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... to my mum and to my dad

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Beliefs	3
2.1	A psychological definition of beliefs	3
2.2	Beliefs about language learning	8
2.3	Development of beliefs	12
2.4	Implications for learning	15
2.5	Summary	19
3	Research approaches and methodologies	21
3.1	Research on beliefs about language learning	21
3.1.1	The normative approach	21
3.1.2	The metacognitive approach	23
3.1.3	The contextual approach	25
3.1.4	Summary and rationale	27
3.2	Development of the BALLI	29
4	Review of BALLI studies	34
4.1	Beliefs in an ESL context	34
4.2	Beliefs in an EFL context	34
4.3	Beliefs in a FL context	40
4.4	Summary	44
5	Contrasting EFL and CLIL	46
5.1	English as a Foreign Language in Austrian secondary schools	46
5.2	Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)	49
5.2.1	Content and Language Integrated Learning in Austria	53
5.2.2	Benefits of CLIL	55
5.3	Summary	59
6	Empirical study	61
6.1	Research question and hypotheses	64
6.2	Data collection and analysis	66
7	Findings	69
7.1	Results of the BALLI	69
7.2	Discussion	76

8 Conclusion.....	84
Bibliography	89
Appendix A	97
Appendix B	101
Abstract English.....	101
Zusammenfassung Deutsch	103
Appendix C	105

1 Introduction

Beliefs about language learning are of considerable importance when it comes to mastering a new language as they can influence learners' success or failure (Rifkin 2000: 394). Such beliefs might concern the time it takes to learn a new language, the difficulty of a language, the role of motivation or the right age to start learning a language, only to mention a few. Although some beliefs learners hold might seem a bit naïve from a scientific point of view, their influence on the language learning process must not be underestimated under any circumstances as the learners themselves regard these beliefs as true (Horwitz 1988: 283). Thus, the investigation of beliefs is crucial for both language learning and teaching. Results of previous studies have shown that beliefs do seem to differ to some extent between learners from different backgrounds. Especially with respect to factors like target language or cultural background researchers have found a number of variations in beliefs. The educational background, on the other hand, has not necessarily been the main focus of attention in former research, but only a few studies have investigated its possible effects on beliefs. Yet, it has to be assumed that factors like foreign language instruction exert an influence on learner beliefs as well. Other than that, prior findings have also suggested that a number of core beliefs seem to exist which are held universally by language learners, irrespective of their background. The question arises if and how far learners from different educational backgrounds differ in their beliefs and to what extent they share similar ones.

The aim of this paper is to compare the beliefs about language learning of two groups of learners with different foreign language instruction: one group goes through traditional English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, while the other group is part of an extensive language programme, which can be subsumed under the concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), in addition to traditional foreign language teaching. In order to discover similarities and differences between the two groups of learners, the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) was distributed to students at upper secondary level at Austrian schools. Due to the different educational backgrounds of the learners it was expected to find variations with respect to some beliefs that could be attributed to the characteristics of the respective types of foreign language instruction. On the other hand, it was

assumed that the two groups would share certain beliefs which have been held more or less universally by learners from different contexts in previous studies.

A definition of the concept of beliefs in a broader sense as well as of beliefs about language learning in particular is at the onset of the theoretical part of this thesis. Moreover, chapter 2 discusses a number of potential factors that might exert an influence on the development of beliefs as well as possible implications of beliefs for the language learning process. Chapter 3 presents a classification of three important research approaches and methodologies and discusses their respective benefits and drawbacks. In addition to this, the research tool for the present study is introduced in greater detail. In chapter 4, a number of previous studies on beliefs about language learning in various different cultural, linguistic and educational contexts are reviewed as these findings provide the starting point for the empirical study of this paper. Finally, chapter 5 of the theoretical part compares and contrasts traditional foreign language teaching at school in Austria and extensive language programmes like CLIL. After reviewing the history of traditional language teaching in Austria, the concept of CLIL as well as its implementation at schools in Austria and possible benefits of this approach are discussed.

In chapter 6, the empirical study of this paper is introduced. School descriptions of those two schools are presented that offer extensive language programmes to their learners in order to give an insight into their respective language teaching policies. Further, the research questions and hypotheses of the study as well as the process of data collection and analysis is discussed. Finally, chapter 7 presents the results of the study. Responses to the BALLI are analysed for existing similarities and differences between the EFL and CLIL learners with the help of descriptive statistics and tests for significance. Then, results are discussed separately for each dimension.

Findings of the study show that EFL and CLIL learners differ significantly with respect to some of the expected areas, but by far not in all of them. In general, the majority of differences is very small and cannot be regarded as meaningful. Quite on the contrary, participants of both groups show a striking similarity in responses over most of the statements. This suggests that both EFL and CLIL learners seem to hold similar beliefs about language learning irrespective of their educational background, with the exception of a few, and that other factors might affect learner beliefs to a greater extent.

2 Beliefs

2.1 A psychological definition of beliefs

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a belief is “a feeling of being sure that someone or something exists or that something is true“. In spite of this being a perfectly understandable definition, it does not really say a lot about the nature of beliefs, not to mention the possible impact of beliefs. Even more importantly, the above-mentioned is only one definition of many. Nisbett and Ross (1980: 28), for example, define beliefs as “reasonably explicit ‘propositions’ about the characteristics of objects and object classes”, while Rokeach (1972: 113) postulates that beliefs are “any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase, ‘I believe that...’ “. Since a whole variety of definitions of beliefs have evolved, it is very difficult to reach a consensus and agree on a clear-cut working definition. This is complicated further by the fact that many definitions are rather informal in that they do not explicitly state what the actual meaning is (Österholm 2009: 157). Furthermore, the difficulty of defining this term could be explained by the fact that the concept of beliefs is a very global one and hence also rather difficult to investigate. This becomes apparent when looking at the number of terms that are often used interchangeably with beliefs, like attitudes, values, opinions or personal theories, just to mention a few (Pajares 1992: 308-309). In order to get an understanding of the concept of beliefs, it is therefore important to distinguish it from other related terms, most importantly from knowledge. In the following, the nature as well as different types of beliefs will be discussed, before an attempt will be made to disentangle the constructs of beliefs and knowledge by means of certain criteria and theories in order to gain insight into this domain.

Beliefs are of a very interesting nature because once they are learned they are highly resistant to change, even when evidence against these beliefs is presented. Ross, Lepper and Hubbard (1975: 880) labelled this tendency perseverance of beliefs. Support has been found for three hypotheses concerning the perseverance of beliefs. First, when people believe a certain theory without having encountered any evidence so far, being exposed to evidence will result in an even greater belief in said theory. Second, when people encounter evidence and form a belief based on

that evidence, the belief will be resistant to contradicting information. That is because early inferences are drawn from these experiences and these inferences again bias the interpretation of following information. This results in beliefs not being sufficiently revised, even if new information might bring contradictions with it. It is due to this primacy effect that beliefs encountered earlier are more difficult to change because they influence the filtering of new information. Finally, beliefs seem to be upheld even when the evidence on which beliefs are based is challenged (Nisbett & Ross 1980: 169-179).

In order to understand this phenomenon of perseverance of beliefs, it is necessary to look at the underlying mechanisms. First and foremost, people tend to turn conflicting evidence into supportive one in order to maintain their beliefs. Although emotional commitment to one's beliefs does play a role as well, information-processing factors seem to be of greatest relevance. For example, when retrieving information from memory, people use several biases in order to confirm prior beliefs. Beliefs therefore also influence how people recall certain events, even if that means completely distorting the event so that the belief can be maintained. Another mechanism ensuring belief perseverance is people's tendency to look for causal explanations of beliefs. Not only is it very easy for people to generate such explanations as they usually do it on a daily basis, but they are also easily convinced by these explanations. In fact, the explanations might turn out to be so convincing that people still find them plausible even when the evidence is disproved in retrospect. Finally, there is the self-fulfilling prophecy, a behavioural confirmation bias. Beliefs influence how people perceive certain events and these perceptions influence people's actions in a way that people act according to their beliefs (Nisbett & Ross 1980: 179-188).

Despite Nisbett and Ross having demonstrated considerable evidence suggesting that beliefs seem to be resistant to change under a number of circumstances, they do not argue that beliefs cannot be changed at all. There may be certain circumstances that might lead to changes in certain beliefs. For example, scientists may alter some of their beliefs with a coming paradigm change. However, it seems as if, in general, beliefs do not change as often or as fast as would be expected from a logical point of view when contradicting evidence is being presented (Nisbett & Ross 1980: 189). This emphasizes the importance of beliefs not only for one's identity, but also for one's behaviour.

Since every person has a multitude of beliefs they need to be organized into a system. Rokeach (1972: 2) defined a belief system “as having represented within it, in some organized psychological but not necessarily logical form, each and every one of a person’s countless beliefs about physical and social reality”. He further analysed different types of beliefs with regard to three main assumptions: first, beliefs vary along a central-peripheral dimension, i.e. not all beliefs are of the same importance; second, the more central a belief, the more resistant it is to change; and third, changes in central beliefs will induce greater changes in the whole belief system. Centrality of different beliefs was defined through connectedness, i.e. “the more a given belief is functionally connected or in communication with other beliefs, [...] the more central the belief” (Rokeach 1972: 5). In order to examine connectedness of certain beliefs, Rokeach (1972: 5-6) introduced four different criteria. Beliefs involved with people’s own identity are more connected to other beliefs than beliefs not relating to oneself. Beliefs shared with other people are also more connected and therefore more central than those which are not consensual. Beliefs that have not been directly encountered are less connected to other beliefs because they have only been derived from other people. And finally, beliefs concerning matters of taste are arbitrary and therefore less connected and central than all other beliefs.

By means of these criteria Rokeach (1972: 6-11) identified five different classes of beliefs, all varying in their degree of centrality. The most central ones he called primitive, fully consensual beliefs. A person does not only directly encounter these beliefs, but people in the environment also reinforce them. Beliefs of this type can be seen as axioms, which is why they are not regarded as controversial and therefore incontrovertible. He further described these beliefs as core beliefs representing ‘basic truths’ people hold. If any of the primitive beliefs would suffer violation, this could lead people to question other beliefs as well and finally result in inconsistency. Another class are primitive beliefs that are not shared with others. Again, these beliefs are learned through a direct encounter, however, they do not depend on being reinforced by any reference group. In contrast to primitive beliefs that are shared with others, these beliefs might be controversial as not everybody shares them, but they are still incontrovertible and resistant to persuasion.

Besides the primitive beliefs explained above, also three types of non-primitive beliefs were identified. These beliefs are of some importance as well and in general

resistant to change. However, they are less central than the primitive ones and therefore easier to change. The most central of non-primitive beliefs are authority beliefs, which develop out of primitive, consensual beliefs. Authorities, whether positive or negative, are of great importance as they are reference points for people. While a child only relies on his parents for reference points, older people's reference groups are already further extended. Authority beliefs are generally controvertible because the believer may realize that some people of his reference group do not share some of his beliefs. Another class of non-primitive beliefs are beliefs that are derived through identification with authorities rather than being directly encountered. Since they are derived from authority beliefs, which are controvertible, derived beliefs can be converted as well. Finally, Rokeach classified inconsequential beliefs describing arbitrary matters of taste. Although these are incontrovertible – again they are learned through a direct encounter – and do not depend on reinforcement, this type of beliefs is the least central. That results from the fact that inconsequential beliefs do not have connections with other beliefs of the system and therefore have no influence on others.

As a result, a belief system was identified which consisted of five different types of beliefs and was regarded “as an organization of beliefs varying in depths [...] designed to help a person maintain, insofar as possible, a sense of ego and group identity” (Rokeach 1972: 12). In order to support this theory an empirical study was conducted where subjects were given nine different statements which they had to rank according to their own willingness to relinquish them, indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each item and estimate the percentage of people who shared their beliefs. The results of the study supported the theoretical distinction of belief types. Participants ranked primitive beliefs the highest with regard to resistance to change. Furthermore, they agreed most strongly with primitive beliefs and the majority of the subjects indicated that everyone believed as they did with regard to primitive beliefs (Rokeach 1972: 14).

Without doubt this conception of a belief system is a very useful theory, however, it is nevertheless essential to distinguish the concept of beliefs from related ones. The most important distinction that needs to be drawn is the one between belief and knowledge since this distinction seems to be the common core of various definitions (Pajares 1992: 313). In his paper on the differences between belief and knowledge systems, Abelson (1979: 356-360) determined seven characteristics,

according to which belief systems and knowledge systems can be distinguished from one another. First of all, the elements of belief systems are not consensual, that means it is possible that the elements of the systems of two people differ from each other. Knowledge systems, on the other hand, do not differ in content from one person to another, but instead they differ in complexity. Another characteristic of belief systems is that they are concerned with the question whether particular entities exist or not. For example, if someone insists that an entity like God exists, it “implies an awareness of others who believe it does not exist” (Abelson 1979: 357). This again is different to knowledge systems because knowledge is regarded as something global. Although, according to Abelson, belief and knowledge systems differ in these two characteristics, he also states that these characteristics are not transparent, i.e. it is difficult to identify them.

A third characteristic of belief systems is that they do not only consist of representations of one world, but also include alternative worlds, mostly in the form of the world as it currently is and the world as it actually should be. That means that belief systems contain representations of the actual state and an “idealized state” (Abelson 1979: 357). Also, belief systems are defined through both evaluative and affective components. Usually the concepts in a belief system are defined as good or bad. On the one hand, these concepts within the system can be seen as simple cognitive categories – in this case they are similar to categories in knowledge systems where assumptions about whether a concept is good or bad are drawn by means of certain rules. This is where the evaluative component comes in. On the other hand, there is the possibility of these concepts having motivational force, which can lead to different processes in the system. For example, favourable input might be processed more deeply than negative one. This affective component distinguishes beliefs from knowledge. Another difference between belief and knowledge systems is the fact that belief systems do contain a lot of episodic elements, i.e. personal or cultural experience, which can influence the strength of a belief. This is again in contrast to knowledge systems, which are built on straight facts rather than on personal episodes. A further distinguishing characteristic of belief and knowledge systems concerns the included content. Belief systems are rather open and have hardly any boundaries. That is because “belief systems always necessarily implicate the self-concept of the believer [...] and self-concepts have wide boundaries”, whereas in knowledge systems the self is excluded (Abelson 1979: 360). This makes

it easier to draw boundaries for knowledge systems. Finally, a last distinguishing feature concerns the certitude of beliefs. While beliefs can vary from being completely convincing to regarding something as more or less probable, this is not the case with knowledge, which is certain.

Of course, these seven characteristics postulated by Abelson are not necessarily able to differentiate between beliefs and knowledge by themselves, however, if applied together, a satisfactory distinction might be reached. In any case, they are helpful in reaching a better understanding of the two concepts. Nespor (1987) further supported this view when he took up Abelson's distinction of belief and knowledge system and put the distinguishing features in an educational context. Thereby he was able to demonstrate the possible influences of beliefs on the behaviour of teachers.

An attempt was made to grasp the concept of beliefs from a psychological perspective. As was shown, beliefs are of a very interesting nature as they generally have a strong tendency to resist change even when controversial evidence is presented. This circumstance was attributed to certain cognitive processes like turning conflicting evidence into supportive one or finding causal explanations for certain beliefs. Further it was demonstrated that beliefs differ in their centrality. The more central a belief is, the more resistant it is to change as it is more deeply integrated into the whole system of beliefs. Finally, a number of aspects were described to analyse and discriminate the concepts of beliefs and knowledge. The difficulty of defining beliefs is not necessarily due to the pluralism of definitions, but rather because of the different perspectives and agendas being taken by researchers. This problem will be encountered again in the next section when beliefs about language learning will be examined more closely.

2.2 Beliefs about language learning

When educational researchers realized that a mere focus on cognitive factors was not sufficient for describing and explaining the processes of learning, research interest in beliefs about language learning set in in an attempt to examine and understand which learner beliefs would lead to positive learning behaviour. Yet, as the concept of learner beliefs is very ambiguous, it is a very difficult undertaking to

agree on a common working definition (Peng 2014: 24). When reviewing previous research, a very large number of different terms referring to beliefs about language learning are encountered that define beliefs in different ways. These sometimes even divergent definitions reflect different research agendas determined by the respective researchers (Barcelos 2006: 8). Although this variety of definitions does not necessarily have to be a disadvantage by itself, it becomes problematic when the actual concept is distorted and no common core is left (Freeman 1991: 32). With researchers assuming various definitions and perspectives, measuring beliefs becomes even more complex and makes comparisons between different studies rather difficult. Hence, it is of utmost importance to discuss the various theoretical conceptions and approaches before conducting empirical research on beliefs about language learning.

Learner beliefs have been investigated under a number of different terms like metacognitive knowledge, representations or culture of learning, just to mention a few. In general, beliefs about learning can be divided into two categories: cognitive and sociocultural beliefs. The focus of the cognitive dimension lies on beliefs about the nature of language and language learning. Learner beliefs within the cognitive dimension are primarily seen as metacognitive knowledge about learning and it is assumed that they are influenced by previous experiences of learners (Peng 2014: 24). It definitely has to be questioned whether it is valid to subsume the concept of beliefs under the concept of knowledge and not take into account the context at all. Also, given the emphasis on previous experiences, beliefs are implicitly regarded as rather stable and resistant to change according to this view. Although this might be true to some extent, a certain dynamic of beliefs about language learning cannot be denied and should definitely be taken into consideration as well. Thus, standing on its own, this view is an oversimplification of beliefs. In the sociocultural dimension, on the other hand, the equating of beliefs and knowledge is deemed problematic. Instead, learner beliefs are mainly regarded as culture of learning. Moreover, beliefs about learning are considered to be dependent on context, i.e. learner beliefs emerge out of sociocultural contexts (Peng 2014: 24). This view does acknowledge the importance of context and assumes that beliefs are dynamic. Yet, previous experiences are completely left out of the picture in this dimension and it appears as if beliefs are not stable at all. Although beliefs are certainly changeable to some extent and should be regarded as dynamic representations, this does not necessarily

imply that people cannot hold beliefs fiercely. Hence, it has to be doubted that this one-sided view can do justice to the concept of beliefs.

Yet, although these two dimensions view learner beliefs differently and cannot fully explain this elusive concept on their own, they are not mutually exclusive. Quite on the contrary, beliefs about learning contain both cognitive as well as sociocultural dimensions. For example, a certain teaching approach might be considered as inappropriate from a cognitive point of view because it is not consistent with what learners believe about learning, or from a social perspective because it is not common in the respective culture (Peng 2014: 24). The fact that these two dimensions can be viewed as complementary instead of exclusive is of considerable importance since elements of both are essential components of beliefs about language learning.

As has been mentioned above, learner beliefs have been investigated under the name of many concepts. Table 1 below summarizes the most commonly used terms and definitions of beliefs about language learning.

Table 1: Different terms and definitions for beliefs about language learning (Barcelos 2006: 9)

Terms	Definitions
Folklinguistic theories of learning	“Ideas that students have about language and language learning” (Miller & Ginsberg 1995: 294)
Learner representations	“Learners’ entering assumptions about their roles and functions of teachers and teaching materials” (Holec 1987: 152)
Learners’ philosophy of language learning	“Beliefs about how language operates, and, consequently, how it is learned (Abraham & Vann 1987: 95)
Metacognitive knowledge	“The stable, stable although sometimes incorrect knowledge that learners have acquired about language, learning and the language learning process” (Wenden 1991: 163)
Learning culture	“A set of representations, beliefs and values related to learning that directly influence [students’] learning behaviour” (Riley 1997: 122)

Although the various terms emphasize different dimensions and perspectives, when looking at the respective definitions it becomes apparent that they have a common underlying basis: all definitions refer to the nature of language and language learning. This common core is underlying all definitions even though the terms appear different

from each other superficially and do not necessarily indicate the same views. For example, while some terms like metacognitive knowledge or representations only emphasize the cognitive components of beliefs and are therefore similar to knowledge, others also underline the social and cultural dimensions. Thus, they are pointing to the fact that beliefs are developed through social interactions – for example through an interaction between teacher and student – and can be influenced by culture (Barcelos 2006: 8). Moreover, while some researchers primarily define beliefs as representations, ideas or knowledge about language learning, others also acknowledge their possible influence on the language learning process. Here, the initial distinction between the cognitive and the sociocultural dimension is apparent again. All these different terms taken together, it can be said that they all contain important aspects of beliefs and an inclusive view should be aimed at. While cognitive components certainly play a crucial role, the social context cannot be set aside completely. This paper will follow a relatively inclusive view where beliefs are regarded as learners' theories about language learning which are assumed to be true and exert an influence on learners' behaviour. Moreover, it is presumed that these theories are influenced by previous experiences as well as the social context. Hence, both the cognitive and the social dimension are taken into account.

The above-mentioned diversity of perspectives has led to different research approaches and methodologies in the study of beliefs about language learning where each approach is based on a specific definition of beliefs which determines the respective research direction. Also, due to the various perspectives and approaches, the distinction between beliefs and knowledge is not as clear-cut anymore compared to the psychological perspective outlined above, but instead the boundary is blurred. And finally, although beliefs are still regarded as fairly stable, they are no longer seen as irreversible. In contrast, researchers reason that beliefs can be changed when the right information is provided. This is especially important with respect to negative learner beliefs that might hinder success in language learning. To conclude, the matter of defining beliefs becomes even more complex in the field of language learning since the various definitions of learner beliefs are a little elusive.

2.3 Development of beliefs

In order to get a better understanding of the nature of beliefs it is important to look at the factors determining and influencing the development of learner beliefs. However, researchers take on different views when it comes to the question of how beliefs are formed. While some scholars mainly emphasize the importance of social and cultural context, others rather focus on individual factors of the respective learners. Nowadays, though, the two perspectives are not considered as mutually exclusive anymore, but instead they are seen as complementary. That means that both social and individual factors are regarded as essential components for the process of belief formation (Gabillon 2005: 239-240). So far, a number of explanations about the origins of beliefs and influencing factors have been presented by empirical studies (Bernat & Gvozdenko 2005: 10). It has been shown that beliefs about learning begin to develop very early in elementary and secondary school (Chin & Brewer 1993; Paris & Byrnes 1989) and this development continues further into adolescence and adulthood (Cantwell 1998). Schommer (1993: 410), for example, conducted a questionnaire study at a high school and was able to show that beliefs differed across various age groups, suggesting that beliefs about learning develop further with age and education. Moreover, the learners did not necessarily share beliefs with their colleagues, but expressed different ones instead. This suggests that the development of beliefs is most likely influenced by a variety of different factors. In the following, a selection of studies will be discussed that investigate potential factors contributing to the development of beliefs.

In an earlier study, Schommer (1990: 499-501) conducted experiments in order to explore potential factors influencing learner beliefs. Therefore, a survey of students' characteristics and home background was administered to the participants. Additionally to basic information like age and school year, gender, parents' education and occupation, participants also had to answer some questions about their upbringing, for example about family structure and obeying rules. The results showed that students' background, including family, predicted their beliefs about learning, i.e. family background seems to be an influential factor in the development of beliefs. A similar study conducted by Diab in the Lebanese context (2006) revealed similar results and provided further support for the influence of social background variables on learner beliefs.

Research by Langston and Sykes (1997: 157-160) produced further important results. In two experiments the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and general beliefs was studied and a correlation was found. In the first experiment, semi-structured interviews were conducted, containing a variety of different situations, which are frequently encountered in everyday life. Participants of the study had to imagine themselves in those situations and tell the interviewer about their hypothetical thoughts and actions as well as give reasons. Then interviewers rated to what extent the participants were defined by the various beliefs. A second part of the experiment involved participants of the study completing a self-report personality questionnaire to measure their score in each of the five personality traits. Finally, interviewers' ratings and the score on the questionnaire were correlated and results showed that differences in the beliefs ratings were related to individual differences in personality traits. A second experiment was conducted in order to replicate the findings on the one hand and to rule out any possible influences by the interviewers on the other. Therefore, instead of interviews, participants were given a self-report instrument for assessing their beliefs. For measuring personality traits again a personality questionnaire had to be completed. The results of the first experiment could be replicated in the second one, although different research methods were used. The findings of this study suggest that certain personality characteristics could be influential factors for the development of beliefs. Moreover, these personality traits could also account for individual differences in learner beliefs.

A longitudinal study over three years conducted by Rifkin (2000: 396-404) discovered that factors like the level of language learning, the type of the language learned – whether it is more or less commonly taught – and the nature of the institution might have an influence on beliefs about language learning. In his study he used a slightly modified version of the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) and collected data over three years. First, the questionnaire was randomly administered to a number of students of different languages in the first semester. A year later, it was again administered randomly to a number of third-semester language students. Finally, the questionnaire was also handed out to language students either studying in a large research institution or in a rather small, private college. With this research design it was possible to examine if and how beliefs across certain groups of learners may differ and whether the postulated factors influence the development of beliefs. Results of the study showed that beliefs differed

significantly across all three groups. First-semester students had rather different beliefs about language learning than more advanced ones, students who learned rather commonly taught languages differed from their colleagues studying languages that are less commonly taught and learners at different institutions had somewhat divergent beliefs as well. These findings provide support for the hypothesis that the level of language learning, the type of the language and the nature of institution are influential factors in the process of belief formation.

Purdie, Hattie and Douglas (2006: 90-95) found evidence for the influence of cultural differences on the development of learner beliefs. In their study they compared learner beliefs and strategies of self-regulated learning of Australian and Japanese students by administering the Student Learning Survey which consisted of ten open questions, two of them concerning students' beliefs. Through qualitative analysis nine different categories of learner beliefs were identified and results showed that the two groups of learners differed significantly in at least five of the categories. While the majority of the Japanese students considered learning as increasing knowledge and personal fulfilment, Australian learners instead viewed learning as memorizing and reproducing as well as understanding. However, some similarities were found across the different cultural groups as well, suggesting that other factors than cultural background could have a greater influence on the development of beliefs.

In fact, Horwitz (1999: 571-573) reviewed a number of studies on beliefs about language learning and took a rather critical view on attributing differences in beliefs to the cultural background. Although a number of studies, like the ones mentioned above, show some differences across cultural groups, according to Horwitz these differences are rather due to social or political circumstances or the status of language learning in the respective countries than due to the cultural background. Moreover, differences between learners of the same cultural group learning different languages were found and it was argued that factors like age, level of language learning or professional status might have greater influence than culture. Finally, intra-group differences were revealed between students of the same culture learning the same language. In this case, the differences are more likely to be attributed to individual differences or the educational setting. These results suggest that beliefs do not necessarily vary so much across different cultural backgrounds, but rather it is other factors that influence the formation of beliefs. However, that is not to say that

culture does not affect learner beliefs at all, empirical evidence simply suggests that influences other than culture seem to have a stronger effect on the development of beliefs. Apart from that, the term cultural background has to be defined clearly since it could be argued that other circumstances like social or political ones are part of the cultural domain as well.

These previous studies show that the origins of learner beliefs already lie in the early years of education and the development continues into adolescence. Furthermore, factors like family background, personality, nature of languages and educational or cultural background are of great importance, some exerting greater influence on the development of beliefs than others. Of course, more studies are needed to support the present results and identify potential other influential factors for formation of beliefs. However, given the current state of the art, the factors discussed here seem to be a good predictor for the development of learner beliefs.

2.4 Implications for learning

As White (1999: 443) has put it, “beliefs help individuals to define and understand the world and themselves, and they are instrumental in defining tasks and play a critical role in defining behaviour”. This suggests that beliefs can have an impact on behaviour and influence the language learner. Because of divergent beliefs learners may rely on different approaches and strategies when learning a language, which in turn could lead to individual differences in students’ performance. For example, if a student believes that learning a language mainly involves reading in the new language, he will concentrate on improving his reading competence, whereas a colleague of his who mainly believes in learning vocabulary will work on improving his vocabulary range. Learner beliefs can therefore have a serious impact on their performance as they are able to determine, at least to some degree, whether students will succeed or fail. In one of her early works, Horwitz (1988: 283) stated that all learners seem to bring certain beliefs to the classroom and although some of them might be considered as naïve from a scientific perspective, they still influence learners because for them they are true. Therefore, she argued, it is important for teachers to realize that learners enter the classroom with various beliefs about language learning. Mantle-Bromley (1995: 373) agreed that it is important for

language teachers to know about these differences in beliefs and address them in the lessons, merely due to the fact that negative, counterproductive beliefs may hinder learners' success. In the following, possible implications for language learning due to both positive and negative beliefs will be addressed and examined in greater detail in order to demonstrate the importance of beliefs in the educational context and raise awareness for the recognition of beliefs in the language classroom.

The theory suggesting that students with positive and realistic beliefs about language learning will rather succeed than learners with negative ones can be supported through various empirical evidence. According to empirical studies, successful learners seem to develop supportive beliefs about the processes of language learning, effective strategy-use as well as about their own abilities and it is these positive beliefs that facilitate students' learning (Anstey 1988, referred to in Victor & Lockhart 1995: 225). Furthermore, positive beliefs might also be able to compensate for other limitations. For example, if someone believes that intelligence can be increased through training, it might be possible for them to outperform others who are more capable, but do not believe in altering intelligence (Mori 1999: 381). However, on the other hand, students can hold a number of counterproductive, negative beliefs about language learning which might lead to negative effects inside and outside of the classroom. A study by Victor and Lockhart (1995: 226-232), for example, showed that autonomy in language learning was rather low when learners used less effective strategies due to negative beliefs. The study aimed at enhancing metacognitive knowledge – assumptions that students have about language learning – in self-directed language learning through learner training. Initially, the subjects' proficiency and linguistic needs were collected. Also, participants had to complete two questionnaires, the first one exploring learners' self-esteem, motivation and cognitive style, the second asking about assumptions about language learning. On the basis of this information an individual programme was put together for every participant. While the counselling sessions should enhance learners' metacognitions, increasing use of the self-access centre indicated greater autonomy. Results of the study showed that enhanced metacognition leads to greater autonomy. This enhancement was explained through an improved self-knowledge, use of more efficient strategies as well as increased resources and language contact.

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986: 127-130) investigated students' anxiety in language learning and considered erroneous beliefs to be responsible for the tension

learners experience. According to them, holding beliefs like not speaking in the target language until full proficiency is reached or not considering guessing as an appropriate language learning strategy could lead to anxiety because in foreign language classes learners are expected to communicate with each other. Erroneous beliefs like these can trigger students' anxiety and thereby impede their success in language learning. The researchers found empirical evidence for their claim when administering an anxiety questionnaire to a number of students. Results of the study showed that anxious students often considered their colleagues to be better at language learning, which indicated that they did not believe they had an aptitude for learning languages. Moreover, they were also afraid that they would not understand everything in the target language, i.e. they believed it was necessary to comprehend every single word. These results suggest that negative, mistaken beliefs about language learning seem to be an influential factor for classroom anxiety. A number of other studies have investigated the relationship between beliefs about language learning and anxiety as well and have found further support. For example, Truitt (1995a, as referred to in Zhang 2013: 30) conducted a study among Korean learners of English and examined the relationship between beliefs and anxiety through various statistical analyses. She administered a belief inventory and an anxiety questionnaire and found a significant relationship between two of the five belief factors and anxiety. Results showed that students who were more confident about learning a language and believed they would succeed in learning it were less anxious. A fairly recent study by Zhang (2013: 31-37) demonstrated a similar picture, although after administering two questionnaires to a group of students only a rather weak correlation between anxiety and two belief factors could be observed. The results suggested that students with greater self-efficacy and confidence were less anxious, as well as learners who were satisfied with the progress they made. Although these more recent studies seem to suggest a rather weak relationship between anxiety and learner beliefs, the empirical evidence still suggests a correlation.

Apart from the influences on autonomy and anxiety, negative beliefs can also lead to a pessimistic attitude towards learning in general. According to Horwitz (1987: 119), beliefs are also influenced by previous experiences students had as language learners. While positive learning experiences can facilitate learning, negative ones have the opposite effect. For example, an unsuccessful experience could give a

student the impression that learning a new language involves certain abilities he does not have and therefore he may believe that he will never be successful. Also, these erroneous beliefs can further lead students to using rather ineffective strategies. In line with this is the impact of learners' beliefs on learning strategies, as was shown by Wenden (1987: 103-113). In interviews students were asked about beliefs they had about learning a language and about strategies they used for this purpose. Results of the study showed that learning strategies described by the participants were largely consistent with the beliefs they expressed. For example, learners who believed it was important to use the language would rather engage in communication and not pay great attention to form. On the other hand, others who considered it more essential to learn about the language itself made use of cognitive strategies and were conscious of form. These results point to the fact that beliefs about language learning can affect students' behaviour inside and outside of the classroom.

Apart from possible counterproductive influences of beliefs on the individual learner, another problem arises when learner and teacher beliefs are not in unison but differ from each other. Differences between learner and teacher beliefs can result in tension because learners might not consider certain teaching practices as useful or appropriate for them. On the other hand, teachers might encounter difficulties when students do not participate in classroom activities because of these discrepancies in beliefs. Therefore, consistency between beliefs is regarded as desirable. However, research has shown that belief differences between learners and teachers do seem to exist, at least to some extent.

For example, a study by Kern (1995: 76-82) investigated whether such differences exist and if so, in how far student and teacher beliefs differ. In this study beliefs of first-year language students were examined and compared to the beliefs of instructors at their institution. When comparing students' and teachers' mean scores across all groups only minor differences could be found. For example, students rather believed in the importance of a perfect accent while teachers would disagree. These minor differences suggested that beliefs were rather consistent. However, when analysed at an individual level – when students were compared to their individual instructors – more and greater differences were found. Students' agreement with their respective instructors only amounted to one third on average. Moreover, the study showed that over the course of the semester differences in

some beliefs either remained the same or became even greater, despite intervention. This suggests that beliefs can be rather difficult to change, although this would be desirable in some cases. Nevertheless, researchers argue for interventions in order to promote supportive positive beliefs and to change or eradicate negative ones. Of course, it should be considered that it is not possible for teachers to adapt their teaching to every single student individually. Nevertheless, it is essential for teachers to investigate students' beliefs in order to be aware of the various beliefs as well as the diverse learner types in their classroom (Horwitz 1999: 558).

The various studies have demonstrated the importance of beliefs in the educational context, inside as well as outside of the classroom. While beliefs can certainly be of a supportive nature and facilitate learning, for example when compensating for lack of certain abilities, negative beliefs may hinder learners from successfully acquiring a new language as they might lead to a decrease in autonomy and to an increase in anxiety. Moreover, since beliefs are determinants of behaviour they also have an influence on strategy-use, i.e. negative beliefs might lead learners to using ineffective strategies in language learning. Finally, big discrepancies between learner and teacher beliefs could lead to further negative consequences for the language learner. All this suggests that beliefs about language learning are very influential and can have a very pronounced impact on success or failure of learners, which is why awareness of beliefs in the language classroom is crucial.

2.5 Summary

Since beliefs are of a very complex nature, defining this construct has to be at the onset of every investigation. However, this is a rather difficult undertaking since so far no precise working definition has been agreed on, but rather a whole variety is to be found and a lot of terms are used interchangeably. Matters are complicated further when investigating beliefs about language learning, as researchers view this concept from different perspectives. While some consider beliefs as metacognitive knowledge, others regard them as representations. Yet, despite the difficulty in defining the construct of beliefs, a number of studies have identified factors like cultural and educational background or personality which seem to influence the development of beliefs and therefore account for individual differences. Besides that,

the influence of beliefs on behaviour could be confirmed as studies have shown that positive and negative beliefs can have implications for language learning. The complex nature of beliefs, their development and the various implications they can have on learning and teaching make them an interesting and important research topic.

Concerning the present study, the question arises whether different educational backgrounds will lead to differences in students' beliefs about language learning or whether learners will share fairly similar beliefs despite different learning contexts. It will be interesting to examine whether students who use English as the medium of instruction in content subjects will show more positive and realistic beliefs about their language learning than those learning English in a traditional foreign language context. The following chapter will introduce three main research approaches and their respective methodologies. Additionally, the development of the research instrument used for the present study, the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory, will be discussed.

3 Research approaches and methodologies

3.1 Research on beliefs about language learning

With research on beliefs about language learning only starting in the 1980s, this research area is quite recent in Applied Linguistics, especially compared to other fields, which took an earlier interest in studying learner beliefs. Nevertheless, a lot of studies have been carried out during the last decades, recognizing the importance of beliefs in foreign language learning and producing a number of very interesting results (Barcelos 2006: 7). However, as mentioned above, the variety of definitions and terms related to the concept of beliefs has led to a number of different research approaches and methodologies. The classification of research paradigms being a rather subjective undertaking, a number of different categorizations have emerged with some researchers classifying the approaches according to the instruments used, while others take on a more general view grouping the various approaches in a broader sense (Bernat & Gvozdenko 2005: 4).

The classification of research approaches below follows the tradition of Barcelos (2006: 11) who identified three main approaches which are characterized through their definition of beliefs, the instruments used as well as the relationship between beliefs and behaviour. Each of the three approaches will be discussed with regard to these characteristics as well as their advantages and disadvantages and it will be reasoned why a normative approach was chosen for the present study.

3.1.1 The normative approach

Studies following the tradition of the normative approach primarily aim at describing and classifying learners' beliefs about language learning, rather than investigating the nature of beliefs themselves. Furthermore, beliefs are considered to be indicators of learners' behaviour in a sense that they can determine success or failure (Barcelos 2006: 11). The manner in which beliefs about language learning are defined within this approach is crucial as beliefs are considered to be myths or misconceptions rather than accurate representations and opinions about learning a language. According to Horwitz (1987: 119), who was one of the first to develop a standardised

questionnaire for investigating beliefs, learners hold a whole variety of beliefs, although they do not necessarily have to be true. Horwitz further states that learner beliefs often seem to differ from those of researchers which are considered to be right. Thus, the existence of students' beliefs about language learning is acknowledged in the normative approach, but these beliefs are often regarded as naïve and wrong.

Since studies following the normative approach aim at describing and classifying beliefs about language learning, mainly questionnaires are used for data collection. These questionnaires mostly consist of a number of questions with given answers that have to be rated on a Likert scale and finally the collected data is analysed with the help of descriptive statistics (Barcelos 2006: 11). Although a number of different questionnaires have been developed over the years, probably the most commonly used among researchers is the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz (1981). This being the first standardised beliefs questionnaire, many researchers have simply adapted it for their own research purposes. Nevertheless, other researchers have also created their own questionnaires to investigate beliefs about language learning. For example, in her study on learner autonomy, Cotterall (1995: 196) developed a questionnaire based on interviews with ESL learners about their language learning experiences. Likewise, Mori (1999: 383) developed a questionnaire in order to investigate the structure of beliefs. Although the use of questionnaires definitely facilitates comparing and contrasting beliefs of various learner groups, researchers have more recently tended towards using other research methods as well in order to validate the questionnaires. Those additional methods can reach from open-ended questions at the end of questionnaires to student interviews. Either way, such additional techniques have shown that students might have other and different beliefs than those included in the questionnaire, suggesting that using a variety of methods might prove to be an advantage (Barcelos 2006: 13).

Researchers within the normative approach reason that beliefs about language learning can influence learners' behaviour, namely either how they approach learning a new language in general or students' language learning strategies in particular. The influence of beliefs on language learning has been confirmed by a number of studies. Abraham and Vann (1987: 96), for example, investigated the relationship between learners' background, strategy-use and

success in language learning and found that learners' beliefs do seem to exert an influence on their approach to learning. This in turn determines learners' strategy-use and their success. Similarly Wenden (1987), as already outlined above, showed that beliefs seem to influence students' behaviour. Although studies undertaken in the normative approach elaborate on theories and assume that beliefs have an influence on students' actual behaviour in a sense that positive beliefs about language learning result in success while negative ones result in failure, one of their major drawbacks is the fact that these studies do not investigate and examine students' behaviour sufficiently. Moreover, the relationship between beliefs and behaviour is very likely of a much more complex nature because it might be influenced by other factors like experiences, motivation or ability (Barcelos 2006: 14-15).

Besides the above-mentioned ones, questionnaire studies also bring some other disadvantages with them. First, subjects tend to answer questions in a socially desirable way, i.e. they indicate what they consider to be appropriate in the respective context rather than their own opinion. Another drawback is that questionnaires restrict participants' answers to the questions. For example, when completing Likert scale questionnaires, subjects cannot answer the questions in their own words because answer categories are already given. Also, questionnaire items might be misunderstood by some of the participants. A final drawback is the fact that beliefs are measured out of context, not taking into consideration that they might vary across different contexts. However, questionnaires also offer a number of advantages for researchers, which is why they are the most commonly used instrument. The fact that they can be administered to a large number of people and completed in a short period of time constitutes an essential benefit, especially when researchers have limited resources. Furthermore, prefabricated questionnaires with closed-ended questions improve and facilitate comparability between various groups. Finally, participants might feel more comfortable completing an anonymous questionnaire rather than being exposed to observation (Barcelos 2006: 15).

3.1.2 The metacognitive approach

Studies in the metacognitive approach have mainly been influenced by Wenden's framework in which beliefs are defined as metacognitive knowledge. According to Wenden (1991: 163), metacognitive knowledge is defined as "the stable, storable

although sometimes incorrect knowledge that learners have acquired about language, learning and the language learning process". Again, as in the normative approach, this knowledge about language learning can be wrong in a sense that it cannot be supported empirically. However, the metacognitive view is not as deterministic because beliefs are not necessarily considered to be misconceptions. Although Wenden (1999: 436) subsumes beliefs under the concept of metacognitive knowledge, she points out that the two concepts also differ from each other as beliefs are not only much more subjective compared to knowledge, but also held rather strongly.

In the metacognitive approach data is primarily collected through semi-structured interviews and self-reports. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with prefabricated guiding questions for the interviewer to work through the essential topics, but without determining the whole interview from the outset. In order to investigate the collected data content analysis needs to be carried out. Although primarily qualitative research methods are used in the metacognitive approach, some researchers also work with questionnaires in addition to interviews. Compared to the normative approach, the number of studies conducted in the metacognitive tradition is rather small with most of the studies investigating the framework of metacognitive knowledge itself as well as the influence of metacognition on learning (Barcelos 2006: 16-17). In one of her early studies, Wenden (1986, referred to in Barcelos 2006: 17) provided support for the assumptions that learners are able to think about the process of language learning and express beliefs about their proficiency, the learning outcome or their role in this process. In another study she further compared the beliefs extracted from interviews with the items of the BALLI and found they differed to a rather great extent. Because of these results she suggested that a more "representative set of beliefs" was needed in order to investigate beliefs in their entirety (Wenden 1987: 113). This is somewhat in line with the normative approach where recent studies now aim at using a variety of methods, as was mentioned above.

The relationship between beliefs and behaviour in the metacognitive approach differs from the normative one insofar as the connection between beliefs and autonomy is much more central. That is because metacognitive knowledge is considered to be the driving force of self-directed learning and directly related to

strategy-use. Wenden (1999: 436) offers the following explanation for this relationship:

[M]etacognitive knowledge and metacognitive strategies should be recognized as complementary components of the broader notion of metacognition, i.e. they are separate and distinct. Metacognitive knowledge refers to *information* learners acquire about their learning, while metacognitive strategies [...] are general *skills* through which learners manage, direct, regulate and guide their learning.

Apart from that, the relationship between beliefs and behaviour is in general very similar to the normative approach, as it is understood that positive beliefs increase self-directed learning and successful strategy-use, while negative ones lead to less self-directed learning and failure (Barcelos 2006: 19).

A major drawback of the metacognitive approach is that, like in the normative tradition, students' actions are not the basis for research on beliefs. Moreover, beliefs are again measured out of context, not taking into consideration that other factors might be influential in the language learning process. On the other hand, the use of interviews and self-reports has several advantages as well. In contrast to questionnaires, participants are allowed to answer questions in their own words and can thereby further elaborate their answers. Additionally, these research methods offer far more information on learners' beliefs about language learning (Barcelos 2006: 19).

3.1.3 The contextual approach

The contextual approach differs from the other two insofar as beliefs are not only investigated from a single, but from a number of different perspectives. Therefore, this approach is of a much more heterogeneous nature which also manifests itself in the various definitions of beliefs and the variety of research methods used. Instead of using prefabricated questionnaires, studies work with several instruments, also in combination. However, although studies within this approach take on slightly different views, there is a common underlying basis. Researchers do not intend to generalize learner beliefs across a number of different contexts, but rather investigate beliefs in specific contexts, which further distinguishes the contextual approach from the other

traditions. Through the combination of different research instruments it is possible to interpret learner beliefs in the respective contexts (Barcelos 2006: 19-20).

In general, beliefs are defined as being “contextual, dynamic and social” in various studies within this approach (Barcelos 2006: 20). Moreover, beliefs are considered as embedded in the respective contexts of learners (Bernat & Gvozdenko 2005: 6). Therefore, context is a central aspect, which is characterized by Goodwin and Duranti (1992: 5) as being constructed through social interactions and therefore also modifiable. According to this, learners’ perspectives on learning and their perceptions of language learning situations are crucial and although researchers may describe beliefs in various different ways, this particular definition is at the centre of studies within this approach (Barcelos 2006: 20). In one of his earlier works Riley (1994: 12.), for example, views beliefs as representations learners have about their learning and considers representations to exert an influence on learners’ behaviour, i.e. they affect how students approach learning a language. In general, researchers within the contextual approach agree that beliefs need to be investigated with regard to their respective context because they are part of learners’ experiences and therefore connected with the environment. Yet, despite this common underlying basis, beliefs can be investigated in various ways (Barcelos 2006: 21).

As already mentioned, studies following the contextual tradition are in part characterized by their diverse use of methods which are usually of a qualitative nature. While some of the studies rely on common observation methods like ethnography or case studies, others make use of phenomenography or metaphor and discourse analysis. Phenomenography investigates learner perspectives and deems them responsible for individual differences between learners (Murrmann 2009: 187). Other studies make use of metaphor analysis because it is believed that metaphors provide interesting insights into learners’ experiences. Metaphors can be found in written reports or spoken reports of students as well as in visualizations. In any way, metaphors offer themselves quite well for investigating learners’ conceptualizations of foreign language learning. A somewhat similar method is discourse analysis, which is also used to examine students’ representations about language learning. Again, data can include various sources like written reports, narratives or interviews (Barcelos 2006: 24). What is striking is the fact that even within different methodologies adopted by researchers a great number of methods is

used for data collection. This further underlines the methodological variety of the contextual approach.

Concerning the relationship of beliefs and behaviour, the focus is again on the context-specific view the contextual approach takes. As knowledge is seen as situated in context, it is important to examine the respective contexts the learners interact in. Studies using methods of classroom observation do not only aim at investigating the nature of beliefs, but also look at the relationship between beliefs and actions with regard to various contexts. Though the relationship between beliefs and behaviour is not as transparent in studies conducting metaphor or discourse analysis, a connection is assumed (Barcelos 2006: 24-25).

Although the methods used in the contextual approach may be time-consuming, they offer a number of advantages compensating for this. First, compared to the other two approaches beliefs are defined as dynamic and as developing through interaction. Second, due to the variety of research methods it is possible to investigate beliefs in their whole entirety rather than simply describing and classifying them. Third, learners are perceived in a much more positive way because they are considered as social beings exerting an influence on their surroundings. And finally, studies within the contextual approach at least attempt to investigate learners' beliefs in connection with learners' behaviour, unlike studies in other traditions (Barcelos 2006: 25).

3.1.4 Summary and rationale

The three approaches outlined above, as suggested by Barcelos (2006), are rather different from each other. While in the normative approach beliefs are defined as misconceptions rather than knowledge and mainly investigated with prefabricated questionnaires for classification purposes, which allows investigating large groups, the metacognitive approach describes beliefs as metacognitive knowledge learners have about their learning and collects data through interview techniques which gives participants the opportunity to elaborate on their answers. However, the normative approach restricts participants' answers and studies within the metacognitive tradition only infer beliefs from the subjects' statements. Moreover, both approaches do not take into account the social aspect and the dynamic nature of beliefs, but rather try to generalize them over various contexts. The contextual approach differs insofar as it

acknowledges the importance of context and aims at investigating the relationship between beliefs and behaviour. Table 2 sums up the main characteristics of each of the three approaches.

Table 2: Characteristics of research approaches

	Normative	Metacognitive	Contextual
Definition	Misconceptions, myths	Metacognitive knowledge; stable, but might be fallible	Contextual, dynamic, social
Methodology	Questionnaires	Interviews, self-report	Observations, case studies, diaries, phenomenography, metaphor/discourse analysis
Beliefs and Behaviour	Beliefs influence learners' approach to learning and learning strategies	Beliefs influence self-directed learning	Beliefs are context-specific

Although these research approaches are fairly different from each other, they share the common underlying assumption that beliefs can influence learners' behaviour, even though this relationship might not be as transparent and clear-cut as expected and needs to be investigated further (Barcelos 2006: 28). With each approach having its benefits and limitations, the choice of a research tradition is always dependent on the researcher's aims and objectives as well as the research questions and the amount of data that needs to be collected.

Research conducted for the present study follows the normative tradition. Despite its various drawbacks a questionnaire study was chosen as the study does not aim at investigating the nature of beliefs or their relationship with behaviour, but rather focuses on describing and contrasting beliefs of different learner groups in order to examine whether different educational backgrounds correlate with learners' beliefs. The focus hence being on a description and comparison of beliefs, a prefabricated questionnaire with closed-ended questions was chosen to ensure comparability of data. The instrument choice was also influenced by the fact that a certain amount of data is needed for comparison studies, which can be collected in a much shorter period of time through quantitative methods. Yet, although the present

research is conducted within the normative approach, beliefs are not necessarily defined as misconceptions or learner opinions that differ from those of researchers. Quite on the contrary, learner beliefs about language learning are not regarded as right or wrong, but rather they are understood as learners' theories about language learning that are held to be true and have an influence on behaviour, i.e. on the language learning process.

As the present study relies on a normative research instrument to examine beliefs about language learning held by different learner groups, the review of previous studies following at a later point will primarily focus on questionnaire studies, more specifically on studies conducted with the BALLI or adaptations of it. Before reviewing studies on beliefs about language learning in various different language contexts, however, the development of the research instrument for the current research will be discussed.

3.2 Development of the BALLI

Although interest in the research on learner beliefs already began in the early 1980s and some researchers like Wenden (1987) already investigated students' beliefs about language learning, there was no validated questionnaire available to investigate beliefs in a standardized way. However, in the mid 1980s, Elaine Horwitz (1985, 1987, 1988) made a major contribution to research on beliefs about language learning when developing a standardized questionnaire for exploring learner and teacher beliefs in a systematic way. The original version of the BALLI was developed by Horwitz (1985: 334-335) in order to assess teachers' beliefs about language learning in four different areas: foreign language aptitude, difficulty of language learning, nature of language learning and language learning strategies. The teacher version of the BALLI consisted of 27 items, which had to be answered on a five-point Likert scale. Items of the original version were developed in several stages. The first stage required four groups of altogether 25 language teachers from different cultural backgrounds to list their personal beliefs about language learning, other people's beliefs about language learning and finally beliefs about language learning their students might have. Out of these teachers' protocols a list of 30 different beliefs was

compiled which was again examined and extended by foreign language teacher educators from various cultural backgrounds and finally, the list was pilot-tested.

In order to assess learners' beliefs about language learning as well, Horwitz (1987: 120-121) developed two student versions of the BALLI. She added beliefs which arose in focus group discussions between the researcher and ESL and foreign language students. Horwitz created two versions of the student questionnaire, one being written in standard English for American foreign language students, the other in simplified English for ESL students, in order to facilitate comparison between different learner groups like second and foreign language learners. These two versions of the BALLI consisted of 34 items and assessed learner beliefs in five areas: foreign language aptitude, difficulty of language learning, nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies and motivation. Also, an additional version for foreign language teachers was developed (Horwitz 1988: 284).

To the present day a lot of studies have used the BALLI and adapted it according to their various research purposes. Items have been added or excluded and open-ended questions have been inserted at the end. However, despite its various adaptations, a main characteristic of the BALLI is that it never adds up to a composite score, but offers descriptions of learners' and teachers' views on language learning with regard to a variety of aspects instead. This is why on the one hand it can be used as a research instrument in order to understand the nature and the impact of learner beliefs as well as comprehend teachers' decisions for learning practices and to examine possible conflicts between learner and teacher beliefs. On the other hand, however, the BALLI can also be used as a teaching instrument in a sense that it serves as a stimulus for discussions in teacher training as well as with foreign language learners. For example, the BALLI can be handed out to language teaching students in one of their first classes in order to discover beliefs they have about language learning. Then, in a following discussion of the answers to the questionnaire items, controversies between learners might arise which again could lead students to question some of their beliefs (Horwitz 1985: 334-335).

Although the BALLI has been the principal normative research instrument for research on beliefs about language learning in the last decades and despite its several benefits, some researchers like Kuntz (1996) have questioned the validity of the questionnaire. In her paper on Horwitz's model, Kuntz (1996: 5-10) mentioned a number of problems concerning the administration of the BALLI. First, the

classification of beliefs into five major themes has not been statistically generated from students' responses, but rather themes were created according to teacher suggestions. Also, the choice of themes was never explicitly explained and the themes were not based on statistical analysis like factor analysis, but only descriptive statistics were used, which in turn made it impossible to investigate the significance of certain variables. Second, Kuntz criticised Horwitz's procedure of sample selection as only first-year students studying commonly taught languages at the University of Texas were selected, probably reducing generalizability of results. Finally, it was criticised that the BALLI did not provide information on all current issues concerning foreign language learning and that several adaptations over the last years, by Horwitz herself, make comparability between studies rather difficult. These several points of criticism led Kuntz to question the validity of the BALLI questionnaire.

A study by Nikitina and Furuoka (2006: 211-218) re-examined the BALLI and investigated the following problems mentioned by Kuntz:

1. Items dealing with learners' beliefs were created by language teachers.
2. Underlying themes were not generated statistically from learners' responses.
3. Only descriptive statistics were used.

They examined a total amount of 107 beginning Russian language students at a Malaysian university who had no prior knowledge of the language. About a third had completed one semester, the rest three semesters. Participants came from various cultural, educational and linguistic backgrounds. The majority of respondents stated that they spoke more than one language, i.e. they were already exposed to language learning and might have formed certain beliefs by then. The English ESL version of the BALLI was employed as research instrument in order to assess participants' beliefs about foreign language learning. As the aim of the study was to measure the reliability of the original BALLI, the researchers only made minor changes so that the instrument would reflect the context of the study. After data collection, factor analysis was employed in order to determine which items could be classified into a component. Thereby, a priori classifications researchers make by means of various criteria can be examined statistically. In this particular study, factor analysis was used in order to determine which of the BALLI items formed independent dimensions and to compare these statistical results with the conceptual framework originally

employed by Horwitz. Thus, it could be investigated whether Horwitz’s assumed categorization could be supported through inferential statistics.

In the process of analysis, some of the items from the BALLI had to be removed as they had high loadings on more than one factor, even after factor rotation, and therefore made interpretation somewhat difficult. However, after the elimination of those complex structures, the remaining structure allowed for an explicit interpretation. Four distinct, independent factors were extracted from factor analysis and given the following names: motivation, aptitude, strategy and ease of learning. When compared to Horwitz’s classification of themes, considerable overlap was found. A comparison of findings is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Comparison of findings (Nikitina & Furuoka 2006: 216)

Horwitz (1988)	Language Difficulty 14 24 28	FL Aptitude 1 2 10 15 22 29 32 33 34	Nature of Learning 8 11 16 20 25 26	Learning Strategy 7 9 12 13 17 18 19 21	Motivation 23 27 30 31
Nikitina & Furuoka (2006)	Ease of Learning 28 33	Aptitude 22 29	-----	Strategy 9 13	Motivation 23 27 30 31

Note: numbers indicate items in Horwitz’s BALLI

The items loading on factors motivation, aptitude and strategy were identical to Horwitz’s categorization and the factor ease of learning was considered to be similar to Horwitz’s theme of language difficulty. Only one theme of the original BALLI, namely nature of language learning, could not be extracted as an independent factor in this study. Results of the study therefore provided support for Horwitz’s original classification of beliefs about language learning through statistical analysis. Nikitina and Furuoka concluded that the BALLI could be considered both an appropriate research instrument for assessing learners’ beliefs about language learning as well as a teaching instrument. Also, they pointed out that the BALLI has been a commonly used research instrument in a great number of studies over the last years, which suggests that researchers on the one hand agree with Horwitz’s theoretical framework and on the other consider it a reliable tool. A number of other researchers have investigated this theoretical classification and the validity of the BALLI as a research instrument as well (Park 1995; Yang 1999; Hsiao & Chiang 2010). Although Horwitz’s classification could not be confirmed in its entirety as the majority of studies

found four instead of five distinct factors – some of them different from the ones postulated by Horwitz – results of such validation studies still provide support for the assumption that the BALLI can be considered a valid instrument for the investigation of beliefs about language learning.

Concerning Kuntz's criticism on Horwitz's sampling procedure, it should be mentioned that by now a number of researchers have investigated learner beliefs about language learning in various cultural, educational and linguistic contexts. The following chapter will review previous studies on beliefs about language learning conducted with the BALLI – or adaptations of it – in various different contexts, in order to provide a background for the empirical study of the present paper.

4 Review of BALLI studies

4.1 Beliefs in an ESL context

In one of her early studies, Horwitz (1987: 119-126) investigated the beliefs about language learning of 32 ESL students at the University of Texas which were enrolled in the Intensive English Program at intermediate level. Participants of the study came from various cultural backgrounds. For data collection Horwitz administered the ESL version of the BALLI, a version written in simplified English. Results of the study revealed that the majority of participants supported the concept of a foreign language aptitude, i.e. an ability to learn languages and believed that it is easier for children to learn a foreign language than it is for adults. Likewise, in general, participants also believed in a difficulty hierarchy, meaning that there are easier and more difficult languages and considered English to be of average difficulty. Concerning the nature of language learning, the majority of subjects considered it very important to learn English in an English-speaking country. Language learning and communication strategies that were considered significant by the learners were repetition as well as practising with native English speakers. And finally, the majority of learners indicated that their desire to have American friends was a strong motivation factor. According to Horwitz, these beliefs held by ESL learners might be influenced by previous language learning experiences or by their respective cultural backgrounds. She concluded that learners' beliefs about language learning may have an influence on how students approach learning a foreign language, which is why knowledge of learners' beliefs could be very useful in language teaching.

4.2 Beliefs in an EFL context

In her study on beliefs about language learning, Truitt (1995b: 1-11) investigated the beliefs of Korean learners of English as well as their correlation with certain background factors and compared the results with outcomes of previous studies. A Korean version of the BALLI and a background questionnaire were administered to 204 students at a university in Korea. Additionally, open-ended questions were added to the BALLI in order to discover other potential beliefs. For data analysis, a

number of statistical procedures like descriptive statistics, factor analysis and multivariate analysis were used. Responses to the open-ended questions were categorized. Results of the study demonstrated that Korean learners believed in the idea of a language aptitude and considered practice and repetition as important. Moreover, participants of the study showed a strong instrumental motivation for learning English, that is they believed in better job opportunities if they learned to speak English well. Also, they agreed that learning strategies like guessing are important and considered it okay to make mistakes. At the same time, however, they also expressed concerns about speaking English with others. The comparison of results with those of other studies showed both similarities and differences. On the one hand, Korean learners differed in their beliefs from international ESL students and American FL students to some extent as they were less confident and rather driven by instrumental motivation in contrast to their peers. On the other hand, a number of similarities were found in comparison with Chinese and other Korean students. Truitt attributed these similarities to similar cultures and education systems. Yet, even learners from the same culture and with similar experiences did not necessarily hold the same beliefs. Finally, it was shown that background variables like an academic major and living abroad have a significant impact on beliefs about language learning which suggests that these beliefs could be influenced by previous experiences.

A study conducted by Sakui and Gaies (1999: 476-486) took on a rather different approach for questionnaire development. In order to ensure reliability of their instrument, the researchers asked English language teachers to evaluate a number of given items from existing belief questionnaires like the BALLI and, if considered necessary, suggest additional ones. The final version of the questionnaire ultimately consisted of 45 items, some of them adopted from previously existing questionnaires, others added by the researchers. The questionnaire was then distributed to 1296 Japanese university students of English as a foreign language. Additionally, researchers conducted interviews with some of the learners who completed the questionnaire in order to ensure a more accurate interpretation of the questionnaire responses. Results of the study showed that Japanese learners of English hold similar beliefs about foreign language learning as learners from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds. For example, the majority agreed that repetition and practice is important when learning a foreign language as well as is knowledge about English-

speaking cultures. Likewise, participants believed in the advantages of learning a foreign language at an early age, while they strongly disagreed with the statement that learners should not speak until they can say something correctly. Probably the most important finding in Sakui and Gaies' study was that interviews provide a very useful supplement to questionnaires as they allow for a more detailed description of beliefs and reduce possible misinterpretations of questionnaire responses.

A study conducted by Diab (2006: 80-91) investigated Lebanese learners' beliefs about language learning and compared the beliefs they held about learning different target languages, namely English and French. For data collection, a modified version of Horwitz's BALLI questionnaire as well as a background questionnaire were distributed to 284 Lebanese students of English at three different universities in Lebanon. About half of the participants studied at English-medium schools, the other half attended French-medium schools. Diab modified the original version of the BALLI to provide for possible context-specific beliefs that might emerge in the Lebanese context. Therefore, she conducted a pilot study in which beliefs of Lebanese EFL university students were elicited through interviews and added to the existing questionnaire. Through factor analysis, four belief factors were identified for each language group. Beliefs about learning English were divided into integrative motivation, the difficulty of speaking and learning English, the importance of accuracy in speaking English and the importance of English in Lebanon. Beliefs about learning French contained the factors motivation and confidence in speaking, the nature of learning French, the importance of French in Lebanon and the importance of accuracy in speaking French. Concerning the importance of accuracy in speaking English and French, participants generally agreed that guessing is an acceptable technique and that it is important to speak with an excellent pronunciation in both languages. Regarding the difficulty of learning English and French, the majority of learners considered English to be a rather easy language, while French was believed to be a more difficult one. Finally, it was also shown that participants had a greater instrumental as well as integrative motivation for learning English than for learning French as they considered it very important to speak English in Lebanon and indicated that they would like to get in contact with English native speakers. With participants of the study reporting slightly varying beliefs about learning English and French, Diab hypothesized that the political and social-cultural context of foreign language education in Lebanon might influence these beliefs about language

learning. However, the study also showed certain within-group variation pointing at differences in learner beliefs due to background variables like gender or language-medium background.

Zhang and Cui (2010: 32-39) investigated the beliefs of beginning and advanced distance foreign language learners of English in China. The researchers examined beliefs about the nature of language learning, the role of the teacher and feedback, strategies in language learning and self-efficacy. The 90 participants of the study were all majoring in English and were recruited through mail and email methods. The research instrument used was a survey, combined of adaptations from Cotterall's (1995) and Horwitz's (1987) questionnaires. Also, an open-ended question was added in order to examine possible difficulties of distance learning. Results of the study showed that, in general, the majority of the participants exhibited similar beliefs as learners in conventional classrooms. For example, they believed that language learning takes an appropriate amount of time, mistakes are a natural part of learning and a new language is easier to learn for children than it is for adults. However, the study also revealed certain differences between beginning and advanced distance language students, especially with regard to autonomy. While beginning learners were probably still influenced by conventional education and valued help and feedback from the teacher, more advanced students were far more confident with their learning and valued their own feedback, rather than relying on the teacher. This study is particularly interesting and important, as it reinforces the view that beliefs can possibly undergo change over time, which in turn provides support for the assumption that beliefs are dynamic, not stable.

A study conducted by Kunt (1997 as referred to in Hong 2006: 48) investigated learner beliefs and anxiety as well as their correlation with each other. For this purpose, the BALLI was distributed to 882 Turkish-speaking university students who were learning English as a foreign language at pre-university programs in North Cyprus. By applying statistical procedures like factor analysis, three different belief categories of Turkish students could be extracted, namely the value and nature of learning English, self-efficacy/confidence in speaking and beliefs about social interaction. Results of the study revealed that Turkish students of English showed a rather strong instrumental motivation, i.e. they believed that being able to speak English well would result in better job opportunities in the future. In line with this, participants of the study considered the English language to be of great importance.

In accordance with the majority of findings of other studies, the Turkish students also believed in the significance of repetition and guessing. Concerning the relationship between beliefs about language learning and anxiety, the study found a significant correlation between self-efficacy/confidence in speaking and foreign language anxiety. This suggests that confidence can protect language learners from suffering from anxiety as higher confidence leads to lower levels of anxiety. A study conducted by Truitt (1995a), which also investigated this correlation, obtained very similar results, as has already been outlined in the previous chapter.

In Yang's study (1999: 519-532) beliefs about language learning and strategy use of Taiwanese University students as well as their relationship were investigated. For data collection, an English Learning Questionnaire was created which consisted of three sections: the BALLI for investigating learner beliefs, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) for investigating strategy use, and questions on the learners' background. The questionnaire was distributed to 505 English students at six different Taiwanese universities at the beginning of the semester. All participants of the study had already studied English for some years, at school as well as at university. For data analysis, a number of statistical procedures were used. Results of the BALLI first of all showed a four factor structure arising from factor analysis. The following four belief categories were identified: self-efficacy and expectation about learning English, perceived value and nature of spoken English, beliefs about foreign language aptitude and beliefs about formal structural studies. According to Yang's study, the majority of Taiwanese learners showed a strong sense of self-efficacy, i.e. they believed they would learn English very well. Likewise, participants considered speaking English to be of great value and also assumed that people in their country believed it was important to be able to speak English. In line with this, learners believed that speaking English with an excellent pronunciation was very important and therefore regarded practice and repetition as essential. Besides that, the majority of the Taiwanese learners believed in the concept of a foreign language aptitude. Finally, a substantial number of participants considered formal structures like memorization as very helpful in foreign language learning. Yang's study furthermore discovered a number of different strategies used by students like functional practice, metacognitive or formal oral-practice strategies. Through statistical correlation procedures it could be shown that a relationship between learners' beliefs and their use of language learning strategies seems to exist. These results provide further

support for the assumed connection between beliefs and strategy use. However, whether beliefs influence learning strategies or vice versa, still needs to be examined further.

Hong (2006) compared learner beliefs and learning strategies of monolingual Korean and bilingual Korean-Chinese university students and investigated the relationship between beliefs and strategy use. He distributed three questionnaires, the BALLI, the SILL – an open-ended question was added to both – and an individual background questionnaire to 428 monolingual Korean and 420 bilingual Korean-Chinese university students. Participants of the study were enrolled in different subjects, but all had to take some credits of English classes. Several statistical procedures like descriptive statistics, factor analysis and correlations were used for analysing the collected data. Factor analysis of the data determined four factors for both the monolinguals as well as the bilinguals: motivation for and nature of learning English, self-efficacy and confidence in learning English, formal learning beliefs and foreign language aptitude. Both similarities and differences in beliefs were found across the groups of monolingual and bilingual students. The majority of both groups believed in the concept of a language aptitude; however, about half of the monolinguals disagreed that they themselves had this special ability, while bilinguals were rather neutral about this statement. Also, more monolinguals considered it to be easier for children to learn a new language than bilinguals. A great number of participants in both groups believed in a difficulty hierarchy and assumed they would learn to speak English well. Concerning the nature of language learning, beliefs were more varied across the two groups. While monolinguals did not consider grammar as important in foreign language learning, bilinguals believed it was crucial. Also, bilinguals were more likely to regard translation as significant. Other than that, a great number of subjects from both groups believed in repetition, practice and excellent pronunciation. Similar to Yang, this study also found a correlation between beliefs and strategy use for both of the groups. According to Hong (2006: 147), these correlations show that beliefs might have an influence on the use of language learning strategies.

A fairly recent study by Azar and Saeidi (2013: 169-173) also investigated the relationship between learner beliefs and their strategy use of Iranian EFL learners. The study differs from others as participants of the study were not university students of English or pupils at school, but adult learners choosing to learn English as a

foreign language. For data collection, the BALLI and the SILL were distributed to 200 learners at seven different private language institutes in Iran and data was analysed through statistical procedures like descriptive statistics and correlation. Results of the BALLI showed that beliefs of Iranian learners were similar to those of other cultural backgrounds. Again, the majority of participants believed in the existence of a special ability for language learning as well as in the concept of a difficulty hierarchy. Likewise, Iranian learners regarded repetition and practice as important and showed strong motivation for learning English. A striking result, somewhat in contradiction to most of the previous studies, was the fact that a substantial amount of participants of the current study disagreed with the statement that English is best learned in an English-speaking country. Moreover, although participants showed strong motivations for learning a new language, their primary aim was not to get in touch with native speakers of that language. Concerning the relationship between beliefs and strategy use, correlations were found between all belief and strategy categories, providing further support for the assumed relationship.

Several other researchers (Park 1995; Kim 2001; Mokhtari 2007) have investigated the relationship between beliefs and strategies in various contexts and the results seem to point at a two-way directional relationship. On the one hand, beliefs may influence strategy use, on the other hand, the selection of strategies might as well influence learners' beliefs about language learning. However, since this relationship is an independent research topic on its own and not the focus of the current paper, no further studies examining this relationship will be discussed. The studies above were reviewed in order to provide a complete picture of research on beliefs about language learning.

4.3 Beliefs in a FL context

Horwitz (1988: 285-293) distributed the standard English version of the BALLI to 241 first semester foreign language students at the University of Texas. Participants were drawn from three different language groups, namely German, French and Spanish in order to allow for comparison of beliefs of beginning university students across various language groups. Overall, results of the study revealed considerable similarities between learners across the different target language groups and were

also somewhat similar to the previous study conducted by Horwitz (1987). For example, learners of all language groups believed in the existence of a difficulty hierarchy of languages, i.e. some languages are easier to learn than others. Also, the majority of learners endorsed the concept of a foreign language aptitude and they considered it to be easier for children than for adults to learn a new language. Moreover, learners agreed that anyone could learn to speak a foreign language. Regarding learning and communication strategies, learners across all language groups believed in the importance of repetition and practice, especially in the language laboratory. In contrast to Horwitz's study with ESL learners, participants of this study only showed moderate levels of motivation. Neither did they expect better job opportunities because of their foreign language competence, nor did they express a strong desire to get in contact with native speakers of the respective languages. Despite these numerous similarities found between learners of different target languages, Horwitz's study also discovered some minor differences. For instance, while Spanish students considered their language to be a rather easy one, German and French students rated their languages as more difficult. Also, learners of French and Spanish were more concerned about reaching a native-like accent than were learners of German. Probably the biggest disagreement across the three language groups was related to the role of translation in foreign language learning. While the majority of German and Spanish students considered translating as an important technique, students of French disagreed. The overall results of the study hence show a lot of similarities among the three different language groups, suggesting a consistent pattern. The differences that were encountered could be attributed to errors in measurement, variation in populations or language instruction. Horwitz concluded that learners seem to have preconceived beliefs about language learning which they bring to class and knowledge of these beliefs might help language teachers to get a better understanding of how students approach language learning.

In a study by Tumposky (1991: 52-60), similarities and differences of language learners' beliefs within as well as across different cultural and educational contexts were examined by looking at the beliefs of learners from different sociolinguistic backgrounds. Therefore she distributed the BALLI questionnaire to 54 undergraduate students from the former USSR – a multilingual society – who were taking part in an exchange program in the United States. Moreover, 36 undergraduate students from the US – a monolingual society – studying foreign languages completed the BALLI. A

number of similarities were found between the two different cultural groups. For example, participants of both groups strongly agreed with the statement that language learning is easier for children, believed in the existence of a foreign language aptitude and indicated that they enjoyed practicing with native speakers of the target language. However, there were also many striking differences that need to be addressed. While the majority of the Soviet students considered learning a foreign language in a country where the target language is spoken as highly valuable, only about half of the American students considered it as important. Moreover, although American foreign language students were similarly eager to practice with native speakers and learn a new language as were Soviet students, about half of the Americans felt timid speaking the foreign language with others. Given the findings of the study, Tumposky concluded that cultural background might have an influence on the beliefs of language learners and subsequently lead to differences in motivation and strategy use. However, she also indicated that overall beliefs were quite similar across the two groups, which suggests that culture might not be as an influential factor as it is considered to be (Tumposky 1991: 62).

In a somewhat different study, Kuntz (1996) investigated the beliefs about language learning of students studying very commonly taught languages like French, German and Spanish and less commonly taught ones like Arabic and Swahili respectively. Once again, the BALLI was used as a research instrument and 13 further statements and a demographic questionnaire were added. It was distributed to 424 university students who were taking beginning language classes in different foreign languages. In part, Kuntz's study was a replication of Horwitz's (1988) study as the beliefs of French, German and Spanish students were investigated. However, in her research she included less commonly taught languages as well in order to examine whether students of these languages differ from their colleagues in their beliefs about language learning. Results of the study identified seven commonly held beliefs about language learning regardless of learners' target language and the respective difficulty. Yet, a substantial amount of differences in beliefs between the two groups was discovered. For example, learners of Arabic and Swahili regarded communication strategies and contact with people of the target culture as more important than learners of more commonly taught languages did. Differences like these provide support for the fact that the respective language being studied as well

as the cultural and social environment may have an impact on students' beliefs about language learning.

A study by Oh (1996 as referred to in Hong 2006: 50) investigated beliefs about language learning and foreign language anxiety in a foreign language context with American students learning Japanese. The BALLI was distributed to 195 first and second-year students at the University of Texas for data collection. Factor analysis extracted four belief categories of American students learning Japanese, namely motivation/confidence in speaking Japanese, beliefs about the importance of formal learning, foreign language aptitude and beliefs about the importance of correctness. Compared to other studies, the findings suggested that foreign language learners share some beliefs regardless of the target language they were studying. However, individual background factors might still have an influence on beliefs as well. Besides, Oh argued that learner beliefs about the difficulty of learning a language as well as motivation were dependent on perceptions of the respective target language, which in turn affected confidence levels.

Ariogul, Unal and Onursal (2009: 1501-1505) also investigated learner beliefs about language learning in a foreign language context. They examined similarities and differences in beliefs among foreign language learners of English, German and French. The BALLI and a demographic questionnaire were distributed to a total number of 343 university language students in Turkey. All participants of the study were beginning students in an intensive language school programme during their first year of university. The collected data was analysed through statistical procedures like descriptive and inferential statistics in order to examine differences between the three learners groups. Overall, Turkish foreign language learners showed similar results as their fellow language learners from different cultural and educational backgrounds. Also, among the different groups of the study a number of similarities were found. For example, the majority of all three groups believed in the concept of a difficulty hierarchy of languages as well as in a foreign language aptitude. Furthermore, a great number of participants also agreed that the best way to learn a foreign language is to live in a country where the target language is spoken and believed that repetition is important. However, results of the study also suggested various differences in beliefs among the language groups. While only a minority of German and English students believed they had a special ability for language learning, the majority of French students assessed themselves as having a rather high ability.

Concerning the fact that knowing the target culture is important when learning a foreign language, a substantial amount of German and French learners agreed, while learners of English mostly disagreed. A rather great difference emerged with regard to the importance of pronunciation. French students valued excellent pronunciation much higher than English and German learners. Moreover, learners of French also showed a greater willingness to communicate with people speaking the target language. In general, results of the study suggested that French learners appeared to have somewhat different beliefs from their peers in other language groups, but nevertheless, overall, the three groups shared a number of beliefs regardless of their target language.

4.4 Summary

As this review of selected questionnaire studies on beliefs about language learning has shown, a great number of similarities exist extending beyond different cultural, educational and linguistic contexts. On the one hand, there seem to be certain core beliefs that are held similarly by various learner groups irrespective of their backgrounds. On the other hand, besides this great number of similarities, findings of previous studies point at some differences between the learner groups as well. Table 4 summarises the main findings of the studies reviewed above by illustrating similarities and differences in beliefs over a number of different contexts.

Table 4: Similarities and differences in beliefs over a variety of contexts

Similarities in beliefs	Differences in beliefs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of foreign language aptitude • Existence of difficulty hierarchy of languages • Benefits of early language learning • Importance of repetition and practice • Importance of errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of pronunciation • Knowing about the target culture • Importance of translation and grammar • Motivation (instrumental vs. integrative)

The studies within this review also provide further support for Horwitz's theoretical categorization of beliefs. Although the extracted factors in the various studies were not completely identical to the ones postulated by Horwitz, there is considerable overlap, suggesting that the theoretical assumptions could be supported by statistical analyses. Of course, there are a number of other studies investigating beliefs about language learning; however, discussing every single one of them in detail would go beyond the scope of the present paper, which is why only a selection of studies on learner beliefs was discussed in this section.

The fact that learners' beliefs about language learning do seem to differ to some extent across different contexts was the starting point of the present paper. While the majority of studies so far have investigated the beliefs of language learners coming from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, the current study examines the influence of the educational background. To be more precise, similarities and differences between two groups of English language students who engage in different language learning programmes at school will be investigated. The following chapter introduces these two programmes.

5 Contrasting EFL and CLIL

5.1 English as a Foreign Language in Austrian secondary schools

The learning and teaching of foreign languages has a long tradition in the Austrian school system with compulsory language education starting at primary school level and continuing into secondary education. Nowadays there are even initiatives promoting language learning at pre-school level since early foreign language education is considered to be of great importance for the further linguistic development of children in general and for their foreign language competence in particular. Moreover, due to growing globalization and an increasing importance of international ties, being proficient in at least one foreign language is becoming more and more fundamental. Therefore, the Austrian school system promotes language learning from an early age onwards to lay a basis for foreign language competence. In the following, the history of foreign language education in Austrian secondary schools and its current structure will be discussed.

While first pilot projects on foreign language teaching were already initiated in the 1960s within the frame of educational reforms, the importance of being proficient in one or two foreign languages for usage in everyday communication was only acknowledged in the 1980s. In the 1990s the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture initiated a so-called 'foreign language offensive', which has led to one or two foreign languages being compulsory at lower secondary level and at least two at upper secondary level. Since then the significance of foreign languages has continually increased and language teaching has become a basic element of the Austrian school system which has been further expanded over the last decades with even more languages being offered (Abuja 2007: 14; de Cillia & Krumm 2010: 154). In general, the whole education system in Austria is regulated on a national level through the 'Schulorganisationsgesetz' which contains the framework for all different school types. The respective syllabi further define underlying aims and didactic principles for the various subjects. Although the national syllabi do not fully dictate which foreign languages should be taught, but provide a list of languages that schools may rather autonomously choose from, in reality this is not necessarily the case with English being the most commonly taught foreign language in Austria. Table

4 provides an overview of the distribution of foreign languages taught at Austrian schools. It clearly shows that English is the dominant foreign language across all grades, while other modern foreign languages mainly gain importance at upper secondary level.

Table 5: Total number of students in Austria taught in a foreign language in absolute and relative numbers (Language Education Policy Profile 2008: 41)

Languages	4th grade	8th grade	10th grade	12th grade
other modern languages	231 0.25%	324 0.33%	122 0.11%	51 0.06%
English	91,718 98.61%	97,906 98.82%	104,305 94.16%	83,915 96.13%
French	1,639 1.76%	8,809 8.89%	25,710 23.21%	23,481 26.90%
Italian	1,338 1.44%	3,727 3.76%	10,638 9.60%	10,287 11.78%
Croatian	488 0.52%	199 0.20%	71 0.06%	64 0.07%
Russian	176 0.19%	462 0.47%	735 0.66%	661 0.76%
Slovak	140 0.15%	47 0.05%	22 0.02%	20 0.02%
Slovenian	716 0.77%	56 0.06%	201 0.18%	13 0.16%
Spanish	97 0.10%	1,041 1.05%	4,525 4.09%	4,142 4.74%
Czech	278 0.30%	144 0.15%	195 0.18%	162 0.19%
Hungarian	195 0.21%	222 0.22%	133 0.12%	103 0.12%

Note: For reasons of completeness the numbers of primary schools are included in this table, however, they will not be discussed further in the present paper

Based on the aforementioned pilot projects initiated as part of the educational reforms, a foreign language, mainly English, became compulsory for learners at both lower and upper secondary level. At lower secondary level only one modern language is taught at an extent of 4/4/4/3 hours per week, though academic secondary schools can adapt this extent. In general, English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Czech, Slovenian, Hungarian or Croatian are offered, but mainly English is taught as the first foreign language. From 7th grade onwards students can choose either another modern language or Latin as compulsory subject choice. At upper secondary level the first modern language, mostly English, is taught at an

extent of 3/3/3/3 hours per week. Depending on the schools' individual language policy, a second modern language is either started at lower secondary level as mentioned above or at 9th grade in upper secondary. Although a third modern language is not compulsory, some schools either offer an additional language from 9th grade onwards as a regular subject or as a compulsory subject choice for students (de Cillia & Krumm 2010: 154-157).

The aims and objectives contained in the syllabus are derived from the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) and refer to the following five skills: listening, reading, writing, speaking and taking part in conversations. In lower secondary the development of a general communicative competence in a foreign language is in the foreground as well as the development of an intercultural competence in order to sensitise students to the diversity of cultures. At the end of lower secondary level students should have reached A2 level in all five skills and level B1 in listening, reading and writing. For example, they should be able to understand sentences and frequently used expressions as well as engage in simple conversations. Foreign language teaching in upper secondary focuses on enabling students to be able to fulfil communicative demands in the foreign language, to further sensitise them to the linguistic diversity and increase their openness and understanding for other cultures as well as promote lifelong autonomous language learning. After eight years of language learning at the end of upper secondary level students should have reached B2 level in all five skills, meaning that among other things they can understand the main ideas of a complex text and interact with others in a fluent and spontaneous way (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen 2004; Common European Framework of References for Languages).

Apart from aims and objectives, the syllabus also contains a number of general didactic principles. Reaching communicative competence in all skills is regarded as the major aim of foreign language teaching and learning as this enables successful communication. Moreover, the functional aspect of language is to be given priority over the formal one. Likewise, language teachers should always consider the respective language of their learners and exhibit a certain error tolerance in their language classrooms as errors are an important factor in language learning. However, accuracy in the target language is nevertheless an important objective. Obviously, the target language should be used as often as possible, even in interdisciplinary ways and students should be provided with opportunities for

authentic encounters with native speakers. This could be realised through school partnerships, native speaker assistants or school trips and exchange programmes which might also result in students getting a better understanding of the target culture. Finally, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are required, i.e. students should be able to use a foreign language for communicative purposes and distinguish between certain registers. For that, the integration of a number of different English varieties into language lessons is essential (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen 2004; de Cillia & Krum 2010: 159).

Apart from the extent of foreign language teaching that is decided by the Ministry of Education, there are a number of schools in Austria which offer additional language programmes and thereby extend the amount of foreign language instruction at their respective schools. These additional programmes can reach from an additional foreign language being introduced at school, as has already been mentioned above, to native speakers assisting language teachers in their lessons or teaching a content subject through a foreign language, i.e. using a foreign language as a medium of instruction. As schools have a certain autonomy concerning their language policy, they can adapt the amount of foreign language teaching on an individual basis. One of these additional language programmes will be explained in more detail in the following section.

5.2 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Nowadays, educational systems across Europe aim at educating multilingual and multicultural EU citizens in order to prepare them for the growing globalization (Lasagabaster 2008: 30; Eurydice 2006: 56). Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a twofold educational approach aimed at promoting a multilingual society in Europe by increasing proficiency in foreign languages through teaching content subjects in the target language. Indeed, multilingual education in Europe dates back centuries when people from different language backgrounds like Romans and Greeks came to live together and were educated in additional languages (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010: 2). Hence, schools where certain subjects are taught in a foreign or second language have existed in Europe for several decades now. However, it was not until the 1990s that the concept of CLIL came into being and the

acronym established itself as the most commonly used term throughout Europe (Eurydice 2006: 7). In order to promote mobility and exchange between citizens of the European member states for occupational, educational as well as personal reasons and with linguistic diversity becoming more and more important, the government of the EU concentrated on the role of languages in general and language teaching and learning in particular in the last decades. In line with this, the EU Commission's White Paper on Education and Training, which was published in 1995, states that every citizen of the EU should have proficiency in at least three of the community languages, i.e. his mother tongue and two additional languages (EU White Paper 1995: 47). This is considered to be a precondition for profiting from occupational opportunities as well as establishing relationships with citizens from other member states. The EU White Paper further hints at the possibility of studying content subjects through foreign languages and thereby points to the concept of CLIL being introduced at schools in Europe:

It could even be argued, that secondary school pupils should study certain subjects in the first foreign language learned, as is the case in the European schools. Upon completing initial training everyone should be proficient in two Community foreign languages (EU White Paper 1995: 47).

Although Content and Language Integrated Learning is a strongly European-oriented approach, its development has been greatly influenced by Canadian immersion and North American bilingual programmes. Yet, these programmes only provided the basis for the development of CLIL as a direct transfer was not possible due to the different educational and linguistic environments in the various member states. In contrast to the Canadian model where students are not only taught content subjects through a second language, but are also surrounded by the target language in their environment, the foreign language of CLIL lessons is not used outside school (Eurydice 2006: 7). Rather than preparing students for using the target language in communication with their peers in their own countries, CLIL programmes aim at increasing students' language proficiency in foreign languages in order for them to be able to work and study in other member states and thereby increase mobility within the EU (Perez-Cañado 2012: 318).

The term CLIL was developed at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland and has since been used to describe an approach where an additional language is used for the teaching and learning of content subjects (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010: 3;

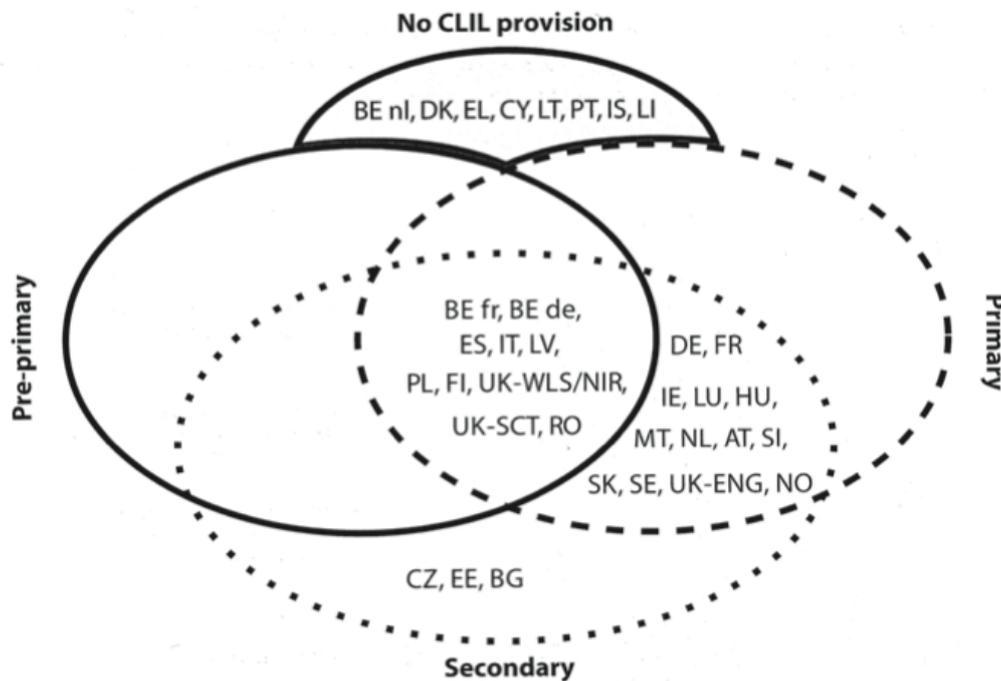
Wolff 2007: 16). However, it needs to be stressed that the target language is not merely used for instructional purposes, but in theory equal importance is assigned to both content and language learning. For example, a content subject such as biology or chemistry is taught through a foreign language and both language and content are at the centre of attention. That is to say, a “subject is not taught *in* a foreign language but *with* and *through* a foreign language”, which suggests a more integrative approach (Eurydice 2006: 7). The underlying idea is that language is best learned when the focus is not on language itself, but on the content that is learned through the language (Wolff 2007: 15). However, although in theory CLIL programmes stress a two-dimensional goal where content and language are of equal importance, in reality the situation is a different one as by now a very large variety of CLIL programmes exists within the EU. That means CLIL provision in the different member states takes many different forms, reflecting a variety of different linguistic or educational environments which again results in programmes that do not necessarily promote content and language to the same extent (Eurydice 2006: 7).

This diversity of CLIL programmes across Europe is also encountered when looking at the terminology. As Lasagabaster (2008: 31) points out, the term CLIL coexists with other terms like content-based language instruction, theme-based language teaching and foreign language medium instruction, just to mention a few. These terms are often used on a national level and can reflect very different educational situations because despite the fact that all these concepts include content as well as language, they do not stress both components to the same extent. While some programmes emphasize language over content, as is the case with ‘bilingual education’, others mainly focus on the content being taught in the target language, ignoring the language aspect (Eurydice 2006: 56). As already mentioned above, the choice for a specific CLIL programme is always dependent on several factors. Because of different educational policies in the member states of the EU, the countries are not bound to guidelines concerning the implementation of CLIL programmes, but rather the choice for the framework of a CLIL programme will depend on several organisational decisions and the respective educational authorities (Dalton-Puffer & Smit 2007: 12; Eurydice 2006: 7).

A survey published by the Eurydice programme in 2006 examined and reviewed CLIL provision in European countries in order to demonstrate the variety of multilingual programmes that have been introduced and implemented in the last

decades. The study included all types of programmes assigned to the concept of CLIL, i.e. content subjects being taught through a foreign language (Eurydice 2006: 10). Results of the Eurydice study reveal the existing diversity among the various CLIL programmes in Europe. Figure 1 shows CLIL provision in EU member states at various levels of education.

Figure 1: Levels of education at which CLIL is offered in mainstream provision 2004/05 (Eurydice 2006: 20)



Source: Eurydice.

In spite of the majority of European countries offering CLIL provision as part of mainstream school education, this does not mean it is very widespread. Only very few countries offer CLIL programmes on a general basis. Usually it is only available to a minority of learners in a few schools. Regarding the status of languages, English is the pre-eminent language of CLIL provision, followed by French and German. The selection of subjects taught in the target language is a very heterogeneous matter because in the majority of countries it is possible to select from all subjects available in the respective curricula, i.e. all subjects could be targeted by CLIL (Eurydice 2006: 14-24). However, the choice of subjects mainly seems to be limited to history, geography and sciences (Pérez-Cañado 2012: 320).

Apart from this great diversity of CLIL programmes that have been implemented across Europe over the last years, they all share a certain number of

features. Through CLIL it is possible to teach languages to students on a very intensive basis as the amount of exposure to the target language is increased considerably; however, this increased exposure is not at the expense of other subjects on the timetable (Dalton-Puffer & Smit 2007: 8). Moreover, CLIL enables the learners to engage in genuine communication about authentic subjects (Eurydice 2006: 8). As the present study is interested in the beliefs of Austrian CLIL learners and their non-CLIL peers, the history and implementation of CLIL in Austria will be discussed next.

5.2.1 Content and Language Integrated Learning in Austria

With the growing interest in foreign language learning since the 1980s and the importance of being proficient in additional languages due to increasing globalization, Content and Language Integrated Learning has been gradually implemented into the Austrian school system. The Austrian model of CLIL is labelled 'Fremdsprache als Arbeitssprache' (FAA) and it was first introduced in 1991 as the result of a project group of the ZSE III (the former Zentrum für Schulentwicklung in Graz, now the Austrian Centre for Language Competence, ÖSZ). The Austrian Ministry of Education set up this project group as an attempt to merge the great number of pilot projects existing in secondary schools across Austria during that time in order to further develop the concept of bilingual education. Work of the project group resulted in a number of publications, increased in-service training and conferences on the topic. Moreover, a variety of teaching materials was published which have led to a steady increase in CLIL activities as well as to the development of various organizational forms (Abuja 2007: 16). While CLIL provision in primary schools is rather homogenous with a foreign language being taught in a cross-curricular way, CLIL programmes in Austrian secondary schools range from so-called 'mini-projects' with only a few CLIL lessons in a limited number of subjects, to bilingual schooling where most of the subjects are taught bilingually throughout the year (Eurydice 2005: 4-5). Therefore, the situation in Austria to some extent mirrors the situation of CLIL provision across Europe, in a sense that a whole variety of CLIL programmes have evolved since its implementation. Yet, this diversity has the advantage of allowing different school types to adapt their form of CLIL implementation regarding the

provision of teachers and materials, the target group and the school setting (Abuja 2007: 17).

With English being the predominant language of CLIL provision in Austria, CLIL is most commonly referred to as ‘Englisch als Arbeitssprache’ (EAA), i.e. English is used as a medium of instruction for the teaching of other subjects. This pre-eminence is most likely to be attributed to the ever-growing importance of English as a lingua franca throughout the world and the related demands that people are able to process and discuss relevant information about various topics in English. In EAA language is seen “as a tool that can be employed to teach subject-specific content, by temporarily merging content teaching and language learning” (Abuja 2007: 17-18). Eurydice (2005: 3) lists the following underlying linguistic and educational aims of EAA:

- Increasing linguistic ability (including in the subject matter)
- Increasing reflection on the usefulness of the FL through use in the subject matter (increasing motivation)
- Preparation for the future, for professional careers and social changes
- Improving learners’ knowledge of and communicative competence in the FL
- Equipping learners with skills required to cope successfully with work-related settings in the FL

Besides improving linguistic skills in various domains, CLIL/EAA¹ also aims at raising intercultural awareness, which is of special importance in a multicultural society like the European Union, as well as increasing learners’ motivation (Abuja 2007: 18).

Although there is no general data available for Austria on the choice of content subjects that are being taught in a foreign language, geography, history and biology seem to be the most commonly taught subjects in CLIL. Of course, this varies from school to school and is also dependent on teacher qualifications. Some years ago the School Board of Lower Austria started a project to support and encourage CLIL use in subjects like mathematics, physics and chemistry at academic secondary schools by providing a special training for the respective teachers. Likewise, the Vienna Board of Education offers a Dual Language Programme (DLP) for teachers at

¹ For reasons of consistency this paper will continue to refer to this programme as CLIL

lower secondary schools to train them for and support them in teaching their content subjects in English and at some pedagogical institutes teachers can participate in one or two-year education seminars on CLIL. Nevertheless, it needs to be mentioned that the majority of universities in Austria does not provide special CLIL education for teacher trainee students yet, but rather it is addressed in general methodology classes. That means no additional qualifications are needed at the moment to teach CLIL at Austrian schools (Abuja 2007: 18-20). When looking at the amount of CLIL provision in Austrian schools, the situation is somewhat similar because there are no specific guidelines concerning the number of years for which CLIL should be provided. This is mainly due to the fact that at present all CLIL activities at secondary schools are voluntary and highly dependent on the individual schools and their staff (Eurydice 2005: 8).

Considering all this, it can be argued that CLIL provision in Austria is still a very heterogeneous matter as it is in the rest of Europe. Without doubt interest in CLIL has very much increased in the last decades, but the implementation of the concept needs to be developed further and general regulations are needed. Surveys about CLIL implementation in Austria have not only shown a high degree of contextual specificity resulting in unpredictability of CLIL provision, but also an absence of coherent policy guidelines (Dalton-Puffer, Faistauer & Vetter 2011: 196). Higher technical institutes as well as primary schools have already managed to establish some guidelines and regulations, but in the future specific syllabi for CLIL implementation in academic secondary schools will be needed in order to provide a framework on a national level (Language Education Policy Profile 2009: 44). This is of utmost importance, as additional language programmes like CLIL will become even more substantial in the future.

5.2.2 Benefits of CLIL

One of the major benefits of CLIL is the fact that CLIL classrooms seem to provide a more naturalistic and authentic environment for language learning than general classrooms which is attributed to the fact that in CLIL lessons the foreign language is acquired in a more native like way compared to traditional language classrooms where the focus is on instruction on the part of the teacher. That is, while mainstream English lessons mainly focus on the teaching of the language itself, CLIL lessons

provide learners with opportunities to use the foreign language as a tool for meaningful communication. The importance of a naturalistic language learning environment being stressed by stakeholders implies “that the best kind of language learning proceeds painlessly, without formal instruction”, as is the case with first language acquisition (Dalton-Puffer 2011: 193). According to Wolff (2007: 19), this more naturalistic acquisition of a foreign language in CLIL lessons can be explained through the simultaneous acquisition of a new concept and term, which is similar to first language acquisition. In traditional language classes, on the other hand, students already know certain concepts and only link the new terms in the foreign language with the previously existing ones in their mother tongue rather than forming new concepts. The more naturalistic language learning environment is therefore one of the major benefits of CLIL.

Another positive effect of CLIL is that it provides additional opportunities for language practice without actually increasing the amount of language lessons. This is not only very effective from an organisational viewpoint, but also gives learners a chance to use the foreign language in a meaningful way outside the language classroom, which is very important as the extent of language learning is constrained and such opportunities are often missing in traditional lessons. Altogether, additional and especially natural and meaningful use of the foreign language can in turn positively influence learners’ motivation for language learning, which is another major benefit of CLIL (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2012: 11-12). According to Wolff (2007: 20), this effect of increased motivation can be attributed to two factors. First, meaningful input leads to greater involvement, which again creates motivation. This is due to the fact that the content in CLIL lessons is more relevant to learners and they can more easily identify with it than is the case with the more general content of traditional language classrooms. Second, CLIL classrooms focus less on form, but more on content and the communication of meaning. That means learners can use a foreign language as a means of communication without focussing on correct form too much, which might result in learners being less anxious and speaking more freely. In line with this, it has been argued that this “primacy of meaning over form” is supposed to have positive consequences for learners, leading to lower levels of anxiety on the one hand, and increased motivation on the other (Dalton-Puffer & Smit 2007: 9).

The fact that CLIL learners are said to be better language learners who outperform their non-CLIL peers is another benefit. This results from CLIL learners

processing a foreign language more deeply and being exposed to a language at a greater extent. Moreover, due to the more complex, academic input in CLIL lessons learners become accustomed to different registers and develop a more formal language proficiency leading to a better preparation for their future working-life (Wolff 2007: 20-22). Regarding the content part of the twofold approach it needs to be mentioned that concerns expressed by parents and teachers that the teaching of content subjects in a foreign language could lead to poor performances in the respective subjects are most likely unfounded. On the contrary, in CLIL lessons content seems to be processed more deeply as the foreign language presents an additional challenge and further cognitive resources are needed for processing, which in turn results in more complex concepts and schemata. This suggests that CLIL learners do not only outperform their peers language-wise, but also content-wise (Wolff 2007: 22).

Although empirical research in the CLIL domain is rather new, a lot of studies have been conducted in the last years, providing support for the above-mentioned possible benefits of CLIL. Indeed, research in this area is again a rather heterogeneous matter, with studies ranging from investigating general learning outcomes to content and language benefits respectively as well as learner motivation. An overview by Dalton-Puffer (2011: 186-189) summarized the most important research on CLIL that has been conducted across Europe in the last years and results seem to provide support for the above-mentioned positive effects of CLIL. Apart from studies showing that CLIL learners surpassed their non-CLIL peers in tests about their overall foreign language competence, findings also indicated that CLIL students seem to have a larger receptive and productive lexicon than students in ordinary language classrooms. Likewise, results revealed that CLIL learners showed advantages over their non-CLIL peers in writing, as they were able to generate more elaborate and complex structures and achieved higher results in the area of spontaneous oral production, except for pronunciation. Turning to content learning, results were not as clear as was the case with studies focussing on language outcomes. Although part of the research suggested that CLIL learners exhibit more persistence and a higher frustration tolerance when working on certain tasks, other results pointed at reduced participation in lessons. Similar outcomes are presented in Pérez-Cañado's overview (2012: 320-330) which contains some of the most important findings on CLIL throughout Europe. The majority of studies suggest

that the implementation of CLIL has positive effects on learners. Findings indicated that CLIL learners outperformed their peers in a number of areas, particularly with regard to level of the target language, global communicative competence, receptive skills, speaking, morphology, vocabulary and writing. Moreover, CLIL students demonstrated greater levels of creativity, risk-taking and learner motivation as well as an increased confidence. In contrast to Dalton-Puffer (2011), Pérez-Cañado's overview reported positive outcomes concerning content learning, showing that CLIL learners did not lag behind in content knowledge, but sometimes even outstripped their non-CLIL peers. Besides the above-mentioned positive effects CLIL is supposed to cause, research also shows that it scarcely affects pronunciation, syntax, informal and nontechnical language and pragmatics (Pérez-Cañado 2012: 330).

A very interesting study by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2009: 4-17) investigated an aspect of CLIL education other than language competence and content learning. The aim of their investigation was to examine the effects of CLIL programmes on learners' attitudes towards English as a foreign language. The basis for their research were several previous studies which suggested that language attitudes could be influenced by a number of different variables like age, sociocultural background and gender. Thus, it was assumed that different language teaching programmes might have an effect as well. Also, researchers stated that CLIL programmes might influence students' attitudes in a positive way because an increase in proficiency could have a positive effect on the desire to learn a foreign language. Participants of the study were secondary students from Basque schools and were divided into two age groups as well as in a CLIL and an EFL group. A questionnaire on attitudes towards English, Spanish and Basque was distributed to the sample. Results of the study revealed that learners enrolled in CLIL programmes had more positive attitudes towards English than their peers in EFL classes. Furthermore, the findings showed that EFL students considered learning English more complicated than CLIL learners. An explanation for the results could be that the implementation of CLIL offers not only intensive exposure, but also meaningful use of the target language in authentic situations. Therefore, "CLIL caters for all types of learners/different learning styles and provides much richer communicative situations" (Lasagabaster & Sierra 2009: 13). According to this particular study, CLIL might lead

to an increased interest in learning foreign languages since CLIL learners seem to hold more positive attitudes towards the target language than their non-CLIL peers.

Despite the fact that research on CLIL provides support for positive effects, these outcomes have to be considered with caution. As Pérez-Cañado (2012: 330) states, the majority of studies carried out in this field of research suffer from methodological flaws. Hence, it is not yet possible to finally determine whether the advantages in certain areas can be fully ascribed to CLIL or if there are other influential factors as well. To conclude, although the majority of findings of current research on CLIL indicate positive outcomes in favour of the approach, there is still a lack of solid empirical evidence requiring further investigation in the future.

5.3 Summary

As this comparison of mainstream language teaching and Content and Language Integrated Learning has shown, the concepts somewhat differ with regard to their aims and objectives as well as underlying assumptions. While English has been taught as a foreign language at Austrian schools for some decades now, CLIL is a rather new approach that has been implemented gradually in the last years and is still missing general regulations and guidelines. Traditional foreign language classes focus on the teaching of the language itself, aiming at reaching certain standards in the skills of speaking, writing, reading, listening and taking part in conversations. Therefore, mainstream language teaching is rather form-focussed although didactic principles in the syllabus suggest otherwise. Moreover, due to the constrained amount of foreign language learning provided at school, it is not always possible to create enough opportunities for learners to engage in communication and make use of the language in authentic situations. This is where CLIL comes in, an approach where content subjects are taught through a foreign language. Through CLIL it is not only possible to teach foreign languages on a rather intensive basis, but learners also get the chance to use a foreign language in a meaningful way, which prepares them for working-life. As the focus in CLIL classrooms is on the communication of meaning rather than on form, learners will be motivated to take part in lessons because their foreign language competence is not in the foreground. Other benefits over traditional schooling have also been found in the areas of general language competence, oral

production, writing and content knowledge. Although CLIL is on the rise throughout Europe and research findings provide support for the concept, it is still very much in its beginnings. In the future, more research as well as guidelines and regulations will be needed to manage the implementation of CLIL on a national level.

These underlying assumptions of the two language teaching approaches outlined above provide the basis for the following empirical research which discusses similarities and differences in beliefs about foreign language learning between two learner groups, namely EFL and CLIL learners.

6 Empirical study

The following empirical study uses a questionnaire as the basis for investigating similarities and differences in beliefs about language learning between learners from different educational backgrounds. It will be examined whether students taking part in additional language programmes, in CLIL programmes to be more precise, differ in their beliefs from learners in conventional English classrooms. As has been discussed above, results of previous studies showed that there seem to be a number of core beliefs that are shared by the majority of learners across different cultures and languages learned. However, with respect to other beliefs, learners of different backgrounds display notable differences. As the aim of this study is a comparison of two learner groups, a closed-ended questionnaire was chosen as research instrument in order to ensure comparability of large amounts of data. Despite some drawbacks, the questionnaire used for the current study provides a reliable research tool for the investigation of beliefs about language learning.

The different educational backgrounds of the participants form the starting point of the following research. Before the statistical analysis will be presented, a short outline of those schools which offer extensive language programmes will be given, in order to provide an insight into the language teaching policy of the respective schools. This is important because CLIL is not yet standardised across schools in Austria, but a number of different projects have been implemented instead.

Sportgymnasium Maria Enzersdorf

The Sportgymnasium Maria Enzersdorf is a school in Lower Austria that offers an extensive language programme in addition to traditional language teaching since the school year 2004/2005 in order to promote learners' language skills in a natural and authentic way. The target group are German-speaking children with good knowledge of both German and English as well as bilingual children who have an interest in languages. As not all subjects at the Sportgymnasium Maria Enzersdorf are taught in English, but the main language of instruction at school is still German it is not a bilingual school. Instead, the students are introduced to English in a natural way from

first grade onwards and the intensive usage of English is further expanded in the following years. In the beginning, learners use English as the medium of instruction in three to four content subjects like geography, math, biology, arts and crafts, physical education or music, but only for short sequences within the lessons. Since beginners might not yet be familiar with using English as the medium of instruction in other subjects, the focus of the various content subjects is quite similar initially. That means simple classroom English is used in content lessons at first so that learners can acquaint themselves with this new form of teaching without being confronted with excessive demands from early onwards. Besides using the target language as medium of instruction in content subjects, the various topics are also taken up and revised in the English lessons. Between the second and fourth grade the subjects physics, history and chemistry are included into the CLIL programme as well and sequences are gradually expanded up to three hours. Furthermore, from third grade onwards, one or two subjects are taught in English 50% of the time and the topics taught in the target language are chosen more selectively from the curriculum. In the upper grades the CLIL programme is continued in the aforementioned subjects and expanded even further. Computer science and history as well as compulsory subject choices are almost exclusively taught in English from fifth grade onwards. At upper levels learners are also offered to take the Cambridge Certificates.

In order to realise the CLIL programme in the best possible way a lot of native speakers are teaching alongside regular teachers. This leads learners to use English outside language or CLIL lessons as well, which further promotes their foreign language skills. Besides the use of native speakers, a lot of team teaching is done at the Sportgymnasium Maria Enzersdorf. English teachers and native speakers support content teachers in planning, preparing and conducting lessons and the topics of English and content lessons are coordinated. One main objective of the additional language programme at this school is to promote learners with increased language competence in everyday and subject specific domains by providing an addition to traditional language teaching. Terminology in the various subjects becomes important at a later stage. Another aim is that English language skills are intensified through everyday language use in lessons. Apart from that, CLIL is supposed to promote joy and a positive attitude towards language learning as it offers a fast and natural access to the English language. Preparing students for potential required qualifications in working life, educating learners in two languages

and successfully mastering the Cambridge Certificates are listed as long-term aims of the CLIL programme at the Sportgymnasium Maria Enzersdorf (http://www.sportgymnasium.at/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=350&Itemid=156).

Vienna Bilingual School

The Vienna Bilingual School (VBS) also offers supplementary language programmes in addition to mainstream language teaching. At the moment they offer three different programmes called Dual Language Programme, Focus English and Vienna Bilingual Schooling. These programmes, although labelled differently, all have the same underlying idea: content subjects are taught in a foreign language, i.e. English is used as the medium of instruction in other subjects. At present, the Dual Language Programme is still offered for learners from third to eighth grade, but it will be discontinued. The programmes Focus English and Vienna Bilingual Schooling can be attended from the first form onwards and are replacing the former Dual Language Programme in the long run. The Vienna Bilingual Schooling programme requires an orientation talk in order to clarify whether learners have certain skills like successfully communicating in social interactions or compensating for a lack of language knowledge and overcoming communication barriers. This clarification is important because only if learners possess these skills they will be able to participate successfully in the VBS programme. The Focus English programme, on the other hand, does not require such an orientation talk. This is due to the different extent of target language use in the three programmes. Despite some slight differences in the general framework of the three models, they are very similar in terms of organisation and aims. In general, English is used as a medium of instruction in as many subjects as possible like geography, history or biology. In order to facilitate the transition from primary to secondary school, a settling-in period is offered to the learners to get acquainted with this new form of teaching. After this period, English is used as language of instruction in many different subjects. The extent of target language use varies with regard to subjects and form, but overall a lot of interdisciplinary projects are offered to the learners and the use of English is gradually expanded further in the following years. Similar to the Sportgymnasium Maria Enzersdorf, English native speakers also play a crucial role in the VBS as they are available to the students up

to six or seven hours per week in addition to their regular teachers. With the help of native speakers an even more authentic and natural language learning situation can be created. Besides that, language learning is supported further by a lot of practical work, open forms of learning and the use of new media as well as special classroom libraries.

Learners who want to take part in these programmes should show an interest in languages and enjoy learning as CLIL classes demand greater expenditure than traditional ones. Also, it is an advantage when learners already have some previous knowledge of English and are interested in using the target language in other content subjects. However, this is only an official requirement for students who want to attend the VBS programme. A main objective of the three programmes is the promotion of language learning, which in turn leads to a higher linguistic competence of the learners. Moreover, these additional language programmes provide opportunities for the students to work with specialist texts in a foreign language at a very early stage. Apart from that, the school also aims at facilitating international cooperation with other schools and stays abroad in a country where the target language is spoken. Finally, it is expected that the qualifications that are acquired through subject-specific English skills will increase learners' chances for future studies and jobs in the long run (http://www.brg14.at/?page_id=4238).

6.1 Research question and hypotheses

The primary interest of this paper are the beliefs about foreign language learning of two groups of learners undergoing different language programmes at upper secondary level. While one group of learners attends traditional foreign language teaching classes at Austrian schools, the other one takes part in additional language programmes at their schools where the target language – in this case English – is used as the medium of instruction in content subjects. Since all these additional programmes integrate content and language to some extent, they can be summarized under the concept of CLIL, even though the frameworks of the programmes differ a bit. As opposed to other studies investigating beliefs about language learning which aimed at comparing and contrasting the beliefs of learners of different cultures or target languages, the present paper focuses on the

comparison of beliefs of learners from different educational backgrounds learning the same target language. To be more precise, the following research questions will be addressed in this research:

1. What are the beliefs of EFL and CLIL learners with respect to foreign language learning?
2. Are there any similarities or differences in the beliefs about foreign language learning between the two groups?

The main hypothesis of this study is that CLIL learners report somewhat different beliefs about language learning than their EFL counterparts due to the varying educational backgrounds and specific characteristics coming with these models of language teaching. First of all, with communication of meaning being in the foreground in CLIL lessons instead of the language itself, it is expected that CLIL learners show a greater error tolerance and disagree more strongly that making errors at an early stage will impede language development than their non-CLIL peers. Likewise, since language errors in CLIL lessons are not corrected to the same extent as in traditional language classrooms, but teachers make use of recasts instead and the focus is on achieving functional not native-like competence, it is further expected that CLIL students will regard accurate pronunciation as less important than EFL learners. Also, in line with this, the focus on natural and meaningful use of the language might be a motivation factor, resulting in CLIL students reporting higher levels of motivation for language learning than their EFL counterparts. Apart from that, findings of studies investigating CLIL programmes and their potential advantages suggest that CLIL students show a higher frustration tolerance and greater self-confidence when using the target language. It is therefore expected that CLIL learners believe more strongly that they will learn to speak English well and report being less timid when speaking English with other people. Moreover, it is assumed that CLIL students deem English easier than EFL learners. Other than that, it has to be taken into consideration that overall CLIL learners spend more time in contact with the target language because CLIL lessons are an addition to regular foreign language lessons. That means they are exposed to the target language to a greater extent, but without spending more time at school than their peers. Therefore, CLIL learners might believe that a new language can be learned in

a shorter period of time as they make faster progress than learners in traditional language classrooms. Moreover, since CLIL students are used to being taught content subjects like sciences in a foreign language, it is expected that they strongly disagree that people who are good at other subjects like sciences are not good at learning languages. Finally, it is hypothesised that EFL learners do not consider native English teachers as important as their CLIL peers simply because they are used to their non-native language teachers at school and only work with native speakers occasionally. In CLIL programmes, on the other hand, native speakers play a very important role and are part of the lessons more regularly.

Besides these expected differences resulting from the different forms of teaching and aims that are being followed, similarities with respect to some beliefs are expected as well. As the overview of previous studies further above has shown, a number of beliefs seem to be shared by learners irrespective of their cultural, educational or linguistic background. For example, the majority of participants of the studies reviewed believed in the existence of a foreign language aptitude as well as in a difficulty hierarchy. Also, many language learners believed it was easier for children than for adults to learn a new language and considered repetition and practice as essential in foreign language learning. With regard to these core beliefs, it is expected that the two learner groups will not differ significantly from each other, but will report similar beliefs instead.

Apart from that, other impacts like the cultural or linguistic background should not be ruled out as they might exert an influence on learner beliefs as well and thereby overshadow possible effects resulting from the educational background.

6.2 Data collection and analysis

Before the data for the present study was collected, several teachers at a number of schools were contacted via e-mail in June 2014 to solicit the participation of their students and permission was obtained to administer the questionnaire in the classes of the respective teachers. Additionally, permission was also obtained from the developer of the BALLI, Elaine K. Horwitz, via e-mail before the questionnaire was distributed. The actual data was collected at four different secondary schools at the beginning of the school year in September 2014. With the help of teachers at the

respective schools it was possible to collect the whole data within two weeks. The questionnaire was distributed during English lessons after the purpose and nature of the study was explained to the students. Also, the subjects were informed that participation was completely voluntary and that they were not required to complete the questionnaire. Finally, it was emphasised that there were no wrong or right answers to the questions and that all responses would stay anonymous and only be used for scientific purposes.

The sample consisted of 201 students in 7th and 8th grade of upper secondary level. One half of the sample (n=100) was engaged in traditional English language classes at two schools in St. Pölten, while the other half (n=101) was undergoing an extensive English language programme at schools in Vienna and Maria Enzersdorf in addition to the standard English lessons. Only learners at upper secondary level were chosen as participants for the study because at this point the learners had been part of the respective programmes for at least three years and it was assumed that possible influences would only be recognisable at a later stage.

As comparison studies usually require large samples, a questionnaire was used because it facilitates data collection. For this particular study, the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), which was developed by Horwitz in the 1980s and has since become the most widely known and used tool for investigating learner beliefs about language learning in a systematic way, was administered. As has already been mentioned previously, Horwitz originally designed three different versions of the BALLI: the first one for language teachers, the other two for ESL students and American students studying foreign languages. For this study, the ESL/EFL version of the BALLI was used in order to examine the beliefs held by EFL and CLIL learners. Given that participants of the study were already attending 7th or 8th grade, the questionnaire was not translated into German, but it was considered that the students would be able to complete the English version. However, to ensure that the original version of the BALLI was appropriate for this age group, it was tested with learners in 6th grade. Overall, there were no problems with the English version and merely a few changes had to be made. The questionnaire used for the present study contained the original 34 items of the BALLI plus two additional ones from an updated ESL version published by Horwitz in 2013 which deal with beliefs about non-native and native English teachers. As suggested by Horwitz (1987), the items on the BALLI examine learner beliefs in the following five areas:

1. Difficulty of language learning (1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 16, 19, 30, 33)
2. Foreign language aptitude (3, 4, 5, 15, 25, 34)
3. Nature of language learning (8, 12, 17, 23, 27, 28)
4. Learning and communication strategies (7, 9, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22, 26)
5. Motivation (20, 24, 29, 31, 32)

As Horwitz did not categorise the new items of the updated BALLI version, the two additional items that were taken up in the questionnaire in this paper were classified under the area of teacher characteristics.

Out of the 36 items of the BALLI 34 items were scored on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree to 5=strongly agree. The remaining two items (4 and 15) are somewhat different as they have other response scales. Since the BALLI is a series of individual items used to investigate learner beliefs about language learning it does not yield a composite score for the entire questionnaire, but the responses to the respective items have to be examined on an individual basis instead. Data analysis was carried out with the help of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22. In order to investigate possible similarities and differences between the two groups of learners, descriptive statistics were computed. To be more precise, frequency of responses, means and standard deviations were calculated and analysed for comparison. In addition to this, tests for significance were computed at $\alpha = .05$ level. Since normal distribution of the variables as an important precondition for independent samples t-test was not given, the Mann-Whitney U test as one of its non-parametric equivalents was applied to test for significance of results.

7 Findings

7.1 Results of the BALLI

As mentioned above the BALLI was used to investigate the beliefs about language learning of two learner groups from different educational backgrounds. Descriptive statistics were computed based on the learners' responses to the BALLI items. Tables 6 to 11 display the results of the statistical analysis, following Horwitz's original classification. The results for both groups will be presented together in order to facilitate comparison.

Regarding foreign language aptitude (Table 6), there was a great similarity of responses across the two learner groups. Both EFL and CLIL students overwhelmingly believed that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a new language and that some people have a special ability for language learning (over 90% in both groups either agreed or strongly agreed with these two statements). However, only about one third of both groups agreed they have this special ability themselves. Moreover, one third of the CLIL students disagreed with this statement, while 43% of the EFL learners were neutral it. Apart from that, participants in both groups (85% of the EFL and 92% of the CLIL learners) strongly agreed or agreed that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language, but were rather neutral about their fellow countrymen being good language learners. While 62% of the EFL learners were neutral about this statement, only about half of the CLIL learners reported a neutral response and over a third (38%) agreed or strongly agreed with it. Above a third of the CLIL learners (39%) and even more of the EFL students (44%) believed that people who already speak a foreign language could learn another one more easily, but about as many were neutral about this statement. Two thirds of both groups disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that people who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning languages and more than half (60% of EFL and 58% of CLIL learners) did not believe that women are better at learning foreign languages than men. While 39% of the EFL learners believed that people who speak more than one language are intelligent, only about 30% of the CLIL students agreed, while almost half of this group (45%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

Table 6: Frequency of responses, means and standard deviations for Foreign Language Aptitude

Item	Group	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.	EFL	1.0	2.0	6.0	34.0	57.0	4.44	.78
	CLIL	2.0	1.0	6.9	28.7	61.4	4.47	.83
2. Some people have a special ability of learning foreign languages.	EFL	1.0	1.0	5.0	48.0	45.0	4.35	.72
	CLIL	1.0	2.0	5.0	40.6	51.5	4.39	.76
6. People from my country are good at learning foreign languages.	EFL	2.0	10.0	62.0	21.0	5.0	3.17	.75
	CLIL	1.0	11.9	49.5	31.7	5.9	3.29	.79
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	EFL	3.0	17.0	35.0	34.0	11.0	3.33	.99
	CLIL	6.9	10.9	43.6	27.7	10.9	3.25	1.02
11. People who are good at mathematic or science are not good at learning foreign languages.	EFL	30.0	29.0	26.0	12.0	3.0	2.29	1.11
	CLIL	31.7	32.7	28.7	5.0	2.0	2.13	.99
16. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.	EFL	10.0	16.0	43.0	28.0	3.0	2.98	.98
	CLIL	6.9	25.7	35.6	26.7	5.0	2.97	1.00
19. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.	EFL	34.0	26.0	31.0	4.0	5.0	2.20	1.11
	CLIL	40.6	17.8	34.7	6.9	0.0	2.08	1.02
30. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.	EFL	9.0	17.0	35.0	31.0	8.0	3.12	1.08
	CLIL	5.0	20.8	44.6	22.8	6.9	3.06	.96
33. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.	EFL	3.0	4.0	8.0	24.0	61.0	4.36	1.00
	CLIL	1.0	2.0	5.0	33.7	58.4	4.47	.77

Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Concerning the difficulty of language learning (Table 7), a large number of learners in each group (90% of the EFL and 85% of the CLIL learners) believed in a difficulty hierarchy as they either strongly agreed or agreed that some languages are easier to learn than others. When asked about the difficulty of English in particular, a great number of learners in both groups (69% of the EFL learners and 73% of the CLIL learners) judged English to be an easy or very easy language, while almost a third of each group regarded English as a language of medium difficulty. A Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference between the two groups ($U = -2.000$, $p =$

.045). This result indicates that CLIL learners were more inclined to judge English as an easy language than their EFL peers. Besides that, the majority of both EFL (79%) and CLIL learners (82%) believed they would learn to speak English well. With regard to the perceptions of how much time is needed to learn a foreign language, the EFL students were a bit more cautious with only 9% reporting less than a year would suffice in contrast to 22% of the CLIL learners who considered less than a year enough. However, about 42% of the EFL group regarded 1-2 years as sufficient, in contrast to 30% of the CLIL group. About a third of both groups considered 3-5 years appropriate and only 6% of the EFL and 3% of the CLIL learners believed that a language could not be learned in one hour per day. Concerning the difficulty of the various skills, learners believed the following: 73% of the EFL students and 80% of the CLIL learners disagreed with the statement that speaking a foreign language is easier than understanding it. At the same time almost half of both groups (40% of the EFL and 43% of the CLIL learners) did not believe that reading and writing in English is easier than speaking and understanding it, whereas about 28% in both groups were neutral about this statement and about a third agreed or strongly agreed.

Table 7: Frequency of responses, means and standard deviations for Difficulty of Language Learning

Item	Group	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.	EFL	2.0	1.0	7.0	35.0	55.0	4.40	.83
	CLIL	2.0	2.0	10.9	37.6	47.5	4.27	.88
4. English is: (1) a very difficult language, (2) a difficult language, (3) a language of medium difficulty, (4) an easy language, (5) a very easy language	EFL	0.0	2.0	29.0	58.0	11.0	3.78	.66
	CLIL	0.0	1.0	25.7	46.5	26.7	3.99	.75
5. I believe that I will learn to speak English very well.	EFL	1.0	6.0	14.0	53.0	26.0	3.97	.86
	CLIL	0.0	3.0	14.9	43.6	38.6	4.18	.79
15. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take them to speak the language very well? (1) less than a year, (2) 1-2 years, (3) 3-5 years, (4) 5-10 years, (5) you can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.	EFL	9.0	42.0	35.0	8.0	6.0	2.60	.97
	CLIL	21.8	29.7	36.6	8.9	3.0	2.42	1.02

25. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.	EFL	38.0	35.0	11.0	11.0	5.0	2.10	1.18
	CLIL	38.6	41.6	12.9	5.9	1.0	1.89	.92
34. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.	EFL	19.0	21.0	28.0	19.0	13.0	2.86	1.29
	CLIL	16.8	25.7	27.7	21.8	7.9	2.78	1.19

Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

In the area of nature of language learning (Table 8), some differences between the groups were found. For example, while over half of the CLIL learners disagreed that knowing English-speaking cultures is important when learning English, almost a third of the EFL learners agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in comparison to only 16% of the CLIL group. However, also about a third of each group was neutral about this statement. A significant difference between the two groups was revealed by a Mann-Whitney U test ($U = -2.025$, $p = .043$), stating that significantly more EFL than CLIL learners considered it important to know English-speaking cultures in order to speak English. Apart from that, only 60% of the EFL learners agreed that learning a foreign language is different from learning other subjects; 19% did not consider it to be different at all. Among the CLIL learners, three quarters agreed that language learning is different than learning other subjects and only 8% disagreed. This difference in responses between the two learner groups was supported statistically by a Mann-Whitney U test ($U = -2.534$, $p = .011$), showing that CLIL learners more readily believed that learning a foreign language is different from learning other subjects. Moreover, fewer CLIL students (60%) than EFL learners (72%) supported the importance of vocabulary in foreign language learning. Regarding the importance of translation almost half of the CLIL group (48%) disagreed that learning how to translate from one language to the other is important, while 39% of the EFL group were neutral. Apart from that, an overwhelming majority of both groups (84% of EFL and 91% of CLIL learners) agreed that it is best to learn English in an English-speaking country. Concerning the importance of grammar, about 40% of each group agreed or strongly agreed that grammar plays an important role in language learning, but about as many learners were neutral about this statement.

Table 8: Frequency of responses, means and standard deviations for Nature of Language Learning

Item	Group	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
8. It is important to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English.	EFL	7.0	34.0	32.0	18.0	9.0	2.88	1.08
	CLIL	5.9	48.5	29.7	12.9	3.0	2.58	.89
12. It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.	EFL	2.0	7.0	7.0	38.0	46.0	4.19	.98
	CLIL	1.0	3.0	5.0	33.7	57.4	4.44	.81
17. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning vocabulary words.	EFL	3.0	5.0	20.0	51.0	21.0	3.82	.93
	CLIL	2.0	13.9	23.8	40.6	19.8	3.62	1.02
23. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the grammar.	EFL	1.0	17.0	40.0	38.0	4.0	3.27	.83
	CLIL	6.9	17.8	34.7	35.6	5.0	3.14	1.00
27. Learning a foreign language is different than learning other academic subjects.	EFL	3.0	16.0	21.0	39.0	21.0	3.59	1.08
	CLIL	3.0	5.0	16.8	43.6	31.7	3.96	.98
28. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language to English or from English to my native language.	EFL	12.0	22.0	39.0	21.0	6.0	2.87	1.07
	CLIL	16.8	30.7	29.7	18.8	4.0	2.62	1.09

Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Regarding the area of learning and communication strategies (Table 9), there was again a great similarity of responses across the two groups. Almost half of both groups considered it important to speak English with an excellent accent, but about 38% of both groups reported a neutral response to this statement. When asked whether nothing should be said in English until it can be said correctly, the groups were more or less equally disposed again, but CLIL learners (85%) were a bit more likely than their EFL counterparts (77%) to disagree with this statement. Also, an overwhelming majority of both groups endorsed the importance of repetition and practice with 92% of the EFL and 88% of the CLIL learners agreeing that it is important to repeat and practice a lot. Almost two thirds of both groups (63% of the EFL and 58% of the CLIL group) felt that it is okay to use the strategy of guessing when not knowing a word in English and only about a quarter agreed that being allowed to make errors in the beginning will make it more difficult to speak English correctly at a later stage, while about 45% of each group disagreed with this

statement. EFL students (71%) were a bit less likely to agree that they enjoyed practicing English with English native speakers in comparison to CLIL learners (82%), but only about 7% of both groups indicated they did not enjoy it. More than half of both groups (51% of the EFL and 57% of the CLIL learners) disagreed with the statement that they feel shy when speaking English with other people, but a quarter of the EFL and CLIL students also agreed with it. And finally, EFL learners were less likely to believe in the importance of CDs and tapes with 44% of the EFL group disagreeing with the statement, while about 40% of the CLIL learners reported a neutral response.

Table 9: Frequency of responses, means and standard deviations for Learning and Communication Strategies

Item	Group	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
7. It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.	EFL	1.0	12.0	38.0	37.0	12.0	3.47	.89
	CLIL	2.0	17.8	37.6	33.7	8.9	3.29	.93
9. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.	EFL	44.0	33.0	15.0	4.0	4.0	1.91	1.06
	CLIL	49.5	35.6	5.9	5.9	3.0	1.77	1.01
13. I enjoy practicing English with the native English speakers I meet.	EFL	3.0	5.0	21.0	38.0	33.0	3.93	1.01
	CLIL	1.0	5.9	10.9	39.6	42.6	4.17	.92
14. It's o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in English.	EFL	4.0	10.0	23.0	45.0	18.0	3.63	1.02
	CLIL	5.0	6.9	29.7	40.6	17.8	3.59	1.02
18. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.	EFL	4.0	2.0	2.0	37.0	55.0	4.37	.94
	CLIL	1.0	2.0	8.9	38.6	49.5	4.34	.80
21. I feel shy speaking English with other people.	EFL	33.0	18.0	25.0	14.0	10.0	2.50	1.34
	CLIL	36.6	20.8	17.8	18.8	5.9	2.37	1.31
22. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.	EFL	14.0	31.0	27.0	19.0	9.0	2.78	1.18
	CLIL	25.7	17.8	30.7	20.8	5.0	2.61	1.22
26. It is important to practice with CDs or tapes.	EFL	15.0	29.0	28.0	23.0	5.0	2.74	1.12
	CLIL	9.9	23.8	39.6	22.8	4.0	2.87	1.01

Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Concerning the motivations for language learning (Table 10), results showed that CLIL students (77%) were more likely to agree that people in their country regarded it

important to speak English than EFL learners (64%). A Mann-Whitney U test ($U = -2.712, p = .007$) revealed that the two learner groups differed significantly with regard to this item. An overwhelming majority of both EFL (94%) and CLIL (96%) students reported that they want to learn to speak English well, while only about 5% of the participants in both groups disagreed with this statement. Although more than half of both groups agreed that they would like to learn English in order to get to know English speakers and their cultures, CLIL learners (54%) were less likely to agree than EFL students (63%). Apart from that, about two thirds of each group (64% of the EFL and 65% of the CLIL learners) expressed a desire for having friends who are native speakers of English. When asked whether learning English well would lead to better job opportunities in the future, groups were more or less equally disposed with 86% of the EFL and 91% of the CLIL learners agreeing with this statement.

Table 10: Frequency of responses, means and standard deviations for Motivation

Item	Group	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
20. People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.	EFL	4.0	11.0	21.0	46.0	18.0	3.63	1.03
	CLIL	2.0	5.9	14.9	44.6	32.7	4.00	.95
24. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know native English speakers and their cultures better.	EFL	5.0	14.0	18.0	38.0	25.0	3.64	1.15
	CLIL	4.0	10.9	31.7	29.7	23.8	3.58	1.09
29. If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities for a good job.	EFL	2.0	6.0	6.0	32.0	54.0	4.30	.97
	CLIL	3.0	3.0	3.0	40.6	50.5	4.33	.91
31. I want to learn to speak English well.	EFL	3.0	2.0	1.0	18.0	76.0	4.62	.86
	CLIL	4.0	0.0	0.0	14.9	81.2	4.69	.83
32. I would like to have friends who speak English as a native language.	EFL	6.0	7.0	23.0	27.0	37.0	3.82	1.18
	CLIL	2.0	8.9	23.8	24.8	40.6	3.93	1.09

Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree.

Finally, in the area of teacher characteristics (Table 11), some differences between the two groups were found. While only about half of the EFL learners (55%) agreed that it is better to have teachers who are English native speakers and 32% reported a neutral response, 75% of the CLIL students agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, therefore emphasising the role of native speakers in foreign language

teaching. A significant difference was again disclosed by a Mann-Whitney U test ($U = -3.055$, $p = .002$), affirming that CLIL learners agreed more strongly than their EFL peers that it is better to be taught by native English teachers. Similarly, CLIL learners (51%) were a bit less likely to agree with the statement that they can learn a lot from non-native English teachers in comparison to students of the EFL group (60%) who showed a stronger confidence in non-native English teachers' skills.

Table 11: Frequency of responses, means and standard deviations for Teacher Characteristics

Item	Group	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
35. It is better to have teachers who are native speakers of English.	EFL	4.0	9.0	32.0	33.0	22.0	3.60	1.05
	CLIL	3.0	4.0	17.8	38.6	36.6	4.02	.99
36. I can learn a lot from non-native English teachers.	EFL	6.0	9.0	25.0	44.0	16.0	3.55	1.06
	CLIL	3.0	16.8	28.7	39.6	11.9	3.41	1.00

Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

7.2 Discussion

Based on the descriptive analysis of the BALLI, the present study identified the beliefs about language learning of EFL and CLIL students at upper secondary level at schools in Austria. Overall, the findings suggested only a few differences between the two groups as the participants' beliefs were very homogeneous over all areas despite their different educational backgrounds. In the following, the findings of the study will be discussed separately for each area.

Foreign Language Aptitude

Students of both groups shared a great number of beliefs in this dimension. As expected beforehand, EFL and CLIL students reported very similar beliefs with regard to early language learning and the existence of a special ability. The majority of learners of both groups believed that it was easier for children than for adults to learn a new language and strongly agreed that some people have a foreign language aptitude. This finding is consistent with previous studies where the majority of participants – irrespective of cultural, linguistic or educational contexts – also reported strong agreement with these statements (cf. Ariogul, Unal & Onursal 2009;

Azar & Saeidi 2013; Hong 2006; Horwitz 1987; Horwitz 1988; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Truitt 1995a; Tumposky 1991; Yang 1999; Zhang & Cui 2010).

However, participants' responses were strikingly similar across other beliefs as well. For example, about two thirds of both groups disagreed that being good at mathematics or sciences implies being a poor language learner. This is somewhat surprising as it was assumed that CLIL learners would report much greater disagreement with this statement than EFL students because they are accustomed to using the target language in connection with other subjects. Nevertheless, this finding is positive as the majority of learners, regardless of their educational background, disagrees with a belief that might hinder prospective success. Likewise, slightly more than half of the participants of each group disagreed with the statement that women are better language learners. Again, this is a very positive finding since gender stereotypes, which might have a negative impact on language learning, are not regarded as true by both groups of learners. The devastating impact counterproductive beliefs can have on the language learning process was shown by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) when they demonstrated that negative beliefs can lead to anxiety and hinder the language learning process. Apart from that, responses were also very similar when participants were asked if another foreign language could be learned more easily when already speaking one. About the same amount of learners from both groups agreed or was neutral about this statement.

Other than that, a number of slight differences were found as well. For example, while about two thirds of the EFL group were neutral about the foreign language abilities of their fellow countrymen, over one third of the CLIL learners reported a more optimistic view. This could result from the fact that CLIL students spend more time in contact with the target language and outperform their peers language-wise as well as show greater levels of confidence (cf. Dalton-Puffer 2011; Pérez-Cañado 2012). It is possible that CLIL learners transfer their own abilities and confidence to their fellow countrymen. Somehow unexpectedly, fewer CLIL learners believed in the advantages of previous language learning experiences and about half of this group was neutral about the statement that speaking a number of languages implies intelligence. However, since these differences are rather small, they cannot be regarded as significant.

Difficulty of Language Learning

In accordance with the hypothesis, an overwhelming majority of both groups similarly believed in the existence of a difficulty hierarchy, i.e. some languages are easier to learn than others. Previous research on beliefs has shown similar results with an overwhelming majority of learners from different backgrounds believing in a difficulty hierarchy of languages (cf. Ariogul, Unal & Onursal 2009; Azar & Saeidi 2013; Hong 2006; Horwitz 1987; Horwitz 1988). Apart from that, learners of both groups agreed that English was either an easy or very easy language, while about a third considered it to be of medium difficulty. In general, these results are in accordance with those of previous studies where the majority of learners either regarded English as an easy or medium difficult language (cf. Diab 2006; Horwitz 1987). However, despite an overall similarity, CLIL learners regarded English as significantly easier than their EFL peers. This finding corresponds with CLIL research, where it was shown that the EFL group deemed learning English as more complicated than their CLIL counterparts (cf. Lasagabaster & Sierra 2009). Nevertheless, a predominant part of both EFL and CLIL learners believed they would learn to speak English well. This finding is again surprising, as it was expected that CLIL learners would report greater self-confidence in comparison to their non-CLIL peers resulting in stronger agreement. This assumption was based on findings of previous CLIL research which named greater confidence as one potential advantage of CLIL programmes (cf. Pérez-Cañado 2012).

Concerning the perceived amount of time it takes to learn a language, the hypothesis could not be met either. Although more than twice as much CLIL learners believed it was possible to learn a language in one year, with respect to the other answer categories the responses were quite balanced again between the two groups and the differences were not significant. Given the fact that CLIL learners spend more time in contact with the target language without spending extra hours at school (cf. Dalton-Puffer & Smit 2007; Eurydice 2006), it was assumed that they might believe in a faster progress than their EFL peers. In general, it has to be noted that learners of both groups reported unrealistic beliefs about the amount of time necessary for learning a foreign language as only a very small number considered a longer time span necessary. This naïve belief can have serious consequences since learners might get frustrated when they realize that the progress they make is not as fast as expected. When asked about the difficulty of the various skills, EFL and CLIL

learners again reported very similar beliefs. Students of both groups agreed that reading and writing in English is more difficult than speaking the language. However, the fact that more CLIL than EFL learners disagreed with the statement that speaking a foreign language is easier than understanding it, is somewhat unexpected in the light of former studies which demonstrated that CLIL learners showed advantages over their EFL peers with respect to spontaneous oral production (Dalton-Puffer 2011).

Nature of Language Learning

Beliefs about the nature of language learning were somewhat different for the two learner groups. When asked about the importance of knowing English-speaking cultures when learning to speak English as a foreign language, a great number of CLIL students disagreed with this statement, while quite a few EFL learners regarded it as important, resulting in a significant difference in responses. This is particularly interesting since bilingual programmes like CLIL have, among other things, emerged in order to promote a multilingual society as well as mobility and enable people to establish relationships with people from other countries (cf. Eurydice 2006; Lasagabaster 2008). Thus, it would have been expected that programmes like CLIL create awareness of other cultures and at least lead to CLIL learners valuing these cultures to a similar extent as learners in traditional language classrooms. However, previous studies investigating the beliefs of language learners from different backgrounds have also shown discrepancies with regard to the importance of knowing the target culture (cf. Ariogul, Unal and Onursal 2009). Another significant difference between the two groups was discovered when asked whether language learning was different from learning other academic subjects. Significantly more CLIL learners agreed with this statement, considering language learning as a different type of learning.

Apart from that, more EFL learners than CLIL students endorsed vocabulary learning as an important, integral part of language learning. Since traditional language lessons often focus on learning specific topic-related vocabulary, while in CLIL lessons the communication of meaning is in the foreground this could serve as an explanation (cf. Wolff 2007). Likewise, CLIL learners tended to disregard the importance of translation more strongly, while EFL learners took a neutral stance instead. Again, these differences were not significant. Concerning the importance of

grammar, responses of the two groups were fairly similar with about 40% of each group acknowledging the importance of grammar, but about as many taking a neutral stance as well. This is again a very interesting finding as it suggests that grammar is still considered an important part of language teaching, but its status does not seem to be as high anymore as it was a couple of years ago. The fact that both groups hold a similar view could further imply that not only CLIL, but also traditional language teaching is more and more shifting its focus towards the communication of meaning. Finally, an overwhelming majority of both groups believed that learning English in an English-speaking country is advantageous. This corresponds with some previous studies on beliefs about language learning which produced similar results with respect to the importance of learning a target language in a country where the language is spoken (Ariogul, Unal & Orsunal 2009; Horwitz 1987).

Learning and Communication Strategies

Responses between the two groups within this area were quite similar again. Surprisingly, almost half of both EFL and CLIL learners considered accurate pronunciation as important. This finding is particularly interesting for the CLIL group since the focus in CLIL lessons is on achieving functional, not native-like competence and the focus is not necessarily on form, but on meaning. Thus, it was expected that CLIL students would regard pronunciation as less important than EFL learners. Especially since previous studies identified pronunciation as one of those skills that is least affected by CLIL (cf. Dalton-Puffer 2011; Pérez-Cañado 2012). Although slightly more CLIL students disagreed with the statement that nothing should be said in the target language until it can be said correctly, this difference was not significant. With respect to guessing, EFL and CLIL learners reported very similar beliefs with more than half of the learners of both groups judging guessing as an appropriate strategy.

When asked whether being allowed to make errors at an early stage will impede language development, almost half of both groups disagreed. This result is rather surprising since it was assumed that especially CLIL learners would show an even greater error tolerance because CLIL programmes focus less on form than on meaning, explicit correction is quite rare and language learning takes place more naturally (cf. Dalton-Puffer & Smit 2007; Dalton-Puffer 2011; Wolff 2007). Not only are the responses of the two groups in opposition to the expectations, but the overall error tolerance is lower than anticipated as well. Hence, this finding is somewhat

negative, as a number of learners do not seem to be aware of the importance of errors in the language learning process. This could result in learners developing a certain anxiety to communicate in the target language and in further consequence hinder their progress (cf. Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986).

In comparison to CLIL learners, fewer EFL students reported they enjoy practicing with native speakers. This difference could be explained by the fact that CLIL learners are much more used to working with native speakers on an everyday basis than are EFL students. However, the differences in responses were not significant and in general the majority of both groups agreed with the statement. When asked whether they felt shy speaking English with other people, over half of the EFL and CLIL learners disagreed. Again, the hypothesis that CLIL learners would prove to be less shy due to greater self-confidence and frustration tolerance as well as reduced levels of anxiety on their part, as has been pointed out by former studies on possible benefits of CLIL, could not be confirmed (cf. Dalton-Puffer & Smit 2007; Dalton-Puffer 2011; Pérez-Cañado 2012). With respect to the importance of repetition and practice the hypothesis was fully met as both groups acknowledged these practice as substantial. Moreover, this finding corresponds with previous research on beliefs, where the majority of learners over a variety of contexts believed in the importance of repetition and practice as well (cf. Ariogul, Unal & Onursal 2009; Azar & Saeidi 2013; Hong 2006; Horwitz 1987; Horwitz 1988; Kunt 1997; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Truitt 1995a; Yang 1999). Only in terms of media use the two groups held different beliefs. While EFL learners disregarded the importance of media, CLIL learners took a neutral stance instead. However, these differences in responses were not significant.

Motivation

The two learner groups showed some slight differences within this area, however, in general the responses were very homogeneous again. When asked whether people in their country consider knowing the English language as important, CLIL learners agreed more strongly with this statement than their non-CLIL peers. One explanation for this could be the fact that CLIL learners already get an early insight into the importance of English for many different fields and areas, reaching beyond the language aspect. That means these learners might already be aware that English can be a helpful and necessary tool in academic or occupational contexts. A great

majority, including almost all participants of both groups, reported that they want to learn to speak English well. This is a very positive finding as it implies a very high motivation for language learning on part of the students. Yet, when asked about the reasons for learning English, slightly fewer CLIL learners would agree that the main reason for learning the target language is to get in contact with native speakers and their culture. Apart from that, about two thirds of the EFL and CLIL learners highly valued having friends who are native speakers of English.

Though about 60% of the two groups appear to have integrative motivation for learning English, even more expressed instrumental reasons. An overwhelming majority of both EFL and CLIL learners agreed or strongly agreed that learning and knowing English would lead to better job opportunities in the future. This finding suggests that instrumental motivation seems to be the driving force behind language learning for both groups; however, integrative reasons cannot be ruled out completely. The hypothesis that CLIL learners would show an overall greater motivation for language learning than learners of the EFL group could not be confirmed, but levels of motivation seem to be more or less equally disposed between the two groups instead. These findings are in contradiction to the CLIL literature, which suggests that the natural and meaningful use of the target language as well as the focus on communication of meaning rather than on accuracy exerts a positive influence on learner motivation and that positive attitudes towards the target language lead to an increased interest in the foreign language (cf. Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2012; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2009; Wolff 2007).

Teacher Characteristics

The last area uncovered some differences between the two learner groups with respect to characteristics of language teachers. Significantly more CLIL students believed that it is better to have teachers who are native speakers of English instead of non-native language teachers. Likewise, fewer CLIL learners would agree that they could learn a lot from non-native English teachers. These findings are in accordance with the hypothesis as it was assumed that CLIL learners would prefer native speakers of English simply because they are more used to working with them on a regular basis², while EFL learners would not consider this as important.

² At least this is the case for CLIL learners who took part in the present study. At their respective schools native speakers are available to the students on a very intensive basis.

Drawing an overall conclusion, the hypotheses of the study could only be met to some extent. Due to a striking similarity of responses across almost all items, expected differences between the two learner groups could not be confirmed. Only with regard to the difficulty of English and the preference for native English teachers the expected variation was found to be significant. Apart from that, EFL and CLIL learners also differed significantly with regard to the importance of knowing about English-speaking cultures, the importance of English in their own country and in their belief whether language learning is different from learning other subjects. On the other hand, all hypotheses concerning the similarity of beliefs could be supported by the findings. Moreover, these findings were consistent with the majority of results of previous studies. This further supports the notion that some beliefs seem to be held universally by students of different languages coming from different social, educational or linguistic backgrounds.

The results of the present study do not rule out that further differences in beliefs exist between EFL and CLIL learners since these findings are not generalizable over all EFL and CLIL learners. Hence, these findings should only be regarded as representative for the participants of the study and their colleagues at the respective schools. Nevertheless, the outcome does imply that it might be possible that other factors, like cultural background or the target language learned, exert a greater influence on learners' beliefs as was shown in previous studies. It has to be taken into consideration, that the participants of the present study were a very homogeneous group that only differed in the language learning programmes they took part in. Thus, possible influences resulting from the different teaching models could be clouded by other influences, in this case the similarity of cultural and linguistic background.

8 Conclusion

The overall aim of this study was to compare the beliefs about language learning of two different learner groups, namely EFL and CLIL learners. The research was based on a very commonly used questionnaire to study beliefs in a systematic way, the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). This questionnaire was distributed to learners of English at upper secondary level who were taking part in different foreign language programmes. At the time of the study, the chosen participants had already been part of the respective language programmes for at least three years. This was important because it was assumed that potential effects could be better identified at a later stage.

The first part of the present paper provided the theoretical background for the empirical study. At first, the concept of beliefs in general and beliefs about language learning in particular were discussed in an attempt to provide an overview of the various views and definitions of different researchers and find a common basis. Also, potential factors influencing the development of beliefs and possible implications for language learning and teaching were considered. The second chapter of the theoretical part reviewed important characteristics as well as advantages and disadvantages of three main research approaches and different methodologies. Moreover, the development of the research instrument that was used for the present study was discussed. This section was then followed by an overview of findings of previous research on beliefs conducted in different language contexts, which were the starting point for this study. Finally, the theoretical frameworks of traditional foreign language teaching at upper secondary level and CLIL programmes were compared and the concept of CLIL in the European context, the implementation of CLIL at Austrian schools and its potential benefits on learning in general and language learning in particular were discussed.

The research questions of the present paper were aimed at a description of the participants' beliefs about language learning and at a comparison of beliefs of the two learner groups. To be more precise, the study asked what particular beliefs regarding foreign language learning the participants reported and whether similarities and differences in these beliefs could be found across the two groups. Given certain characteristics of the two respective language programmes, it was hypothesised that

CLIL learners would differ from their EFL counterparts in some of their beliefs for the following reasons:

- CLIL classrooms mainly focus on the communication of meaning rather than language itself which is why it was expected that CLIL learners show a greater tolerance of errors and do not consider accuracy as important.
- The focus on communicating content and using language in a meaningful way is regarded as a high motivation factor.
- According to previous studies, CLIL learners display a higher frustration tolerance and are more self-confident when learning a new language; therefore, it was assumed that they have positive beliefs about their success in language learning, report being less shy when speaking with native speakers and perceive English as an easier language than their EFL peers.
- As CLIL learners spend more time in contact with the target language without extra hours on their timetables, it was expected that they might hold unrealistic beliefs about the amount of time it takes to learn a new language.
- Concerning teacher preference, it was assumed that CLIL learners would prefer native English teachers in comparison to EFL learners because they are used to working with native speakers on a regular basis, while EFL learners only practice with natives occasionally.

Other than that, a couple of similarities between the two groups were expected due to previous findings in the field of beliefs. Former studies have shown that there seem to be a number of core beliefs shared by language learners regardless of their backgrounds. Thus, it was presumed that both EFL and CLIL learners would believe in a foreign language aptitude and a difficulty hierarchy of languages. Also, similarities were expected with regard to the importance of early language learning, repetition and practice.

Although significant differences between the EFL and CLIL group were found with regard to some beliefs, overall the results of the study could not fully support the main hypothesis as a startling similarity of responses across the two groups was revealed over the majority of items and participants did not differ significantly in all of the presumed areas. On the other hand, though, the expected similarities between

the two learner groups could be fully confirmed by the current findings with participants reporting strikingly similar responses in the presumed dimensions. Moreover, these similarities between learners from different educational backgrounds were also in accordance with the majority of previous research on beliefs, providing further support for the view that a number of core beliefs seem to exist which are held similarly by learners across different contexts. Overall, however, the hypotheses of the present study could only be confirmed to some extent.

Of course, certain limitations of the present study have to be kept in mind. The findings of the study cannot be generalised over different cultural and linguistic backgrounds as the participants were drawn from specific educational settings in Austria. Foreign language teaching programmes at school vary from country to country, even within the European Union, and even more so does the implementation of CLIL programmes. Therefore, due to these different theoretical frameworks, the findings should not be considered as representative for language learners in other areas. Apart from that, even a generalization of the findings within Austria is problematic since the implementation of CLIL programmes on a national level is only in its beginnings. At the moment there are no consensual regulations, but a number of pilot projects are on the onset instead. That means, schools can decide individually on the extent to which CLIL is taken up in their respective programmes. For the present study this means that its findings are only meaningful and representative for these specific participants. Thus, the results of this study can only contribute in part to the research on beliefs about language learning of learners from different educational backgrounds.

Further studies conducted in this field of research have to aim at a larger and more representative sample of participants, for example by including a greater number of schools from all parts of Austria. Furthermore, in addition to the distribution of the questionnaire, classroom observations could prove to be a useful additional research method as specific characteristics of the respective schools could be identified which might offer valuable explanations with respect to the findings. For example, it might be the case that traditional language classrooms make use of certain elements of CLIL programmes or vice versa. This in turn could have an impact on the results. Clarifying and observing the theoretical framework at the respective schools even more precisely is therefore of utmost importance in future studies. Additionally, other factors like gender or sociocultural background of the

participants should be controlled in prospective studies as these factors might reveal important explanations as well. Apart from that, the implementation of CLIL programmes will require a standardized regulation in the near future for upcoming research to be able to make generalizable statements about this group of learners.

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Appendix A

VP-Nr: _____



Information zur Studienteilnahme

Ich lade Sie herzlich ein, im Rahmen meiner Diplomarbeit am Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik an der Universität Wien an einer Studie teilzunehmen. Diese Studie beschäftigt sich mit **Einstellungen gegenüber Aspekten des Fremdsprachenlernens**.

Alle Angaben die Sie im Rahmen dieser Untersuchung machen werden **streng vertraulich** behandelt und ausschließlich für wissenschaftliche Zwecke verwendet. Die Daten werden nicht an Dritte weitergegeben. Die Teilnahme an der Studie ist vollkommen freiwillig. Sie können die Bearbeitung jederzeit auch ohne Angabe von Gründen abbrechen.

Bitte lesen Sie sich die Instruktion genau durch und beantworten Sie bitte alle Fragen. Nur vollständige Fragebögen können ausgewertet werden.

Die Bearbeitung dieses Fragebogens wird **ca. 10 Minuten** in Anspruch nehmen.

Ich würde mich sehr über Ihre Unterstützung freuen!

Danke für Ihre Bereitschaft zur Teilnahme.

Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

Directions: Below are some beliefs that people have about learning foreign languages. Read each statement and then decide if you: (1) strongly disagree (2) disagree (3) neither agree nor disagree (4) agree (5) strongly agree. There are no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in your opinions. Mark each answer right below the statement. Questions 4 and 15 are slightly different and you should mark them as indicated.

REMEMBER: (1) strongly disagree (2) disagree (3) neither agree nor disagree (4) agree (5) strongly agree.

1. It is easier for children than for adults to learn a foreign language.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

2. Some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

4. English is:

(1) a very difficult language

(2) a difficult language

(3) a language of medium difficulty

(4) an easy language

(5) a very easy language

5. I believe that I will learn to speak English very well.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

6. People from my country are good at learning foreign languages.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

7. It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

8. It is important to know about English-speaking cultures in order to speak English.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

9. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

11. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

12. It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

13. I enjoy practicing English with the native English speakers I meet.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

14. It's o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in English.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

15. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take them to speak the language very well?

(1) less than a year

(2) 1-2 years

(3) 3-5 years

(4) 5-10 years

(5) you can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.

16. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

17. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning vocabulary words.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

18. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

19. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

20. People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

21. I feel shy speaking English with other people.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

22. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

23. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the grammar.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

24. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know native English speakers and their cultures better.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

25. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

26. It is important to practice with CDs or tapes.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

27. Learning a foreign language is different than learning other academic subjects.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

28. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my native language to English or from English to my native language.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

29. If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities for a good job.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

30. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

31. I want to learn to speak English well.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

32. I would like to have friends who speak English as a native language.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

33. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

34. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

35. It is better to have teachers who are native-speakers of English.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

36. I can learn a lot from non-native English teachers.

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

Appendix B

Abstract English

This paper deals with the beliefs about language learning of learners of English at upper secondary level in order to discover possible similarities and differences between learners who underwent traditional foreign language instruction and learners who experienced extensive foreign language teaching in the form of CLIL in addition to regular language lessons. Only learners at upper secondary level participate in the study as it is assumed that potential effects could rather be identified when students have already been part of the respective programmes for a longer time.

The first part of this paper provides the theoretical background for the investigation of learner beliefs by defining the concept of beliefs and discussing their development and their importance for language learning and teaching. Moreover, a classification of three main research approaches and the development of the research instrument is presented. In addition to this, findings of previous research are discussed and the concept of CLIL, its implementation in Austria and possible advantages are presented and contrasted with traditional language teaching in Austria.

The empirical part of this thesis focuses on the examination of beliefs about language learning of the two different learner groups by analysing their responses to a belief questionnaire. The aim of this study is to identify which beliefs are held similarly by both groups of learners irrespective of their educational background and with respect to which beliefs the two groups differ.

The findings suggest a few significant differences between EFL and CLIL learners, which might be attributed to their educational background; however, the learners do not differ significantly in all of the expected areas. Instead, overall a great similarity of responses between EFL and CLIL learners is found, supporting the view that certain beliefs seem to be held universally by students from different backgrounds. Apart from that, these findings suggest that other factors like the cultural background or the target language have to be taken into consideration as well.

Zusammenfassung Deutsch

Diese Arbeit befasst sich mit den Einstellungen von Englischschülerinnen in der Oberstufe gegenüber dem Sprachenlernen mit dem Ziel, potenzielle Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen SchülerInnen, welche traditionellen Englischunterricht besuchen und jenen, welche erweiterten Englischunterricht in der Form von CLIL zusätzlich zum regulären Fremdsprachenunterricht erhalten, zu entdecken. Lediglich SchülerInnen der Oberstufe nehmen an dieser Studie teil, da davon ausgegangen wird, dass potenzielle Effekte erst nach einer gewissen Zeit in den jeweiligen Unterrichtsformen erkennbar sind.

Der erste Teil dieser Arbeit beinhaltet den theoretischen Hintergrund für die Untersuchung der Einstellungen von SchülerInnen. Zunächst wird versucht das Konzept der ‚beliefs‘ zu definieren und die Entstehung dieser Einstellungen sowie ihre Bedeutung für das Lehren und Lernen von Sprachen wird diskutiert. Zudem wird eine Klassifikation von drei Forschungsansätzen sowie die Entwicklung des Forschungsinstruments präsentiert. Schließlich werden Ergebnisse früherer Studien diskutiert und das Konzept von CLIL, dessen Umsetzung in Österreich sowie mögliche Vorteile präsentiert und dem traditionellen Sprachenlernen in Österreich gegenübergestellt.

Der empirische Teil dieser Arbeit ist fokussiert auf die Untersuchung der Einstellungen der beiden Schülergruppen gegenüber dem Sprachenlernen. Dazu werden die Fragebogenantworten der SchülerInnen analysiert. Ziel der Arbeit ist es, herauszufinden welche Einstellungen beide Gruppen unabhängig von ihrem schulischen Hintergrund teilen und bezüglich welcher Einstellungen sie sich unterscheiden.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen einige bedeutsame Unterschiede zwischen EFL und CLIL SchülerInnen, welche möglicherweise auf deren schulischen Hintergrund zurückgeführt werden können. Allerdings unterscheiden sich die SchülerInnen nicht in allen angenommenen Bereichen signifikant voneinander. Stattdessen zeigen sich beträchtliche Gemeinsamkeiten in den Antworten der EFL und CLIL SchülerInnen, was die Ansicht unterstützt, dass einige Einstellungen von allen SchülerInnen unabhängig von deren Hintergrund geteilt werden. Abgesehen davon deuten diese Ergebnisse daraufhin, dass auch andere Faktoren wie der kulturelle Hintergrund oder die Zielsprache berücksichtigt werden sollten.

Appendix C

Curriculum Vitae

Personal Information

Name	Alexandra Katharina Lee
Place of birth	Sankt Pölten
Nationality	Austrian

Education

1997 – 2001	Primary School: VS Englische Fräulein Sankt Pölten
2001 – 2009	Secondary School: Privatgymnasium der Englischen Fräulein Sankt Pölten
Since October 2009	Teaching degree in English and Psychology and Philosophy, University of Vienna
2011 – 2014	Bachelor's degree in Psychology, University of Vienna
Since October 2014	Master's degree in Psychology, University of Vienna

Work experience

2010 – 2013	Summer job at NÖGKK (health insurance)
Since September 2014	English trainer at preschool

Languages

German
English
Spanish