

Zrinka Kolaković, University of Klagenfurt, Austria

Tatjana Vučajnk, University of Klagenfurt, Austria

Multilingualism and Transcultural Learning in the Curriculum of the Interdisciplinary Cross-Border Studies Master's Program¹

The paper addresses one question: What makes the Cross-Border Studies (CBS) MA a multilingual study program? The first part presents the CBS MA curriculum, developed on the basis of current research literature on multilingualism and transcultural learning. The multilingual essence of the trans- and interdisciplinary CBS MA program is visible among others in the German- and English-language tracks. Besides these languages of instruction, the MA program encompasses at least two target languages, one of which is mandatorily Slavic (BCMS, Russian or Slovene). The intended objective of the CBS MA is to educate future experts who will actively operate between languages and cultures. Therefore, the program's focus is not on acquiring language skills only, but also skills in the intercultural, i.e., interpersonal, sociolinguistic, and social areas. These are covered in the inter- and transdisciplinary compulsory and guided electives (*Gebundene Wahlfächer*).

In the second part of the paper, the CBS MA is discussed in the context of multilingual and multicultural universities. We argue that it is possible to introduce English as a language of instruction and keep a multilingual setting, which includes preserving the local languages. Numerous strategies used within the program both in and outside the classroom to reinforce multilingualism and language diversity are presented.

Keywords: multilingualism, Cross-Border Studies Master's degree program, Slavic, Germanic, and Romance languages, University of Klagenfurt

Prispevek odgovarja na vprašanje, zakaj je magistrski študijski program Cross-Border-Studies (CBS MA) večjezični študijski program. V prvem delu prispevka predstavljamo kurikulum magistrskega študija CBS, ki je bil razvit na podlagi aktualne strokovne literature s področja večjezičnosti ter transkulturnega učenja. Večjezičnost znotraj trans- in interdisciplinarnega magistrskega študijskega programa se med drugim kaže tudi pri možnosti študija (izbiri učnega jezika) v nemškem ali angleškem jeziku. Poleg omenjenih učnih jezikov obsega magistrski program vsaj dva ciljna jezika, od katerih je eden obvezno slovanski (BHMS ali ruščina ali slovenščina). Cilj CBS MA je izobraziti bodoče strokovnjake, ki bodo aktivno delovali med jeziki in kulturami. Program se torej ne osredotoča samo na pridobivanje jezikovnih veščin, ampak tudi medkulturnih, zlasti na medosebnem, sociolingvističnem in socialnem področju. Te so zajete v inter- in transdisciplinarnih obveznih in izbirnih predmetih (nem. *Gebundene Wahlfächer*).

V drugem delu prispevka je magistrski študij CBS obravnavan v kontekstu večjezičnih in večkulturnih univerz. Prispevek trdi, da je mogoče uvesti angleščino kot učni jezik in ohraniti večjezičnost, kar vključuje ohranjanje lokalnih jezikov. Predstavljene so številne strategije, ki se uporabljajo v programu tako v učilnici kot zunaj nje za krepitev večjezičnosti in jezikovne raznolikosti.

Ključne besede: večjezičnost, magistrski program Cross-Border Studies, slovanski, germanski in romanski jeziki, Univerza v Celovcu

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1. Introduction

Culture contacts and cross-cultural communication are more common than ever in our globalized world. They make mastering other languages everyday reality and a continuous life necessity for almost everyone (cf. Cenoz, 2013, p. 3f). However, a level of linguistic knowledge similar to that of L1 speakers is rarely the goal. Some see the development of multiple competences in various languages in order to successfully communicate with others as the ultimate goal of multilingualism.²

Speaking a common language is the first step towards understanding each other. However, as problems in cross-cultural communication attest, very often this is not enough. The problems arise when another's speech is interpreted according to our own cultural conventions and expectations (cf. Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 147f). This suggests that educating internationally skilled and transculturally experienced individuals with expertise in cultural mediation in its broadest sense is presently needed more than ever. Located at the heart of the multilingual Alps-Adriatic region and close to the Slovene and Italian borders, the University of Klagenfurt seems a suitable place to offer such a degree program (cf. Yerun, 2022).

Relying on the theoretical literature, this paper argues that the Cross-Border Studies (CBS) MA, specially designed to educate cross-cultural multilingual mediators, is a well-designed multilingual study program. A brief presentation of the motivation for the development of the MA program, the program prerequisites, the inter- and transdisciplinary nature, and the curriculum of the CBS is given in Section 2. Section 3 focuses on the role of multiculturalism and multilingualism in the CBS MA. It is followed by Section 4, containing conclusions.

2. Cross-Border Studies Master's Degree Program

2.1 Motivation for and Preparation of the Cross-Border Studies Master's Degree Program

The previous MA program in Slavic studies at the University of Klagenfurt aimed to deepen the knowledge of Slavic languages (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian [BCS], Russian, and Slovene), cultures, literature, and linguistics already held by students. The language of instruction was mainly German. The exception was the MA program in Slovene Studies, primarily because it partially overlapped with the Slovene Teachers' Education Program MEd (Germ. *Masterstudium Lehramt Sekundarstufe Allgemeinbildung*), where the language of instruction was predominantly Slovene.

The previous MA program in Slavic studies consisted of two core Slavic languages. As a rule, the first Slavic language was the one taken during the student's BA course. The program also allowed for the acquisition of a third Slavic language. Moreover, in this program, with the supervisor's consent students were allowed to write their MA thesis in a language other than German (cf.

² Unlike in some others, in this paper plurilingualism and bilingualism are also subsumed under the label of multilingualism (cf. Cenoz, 2013, p. 7; Hu, 2017, p. 246).

University of Klagenfurt, 2017, p. 13). The last enrollment was in the summer semester of 2022. Due to a low number of enrollments, the MA program in Slavic studies at the University of Klagenfurt has been officially disestablished. The new CBS MA program was designed to attract a larger local and international student body and to respond to labor market requirements.³

2.2 Prerequisites for the Cross-Border Studies MA

The target student group are early and late simultaneous and consecutive bi- and multilinguals (or those who aspire to become such), proficient in German or English, with a basic knowledge of BCMS, Russian or Slovene, who are interested in language and culture contact in the broadest sense (cf. Yerun, 2022).

There is no special admission procedure for the CBS MA program. However, candidates do have to meet the following conditions. First, they must have a Bachelor's or equivalent academic degree from a post-secondary educational institution. Depending on the track chosen, candidates must provide proof of German or English language proficiency at B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (cf. Council of Europe, 2001; University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 5f). Alternatively, candidates choosing the German language track whose L1 is not German must demonstrate language skills of at least A2 level at the time of application and attend German courses as part of the Preparatory Study Course (VAAU) program (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022b, p. 1; University of Klagenfurt, n.d.a).

Supplementary examinations are prescribed for those lacking substantial subject-related knowledge and must be passed by the end of the second semester of the CBS MA program. Moreover, for graduates of non-philological Bachelor's degree programs introductory courses in the field of literature and linguistics (6 ECTS credits) and language skills depending on the focus language (Slavic language, German, English or Italian, 6 ECTS credits) are obligatory (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 5).⁴

It should also be noted that in the case of some compulsory subjects and guided electives (Germ. *Gebundene Wahlfächer*), a set entry language level is required (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3, 14f, 24f).

³ The initial concept of the CBS MA studies used in curriculum development was elaborated by Cristina Beretta, Magdalena Kaltseis, and Zrinka Kolaković in the 2020 summer semester.

⁴ For more information, see Section 63 (3) (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 5). Supplementary examinations are not compulsory for students who took a philological (English, German, Romance or Slavic) extension curriculum (EC) or extension program (EP) during their Bachelor's degree studies (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 6).

2.3 Interdisciplinarity and Transdisciplinarity

The program is characterized by a high level of inter- and transdisciplinarity. In the broad sense, the program is inter- and transdisciplinary because it brings together students and staff from different disciplines, i.e., with varied educational backgrounds. In the narrow sense, inter- and transdisciplinarity are achieved through the curriculum, especially the wide array of guided electives.⁵ The curriculum was designed to develop competences in dealing with transcultural, border-specific, and cross-border issues. However, how inter- and transdisciplinary a student's profile will be by the end of the studies depends above all on the choices made regarding guided and open electives (cf. University of Klagenfurt, n.d.a). The inter- and transdisciplinary approach in the CBS MA not only aims to provide solid subject-specific competences, but also to raise critical-analytical awareness. These are essential for recognizing and dealing with linguistically and culturally coded challenges, questions, and conflicts (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 4).

2.4 Curriculum

Traditional curricula are in some ways characterized by their regimented and restrictive nature as they often fail to encompass topics students would like to know more about. In contrast, the CBS customizable curriculum with a philological core allows students to explore a wider range of choices and combinations (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3). This can be attractive to students who are seeking to get more than is usually offered in traditional philological studies. The program is also open to students who want to enter an entirely new field after completing a bachelor's degree.

The curriculum of the CBS MA is designed for educating intercultural speakers, i.e., preparing communication experts who will interact with people speaking a different language and living in another cultural context (cf. Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1998). The different compulsory subjects were selected to promote curiosity and openness towards alterity and diversity. CBS MA students are expected to be willing to get to know other cultural ways of thinking and perceiving, as well as to distance, relativize, and critically question their own (cf. Byram, 1997, p. 34). The philological cores of the curriculum, as well as the vast array of guided electives, are intended to help future cross-border experts to learn how to judge the perspectives of their communication partners not based on their own cultural values and norms. The curriculum gives them tools for avoiding ethnocentrism by bringing them closer to their interlocutor's ways of thinking and perception.

Bearing in mind that language knowledge is not only an academic value but that a language in the broadest sense also integrates other meanings and values, the CBS curriculum was designed concentrically with knowledge of different target languages being enhanced and intertwined (cf. Krumm & Reich, 2011; Novak Lukanovič, 2020, p. 55). Courses in the Slavic languages that students are already familiar with (entry level must be at least A2 according to CEFR) – Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian (BCMS), Russian or Slovene – are an integral part of the

⁵ For more information see the next subsection.

curriculum. Depending on their L1 language(s) or other languages they have already mastered and their aptitudes, students are encouraged to add a non-Slavic language, i.e., German, English, or Italian, to their linguistic repertoire. Both Slavic and non-Slavic language courses are compulsory (10% and 8% of the total study program), as the program targets exploration of these languages and their literatures and cultures in interaction (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3f).

The language courses are enhanced with Slavic and non-Slavic linguistics, literature, and cultural studies courses. Students can freely decide whether they want to study interfaces between language and society or whether they prefer to address Slavic and non-Slavic contemporary literature in its European and transcultural contexts (11% and 7% of the total study program) (cf. University of Klagenfurt, n.d.a). If they select the former, they have a choice of various fields such as multilingualism research, contact linguistics, sociolinguistics, gender linguistics, pragmatics,⁶ discourse analysis, and corpus linguistics, etc. (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 4).

The program provides an orientation in the interdisciplinary field of Cross-Border Studies. Students become acquainted with its central concepts and approaches, and become familiar with the specific nature of interdisciplinary work (7% of the total study program) (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 7, 15).

Moreover, students can take a wide array of guided electives. Depending on where they see themselves professionally, choosing a specialization in Interdisciplinary Multilingualism, Peace and Education Studies in Global-Local Contexts, Business Administration and Entrepreneurship, Media and Communication Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, Applied Cultural Studies, Geography and History, and Digitalization, and Sustainable Development can be used to acquire additional skills needed for the future (25% of the total study program) (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3; 8–12, 16f).⁷

The CBS MA promotes gaining practical experience outside the university (cf. Yerun, 2022): work experience or study abroad are compulsory. Ideally, such time should be spent away, in multilingual institutions that operate across borders (5% of the total study program). This means that students are encouraged to work abroad, practically and theoretically, on multilingual, transnational, and cross-border issues (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 4, 13).⁸

Furthermore, students can cross the borders of their academic courses foreseen by the curriculum and, within open electives (10% of the total study program), add specialist courses and optional subjects to their portfolios or take extension programs in parallel (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 24).⁹

⁶ Cross-cultural pragmatics, as the study of (dis)similarities in cultural norms for conveying and interpreting messages (e.g., speech acts), could be particularly important for future cross-border specialists (cf. Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 148).

⁷ Together with the philological cores, these electives cover Byram's (1997, p. 35–37) "knowledge", "skills of interpreting and relating", "skills of discovery and interaction", and "critical cultural awareness" that intercultural speakers are expected to have.

⁸ The University of Klagenfurt has around 250 partner universities which can be visited within various scholarship programs (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 13; University of Klagenfurt, n.d.b).

⁹ For more information on extension programs consult University of Klagenfurt (n.d.c).

Finally, a Master's thesis is written in Linguistics or Literary Studies, depending on the seminar that was attended, and which can have an interphilological and interdisciplinary character. It is accompanied by a Master's Colloquium and a final overall board examination (18% of the total study program) (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 25f).

2.5 Profile

Studies of real-life situations, such as job interviews, doctor-patient encounters, and legal communication, show that differences in speakers' cultural conventions can easily cause misinterpretations and misunderstandings and result in a total breakdown of communication (cf. Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 147f). With this in mind, the CBS MA curriculum encompasses a study program whose purpose is training in recognizing commonalities across cultures and languages. Understanding the world in its infinite diversity demands going beyond narrow black-and-white thinking and stimulates critical reasoning and searching for alternative points of view (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3). The CBS MA is designed to produce advanced problem-solving thinkers. An objective of its curriculum is to provide students with deeper knowledge of the structure, functions, and development of language(s). The intended outcome is for CBS MA alumni to be capable of reflecting on societal multilingualism, language varieties, and language as an identity-forming, communicative, and social phenomenon. Furthermore, they should gain an acquaintance with the socio-pragmatic characteristics of the core languages studied, making them confident communication and intercultural mediators (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 4).

The individual profile of each alumnus will depend on the specializations, i.e., guided electives and open electives, that he or she chose, and on the extension program(s), if taken during the course of study. In any case, CBS MA alumni might pursue their careers in inter- and supranational institutions, companies, and organizations where cross-border cooperation is central. Alumni will be qualified, among other things, for occupational activities in various areas, which include: public relations and communications; multinational companies with a focus on the Alps-Adriatic region, including Bosnia/Croatia/Serbia/Montenegro, and also on Russia and Ukraine; publishing, cultural mediation, and cultural agencies; newsrooms; business development, management consultancy, regional marketing, and public administration (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 5; University of Klagenfurt, n.d.a).

3. The Cross-Border Studies MA as a Multilingual and Multicultural Study Program

3.1 Multilingualism and Multilingual Universities

Globally speaking, bilingualism and multilingualism are becoming more and more valued. Many individuals are consciously trying to become bi- or multilingual since this represents a promise for better socio-economic welfare (cf. Cenoz, 2013, p. 4; Cots et al., 2012, p. 10). Consequently, in many countries bilingualism and multilingualism are becoming an integral part of the educational policy (cf. Medved Krajnović, 2010, p. 104; Hu, 2017, p. 247). Many European higher

education institutions are engaged in the processes of multilingualization (Cots et al., 2012, p. 9f):

[W]e are seeing nowadays how the knowledge of not only wide-spread languages such as English but also of minority languages has an increasing exchange value in the labor and culture markets which tends to facilitate the upward social mobility of multilingual speakers. It is no wonder, therefore, that universities, in their attempt to respond to the professional demands of future graduates, include the development of multilingual skills as an important part of their training programmes.

Multilingual universities are held to be places where bilingual or multilingual education, whether official or unofficial, partial or comprehensive, pedagogically explicit or implicit, is represented (cf. Dafouz & Smit, 2016, p. 399). In the following paragraphs it will be argued that CBS qualifies as a multilingual MA study program.

Contemporary definitions of multilingualism (cf. Li, 2008, p. 4; Kemp, 2009, p. 22; Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 379f) do not assume very high linguistic and communicative competences in individual languages. Instead, they focus on the ability to use languages effectively in communication (cf. Grosjean, 2012, p. 4).¹⁰ Based on these lines of thought, it can be said that globalization is one of the factors that make the majority of the modern world's population bi- and multilingual. Namely, it is not uncommon for communicative competences in more than one language (variety) to be necessary in everyday life (cf. Medved Krajnović, 2010, p. 12f). Moreover, it could be argued that multilingualism is a rather common phenomenon since L1 speakers of any language (variety) also speak at least one other language or variety to a certain extent (cf. Medved Krajnović, 2010, p. 5f, 12).^{11,12} The CBS MA builds on this naturally occurring multilingualism. Its curriculum is specially designed to help students achieve higher levels of language proficiency or to extend their language portfolios by including more languages in it. It is completely up to students to decide whether they want to work on their language portfolio by improving their skills in a language they are already familiar with or by learning a new language from scratch (University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 6):

If, at the start of the degree programme, the student has already mastered a core language from compulsory subject 1 or compulsory subject 2 at a level that is deemed sufficient for completing courses in compulsory subject 4 or compulsory subject 5, it is possible to choose to study a language that is not covered in academic depth in compulsory subject 4 or compulsory subject 5. Alternatively, in this case, students can

¹⁰ The extent to which a person is multilingual is hard to measure exactly and objectively. Among other reasons, this is because being multilingual is a dynamic process – language proficiency is susceptible to change (cf. Jessner, 2008, p. 270; Cenoz 2013, p. 12; Zydariš, 2017a, p. 386).

¹¹ Vertical bilingualism means the use of different varieties within one abstract language system. In such a view, the dialectal variety is the actual L1 and the standard variety, introduced in (pre)school, is the child's L2 (cf. Wandruszka, 1979, p. 38; Pavličević-Franić, 2006, p. 2). In other words, children are vertically bilingual from (pre)school. Introduction of a foreign language makes them horizontally bilingual, and multilingual because of their three (at least) language systems in interaction (cf. Pavličević-Franić, 2006, p. 2). This kind of multilingualism is inherent in any national language (cf. Hu, 2017, p. 246).

¹² However, that does not mean that becoming fluent in more than one language is easy. On the contrary, many individuals struggle and fail in their attempts to become fluent multilinguals (cf. Medved Krajnović, 2010, p. 13).

also choose corresponding philological courses from the guided electives instead of language courses.

This means that the acquisition or improvement of another Slavic or any other language is also an option. Moreover, instead of attending language courses students can take courses on multilingualism or any other philological courses. This is one of the many ways in which the CBS MA curriculum stimulates multilingualism.

3.2 Paradigm Shift

The CBS MA proposes a paradigm shift: its focus is not only on acquiring language skills but also on developing skills in the intercultural, i.e., interpersonal, sociolinguistic, and social areas. It is not a program that aims to deliver alumni with two or three L1s. Its goal is not to bring into being “native speakers” of several languages. Instead, the CBS MA aims to educate future experts who will actively operate in different languages and cultures (cf. Schmenk, 2017, p. 143f).

The CBS MA program is multicultural on practical and theoretical levels. At the outset, multiculturalism is embodied in its students and teachers and is reflected in daily university life. The CBS program brings together both teachers and students with different cultural and language backgrounds.^{13,14} Additionally, alterity and diversity are essential curriculum components and are dealt with in special courses (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 9f, 12, 18).

By taking into account migration-related multilingualism of the parties involved,¹⁵ the CBS MA curriculum has the goal of supporting multilingualism in the Alps-Adriatic region, and upgrading it to the next level via the two language tracks and additional languages of instruction. This constellation includes speakers of various L1 languages belonging to different language families. The cultural pluralism and institutional multilingualism, covering the Slovene, German, and Italian languages, is partly caused by the unique geographical location of the University of Klagenfurt (cf. Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 150; Matticchio & Melchior, 2021). Ljubljana is less than 100, and Udine 200 kilometers away. Moreover, Slovene has the status of a minority language in Carinthia. Thus, students can put the theory learned during their studies into practice on the spot. This factor was the motivation for designing the curriculum with subjects from the Slavic (specialization 1, SP1), and Germanic or Romance philologies (specialization 2, SP2) as the compulsory core (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3). The CBS Curriculum explicitly states that after finishing the program, alumni will be multilingual (University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3):

Students acquire in-depth knowledge of language, literature and cultural spaces in a transnational and transcultural context, are multilingual and have a high capacity for

¹³ This kind of constellation is present at universities worldwide. “Today, most institutions, organizations, regions and countries are experiencing an increasingly diverse workforce” (Yanaprasart & Lüdi, 2018, p. 827).

¹⁴ This should not be underestimated since personal experiences and the reflection about them can impact the development of attitudes such as openness to alterity (cf. Byram, 1997).

¹⁵ For many of them the dominant German language is not the L1, but an L2 or even an L3.

reflection in dealing with (concepts of) language and culture as well as with their social preconditions and dimensions.

The guided elective Interdisciplinary Multilingualism introduces multilingualism to students on the theoretical and practical level: theories and concepts of multilingualism are compared and multilingual situations are analyzed from different perspectives. According to the program, after specializing in Interdisciplinary Multilingualism, students should be able to critically consider discourses on multilingualism and assess concrete examples of social language policies and practices (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 4, 12).

Recognizing the role of multilingualism in future-oriented action, especially as regards settling tensions between majorities and minorities, is one of the learning outcomes that Peace and Education Studies in Global-Local Contexts lists (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 9f). The individual courses offered in the 2022 winter semester such as Minorities and Multilingualism also attest that multilingualism holds a very important position in the study program.¹⁶

3.3 English “and” not “versus” Other Languages

Like many other non-Anglophone universities in Europe, the CBS MA relies on English as an excellent means of attracting international students (cf. Cots et al., 2012, p. 8).¹⁷ The English language track was undoubtedly implemented to facilitate international exchange and help recruit an international student body. However, local students can also profit from it – in preparation both for the labor market and for a further academic career (cf. Yanaprasart & Lüdi, 2018, p. 829). Although for many speaking English is a necessity, it is the ability to speak other languages that gives a competitive edge (cf. Edwards, 2008, p. 164).¹⁸ In a similar vein, it is argued that the “English lingua franca should not constitute THE but ONE OF the communication strategies for all practical purposes between people with different repertoires” (Yanaprasart & Lüdi, 2018, p. 829). Moreover, universities are also expected to protect and promote their local language and culture, especially in bilingual contexts where a minority language is spoken (cf. Cots et al., 2012, p. 8). “To avoid a situation where language issues becoming a source of conflict and inequality within culturally diverse teams, the management of language diversity is more relevant to the academic world today than it has ever been before” (Yanaprasart & Lüdi, 2018, p. 835). To overcome such potential problems, English is by no means the only shared language used among staff and students in the CBS MA. More importantly, the multilingualism embodied in the CBS MA curriculum covers languages from three language families and is not exclusively limited to geographically close languages.

¹⁶ For an exhaustive list of courses see University of Klagenfurt (n.d.d).

¹⁷ Choosing English as an official language of instruction is an effect of a general trend to intensify internationalization in higher education (cf. Maringe, 2010, p. 24ff).

¹⁸ A recent study by Kaltseis & Doleschal (2020, p. 57) at local Carinthian schools confirms that students are interested in learning foreign languages other than English.

3.4 A Note on Multilingual Strategies and Practices

The CBS MA program draws on a wide range of strategies and practices to foster and nurture multilingualism (cf. Van der Walt, 2013, p. 141). By offering both English and German language tracks and by adding other languages of instruction (there are courses and corresponding written assignments and examinations in a language other than German or English), multilingualism, institutional and otherwise, is further promoted (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 3). In addition, track languages are both target languages themselves and tools to gain content knowledge, which can be considered an added value of the program (cf. Baker & Hüttner, 2017, p. 509). In language courses, more than 50% of the time is spent in the target language. As mentioned above, some other courses are also held in target languages. For students this is an excellent opportunity to practice different varieties of the chosen target language (e.g., scholarly/scientific register) and to acquire vocabulary used beyond the bounds of everyday situations.

For some students German and English, the official instruction (track) languages, are not the L1, but the target L2 or L3. These constellations mean that both translanguaging and immersion are essential elements of the program (cf. Genesee, 1987; Williams, 2002, p. 9; García, 2009, p. 44f; Zydatiś 2017b, p. 134f). Due to a high number of L1 speakers of different languages from the same language family, intercomprehension strategies are also rather common in communication among staff and students, and between these two groups (cf. Meißner 2017, p. 147).

Finally, it has to be emphasized that the program allows, if assessment can be guaranteed, the Master's thesis to be written in a language other than German. Regardless of the language chosen, the thesis must contain an English-language abstract. If the thesis language is other than German or English, the cover page and the title must be provided in German or English (cf. University of Klagenfurt, 2022a, p. 25).

4. Conclusion and Further Perspectives

“[A] successful collaboration depends, first and foremost, upon the [...] ability to work across cultural and linguistic borders” (Yanaprasart & Lüdi, 2018, p. 835f). Following these lines of thought, the CBS MA is built with the assumption that promoting multilingualism is necessary. As concisely demonstrated in Section 3, endorsing multilingualism requires proven strategies to be implemented on various levels. Although only recently inaugurated, the promising multilingual CBS MA program puts the University of Klagenfurt next to other multilingual universities in Europe such as Bolzano, Fribourg, Luxemburg, Frankfurt an der Oder, and Helsinki. Potential to attract a student body both local and international is offered not only by English as a language of instruction, but more importantly by multilingualism *in situ* and *in vivo*. Students' relative freedom in choosing areas of specialization, combined with the possibility to spend significant portions of the degree program outside Austria, make CBS an innovative, multilingual and pan-European degree program (cf. Yerun, 2022).

Since the program was inaugurated in the 2022 winter semester, it is not yet possible to discuss any results or problems. After several semesters, a midterm evaluation report may be prepared on the multilingual CBS MA study program, addressing many more exciting research questions such as:

1. What is the relationship between institutional multilingualism and the personal multilingualism of students enrolled in the program?
2. How do the languages of instruction influence the learning process itself and the choice of courses, both compulsory and guided or open electives?
3. Which factors influence students' choices of track and target languages?

In any case, further studies are welcomed.

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