachers construed their language experiences as socially constructed and displayed different degrees of investment and participation in L2 communication during the CLIL class. Moreover, teaching their subject in an L2 offered teachers new identity options, which in turn reflected on their curricular choices. Teacher identity, investment and personal agency are central concern in shaping CLIL experiences, since in CLIL much depends on grass root initiatives. The paper contributes to exploration CLIL teacher identity from a sociolinguistic perspective and findings are relevant for teacher training and program implementation.


Keywords: teachers, investment, CLIL.