In Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) research, the concept of integration still remains quite vague. In this paper integration is approached by examining CLIL teachers’ beliefs which closely involve their professional identities. Beliefs can be defined as a complex set of variables based on attitudes, experiences, and expectations. They constitute a basis for teachers’ action and guide their decision-making (Thompson 1992: 138). When exploring teachers’ beliefs about integration, we focus on how they see the roles and relationship of language and content in CLIL. Teachers’ professional identities emerge in how they relate to CLIL and how they position themselves and are positioned by others.

Our data consist of 12 semi-structured interviews of secondary school history and science teachers from Austria, Finland and Spain. All of the teachers teach through English and four of them are native speakers of English. Our focus is on:

- what the teachers say about teaching and learning of content and language in CLIL
- how the teachers see their professional position and role

The preliminary results indicate that integration of content and language occurs on both individual and social levels in planning, classroom interaction, assessment and reflection. The teachers report that in CLIL lessons not only language and content are integrated but also culture, people and innovative ways of working. Secondary school teachers seem to share a strong subject expert positioning. However, there is remarkable variation in how they see the role of language and language teaching in their work.

References


Keywords: integration, CLIL, Teacher beliefs.