

## PERCEIVED AFFORDANCES OF A COLLABORATIVE VIRTUAL TEACHER EDUCATION COURSE ON CLIL AND TECHNOLOGIES DURING REMOTE TEACHING

*Affordances Percebidas Em Um Curso Virtual Colaborativo De Formação  
De Professores Sobre CLIL e Tecnologias Durante O Ensino Remoto*

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**ABSTRACT:** The objective of this paper is both to describe the course syllabus and the activities implemented in a course on CLIL and technologies for pre-service and in-service teachers from three public universities in Paraná, and also examine the perceived affordances of the initiative. The theoretical framework of affordances guided the analysis and results indicate that the interactions provided by the online course allowed teachers to learn about CLIL, have opportunities to practice their language skills, articulate the use of technological resources and also reflect about pedagogical issues specific to the English language. For the professors in charge of the initiative, it allowed them to collaborate through the course planning as well as through researching/learning together in an international online experience. The affordances for our institutions include the incorporation of new perspectives into their curriculum as well as the development of internationalization at home practices. The proposal

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also allowed some room for identifying some limitations such as lack of time, no interactions among peers from different regions; no involvement with proposed ethnographic case study activities, aspects which impaired community building.

**KEYWORDS:** Affordances; CLIL; English teacher education; online course.

**RESUMO:** O objetivo deste artigo é descrever o currículo e as atividades implementadas em um curso sobre CLIL e tecnologias para professores em formação e em serviço de três universidades públicas no Paraná, bem como examinar as *affordances* percebidas da iniciativa. O referencial teórico das *affordances* orientou a análise e os resultados indicam que as interações proporcionadas pelo curso online permitiram que os professores aprendessem sobre CLIL, tivessem oportunidades de praticar suas habilidades linguísticas, articularem o uso de recursos tecnológicos e também refletirem sobre questões pedagógicas específicas da língua inglesa. Para as professoras responsáveis pela iniciativa, o projeto permitiu que elas colaborassem tanto no planejamento do curso quanto na pesquisa/aprendizado conjuntos em uma experiência online internacional. As *affordances* para as instituições envolvidas incluem a incorporação de novas perspectivas em seus currículos, bem como o desenvolvimento de práticas de internacionalização em casa. A proposta também permitiu identificar algumas limitações como falta de tempo, ausência de interações entre pares de diferentes regiões; nenhum envolvimento com as atividades propostas de estudo de caso etnográfico, aspectos que prejudicaram a construção de uma comunidade.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Affordances*; CLIL; formação de professores de inglês; curso online.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

For the last decades, foreign/additional language teaching in the Brazilian educational system has been characterized by gaps and discontinuity, since the national guidelines have guaranteed little or no room for it in the school curriculum, as well as failed to address the languages to be taught, supposedly aiming at local communities' autonomy to choose what would be the best for their students. However, the latest set of governmental guiding principles for the national curriculum, since 2016, explicitly posits English as a mandatory discipline from Elementary (second phase - years 6 to 9) to High school in the country (BRASIL, 2017a; 2017b, 2018). Such updating in terms of public policy seems to follow an international trend according to which English is defined as a global lingua franca (GIMENEZ et al., 2015), due to its worldwide use as the main medium of communication for business, science and entertainment. Despite the recognition of the role and status of this language in contemporary society, the document does not acknowledge the importance of other languages in the curriculum, emphasizing, though, the hegemony of English. Considering that the National Inventory of Language Diversity acknowledges the existence of more than 200 languages spoken in Brazil (MAHER, 2006; 2013), we must recognize that the current guidelines may pose a barrier for multilingual education (CAVALCANTI; MAHER, 2018; FINARDI, 2019; OLIVEIRA, 2016).

Teacher education in Brazil, especially at the undergraduate level, continuously seeks to provide professional qualifications to meet the increasing demand of schools for English language teachers to work in varied contexts, requiring the development of increasingly complex skills. The implementation of a “Content and Language Integrated Learning” (CLIL) approach, which contextualizes practices beyond limited language goals, seems appealing, mainly in Bilingual schools (SOUZA, 2019) that are booming in Latin America, and for the most part in the private context in Brazil (SIQUEIRA et al., 2018; LIBERALI; MEGALI, 2011).

Although more present in Brazilian big urban centers, bilingual education (English and Portuguese) is not yet part of most curricula for undergraduate courses (COYLE, 1999), a situation experienced by three of the main public universities in Paraná state, context in which this study takes place: the State University of Londrina (UEL), the State University of Maringá (UEM) and the Federal University of Technology - Paraná State, in Pato Branco (UTFPR-PB). Being responsible for preparing a significant number of English language teachers, professors of the three universities proposed a joint initiative,

supported by the Regional English Language Office (RELO) of the U.S. Embassy, to address what seemed to be an area of need for teacher education in Paraná State.

The extension course “Virtual English Language Specialist: Technology and CLIL for Teachers in Paraná” was developed as an answer to the growing demand for preparing English language teachers to work in contexts that require the use of CLIL, as it has recently acquired a prestigious status in Brazil due to the new white paper for plurilingual Education (BRASIL, 2020). In this document, CLIL is recognized as being one of the main approaches used in bilingual education for integrating language and content learning<sup>2</sup>. According to Megale (2020), if we acknowledge that the language and content integrated work is one of the tenets of bilingual education, teacher education must, therefore, instrumentalize teachers to implement proposals that align language to the construction of several kinds of disciplinary knowledge.

Besides the need for incorporating CLIL in the curriculum, a secondary objective of the course was to provide the participants with opportunities to experience the use of technology in remote teaching. Developing digital literacy has been of great importance for English teacher education programs in Brazil, but this need became critical in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, when classes moved to online environments. This change has posed significant challenges, requiring teachers to develop new instructional approaches through the use of various digital tools and resources (KÖNIG et al., 2020).

Considering the context presented above, the objective of this paper is twofold. First, it describes the course syllabus and the activities implemented in a course on CLIL and technologies for pre-service and in-service teachers from the three state universities in Paraná. Then, it presents the course coordinators’ perceptions on the affordances (GIBSON, 1986; GAVER, 1991) of this project for themselves as teacher educators, for the participants involved in this joint experience as well as for their home institutions. Reflecting on the affordances of this course is significant because it enables us to identify the possibilities for acting, interacting and being in this format of teacher development course, not only to evaluate the experience but also to provide informed theory for follow-up endeavors.

This paper is one of the outcomes from the project “English Teaching in times of internationalization - approaching CLIL and EMI in a collaborative virtual experience”<sup>3</sup>,

2 Available at <http://portal.mec.gov.br/docman/setembro-2020-pdf/156861-pceb002-20/file>

3 This research project aims at investigating aspects related to the ways of acting, interacting, representing and being of the teachers involved in the courses, through their language productions made during the courses. From these subsidies, we seek to contribute to the improvement of English language teachers education in Brazil, especially in computer-mediated contexts.

a joint research initiative coordinated by three professors from three aforementioned universities in Paraná - coordinators of the online course - with the participation of a Virtual Specialist fellow from the Western Oregon University (USA) - the course instructor, all authors of this paper. Ethical procedures were followed to carry out the research focusing on the CLIL course. The research project was approved by the Ethical Board Commission from UEL, where it was first registered (CAAE 37434820.8.3001.5547). The initiative was also approved by UEM's and UTFPR's Ethical Boards. All the participants received the Consent Form and only the ones who signed their permissions are going to be considered for future studies deriving from the initiative.

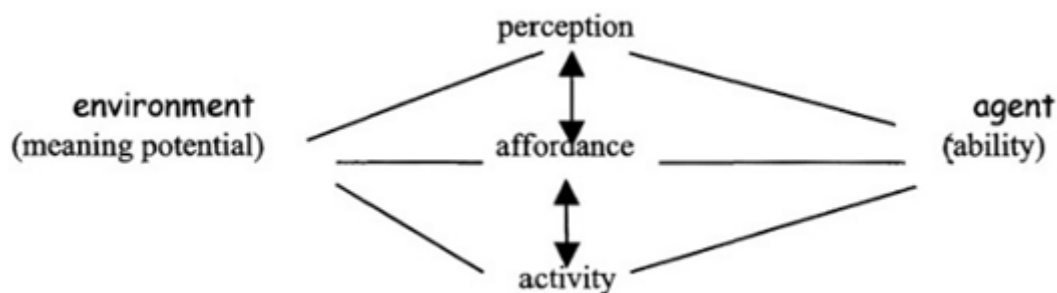
The text is organized as follows: we first introduce the concept of affordances, the lenses through which we analyze this experience; then, we present some of CLIL principles for language teaching. Next, we contextualize our proposal within the Virtual Specialist program from RELO Office and focus on the main features of the course "CLIL for English language teachers in Parana", presenting its rationale and implementation. After that, we analyze and reflect on the affordances of this teaching proposal for all the participants. We conclude this paper outlining the potential and limitations of the initiative.

## 2. PERCEIVED AFFORDANCES

The concept of affordances was proposed by Gibson (1986) to describe the relation of mutuality between the ecological environment and the subject that acts on it. Thus, "[...] the affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill" (GIBSON, 1986, p. 127). To Gaver (1991), this perspective recognizes the sociocultural scenarios and provides us with an understanding of how agents think and learn, in our context, in relation with technologies and CLIL. This notion has been used in the teaching and learning field by van Lier (2000; 2004a; 2004b), who understands the concept as being the possibilities of action offered to the learner by the environment of learning in an attempt to associate the perceptual and social activities of learners. The author supports the idea that the individual is immersed in an environment full of opportunities for meaning making. These opportunities, for Van Lier (2000), present themselves according to the interaction between the learner and the environment, that is, "what is available to the person" (VAN LIER, 2004a, p. 91). That way, Van Lier (2000) expands the concept brought by Gibson by emphasizing that the concept of affordances comprises "demands and requirements, opportunities and limitations, rejections and invitations, enablement and constraints" (VAN LIER, 2000, p.

253). The concept of affordance is strictly related to the perception of participants. To Van Lier, action, perception and interpretation are prerequisites so affordances can emerge. Van Lier (2000) points out that the meaning making emerges in a third dimension, that is, as a result of the interaction between the perception/activity (through the affordances) and the relations between the agent/environment, which means the environment is always full of meanings in potential, but the agent has to have certain skills to realize such possibilities of action. The affordances, to the author, fuels the perception and the activity and creates meaning. The next picture exemplifies the relation between perceptions and affordances.

**Picture 1** - Affordance Reproduced from van Lier (2004a, p. 96).



Therefore, in this paper, we understand affordances as “the opportunities/possibilities of actions that are provided by the environment and perceived by the engaged agent in the relation of a specific activity that forges the meaning making” (EL KADRI, 2018, p. 32). According to El Kadri (2018), several studies in Brazil have used the concept in the field of Applied Linguistics in studies related to educational technology (BRAGA, 2017; PAIVA, 2011; PAIVA, 2017; PINHEIRO, 2017; SILVA, 2015) in order to analyze the opportunities for action in different learning environments. As pointed out by Silva (2015), affordances can be identified by observing individuals engaged in an action with the environment and with other individuals or by looking at the participants’ perception of affordances. In this paper, we look at the affordances from the second perspective, focusing on our perceptions on how the teachers engaged with the online course.

### 3. CLIL IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is broadly defined as a dual-focused educational approach that “integrates content and language learning in varied, dynamic and relevant learning environments” (COYLE, 2007, p. 546). Initially developed in Europe, and more recently embraced in other parts of the world, including in Asia

and Latin America, CLIL has gained increased popularity in the last two decades as an approach to meet the demands of plurilingual education around the globe (ESCOBAR-URMENETA, 2019; PÉREZ-CAÑADO, 2018).

The widespread adoption of CLIL has given rise to a number of flexible instructional models, implemented in diverse educational contexts, such as sheltered instruction, immersion, bilingual and foreign language education, from primary to university levels (COYLE, 2006). The dual aims of CLIL can be described along a continuum, depending on whether content or language goals are driving the curriculum. On the content-driven end of the continuum, the focus is on the attainment of conceptual understandings and skills related to the content areas, so course goals are determined in terms of content objectives. Language skills are taught and practiced in order to provide students greater access to the subject matter; in other words, language learning is a vehicle for mastery of content. At the opposite end of the continuum are language-driven curricula, which prioritize language objectives centering on the four language domains. The curriculum is organized around themes and topics that maximize authentic language learning, and students are evaluated on their progress in language proficiency, as well as on the content that is integrated into lessons (GOTTLIEB & ERNST-SLAVIT, 2014; MET, 1999). Regardless of where a program falls along the continuum, however, all CLIL models view the process of language learning as essentially an integrated endeavor, which cannot be separated from real-world tasks, knowledge, skills, and cultural understandings.

CLIL principles are anchored on the theoretical foundations of constructivism (CENOZ et al., 2014), and promote student-centered classroom environments where learning is personalized and connected to students' prior experiences and background knowledge (DIAZ-PEREZ et al., 2018). Classroom tasks provide meaningful and authentic input, and opportunities for interaction and output that promote collaboration and critical thinking. Purposeful scaffolding is offered to support language production and comprehension, develop higher-order thinking skills, as well as facilitate the learning of academic content and completion of tasks (MEYER, 2010). Importantly, CLIL classrooms support additive bilingualism, intentionally fostering translanguaging and cross-linguistic pedagogical practices (GEORGIU, 2012). In recent years, digital tools and online technologies have become increasingly prominent in CLIL contexts, given their potential to maximize participatory and project-based learning, as well as to promote authentic communication and intercultural awareness (O'DOWD, 2018).

The fundamental pedagogical features of CLIL have been described in the "4 Cs Framework" (COYLE, 1999; 2006), later extended into 5 Cs (ATTARD-MONTALTO et



al., 2015), which provides a helpful guide for curriculum design and lesson planning. The framework is open-ended and flexible, and outlines the building blocks for effective CLIL practice: *content* (acquisition of knowledge and skills; construction of understandings through language use); *communication* (learning through social interaction; language learning while using language); *cognition* (language use to develop thinking skills; strategies for learning to learn); *competence* (content and skills that describe the outcomes of a lesson); and *culture* (awareness of self and others; development of shared understandings through exposure to multiple perspectives).

In the last two decades, CLIL has been constantly adapted, modified and extended to meet the demands of the diverse local contexts where it has been implemented. Recent examinations of the CLIL research literature (PÉREZ-CAÑADO, 2012; DALTON-PUFFER, NIKULA, 2014; COYLE, 2007) reveal an interest in a wide range of issues and questions, including students' language and content learning gains, teachers' and learners' attitudes and motivation, development of pedagogical practices and assessments, and enactments of educational policies and language ideologies in classrooms. Recently, different scholars have advocated for a broadening of the CLIL research agenda, calling for studies that adopt a critical lens (DARVIN et al., 2020), an ethnographic perspective (RELAÑO-PASTOR, 2018), collaboration among practitioners (COYLE, 2007), and an examination of multiple contexts and languages of instruction (DALTON-PUFFER; NIKULA, 2014).

The implementation of CLIL approaches is a relatively new phenomenon in Latin America in general, and in Brazil in particular. As Siqueira et al. (2018) point out, CLIL presents significant challenges for educators in Latin America. One of these challenges relates to the availability of locally produced CLIL materials that reflect students' realities and problematizes the supremacy of English over local languages. Since most CLIL textbooks are produced in the U.S. and in the U.K., they often reinforce hegemonic values and dominant cultural representations. Another challenge is the shortage of university courses and programs that prepare pre-service teachers for CLIL contexts. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is the need to provide wider access to CLIL approaches for students in the public education sector. "The privatization of access to education and, with it, language learning, is characteristic of many South American settings" (SIQUEIRA et al, 2018, p. 200). It is important to remember, however, that these challenges also represent exciting future opportunities for research and practice. The present study reflects one of these opportunities, as it examines the implementation of a CLIL course for pre-service and in-service teachers.



#### 4. THE CONTEXT - THE VIRTUAL SPECIALIST PROGRAM

As described by the RELO Office, The Virtual English Language Fellow and Specialist Program is a quick response mechanism to connect with institutions, teachers, and learners during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to support English language teaching and learning and help to support transitions to online and Emergency Remote Teaching models when face-to-face exchanges are not possible. The program may include Virtual Specialist participation in keynote presentations, workshops, materials development, curriculum design, or assessment. Virtual Fellows can teach short-term or semester-long courses for a specified audience with a hosting institution. Fellows and Specialists are U.S. academics in the fields of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Applied Linguistics.

The project proposed by the first three authors to the Virtual Specialist Program aimed at offering opportunities for professional development to around 100 pre-service and in-service English language teachers, focusing not only on language practice but also on technology (Blended learning/CALL) and CLIL (bilingual Education/EMI) in the state of Paraná, Brazil. The project also builds an English language teaching community through the interaction between these professors from three public universities, representing different regions of Paraná State: Londrina, Maringá and Pato Branco. Once the project was approved, together, the three coordinators interviewed a number of candidates identified by the RELO Office, and selected the fourth author as the Specialist to lead the project.

The participants were invited by the three project coordinators, who had the pre-service teachers as the main priority due to their work as teacher educators at the public universities, especially because CLIL is still not yet part of their curricula of undergraduate courses. However, in-service teachers involved in several activities aimed at English language teachers' education developed by the universities were also asked to take part, as they represent important partners or potential peers for collaborative projects.

A total of 113 participants registered for the course, from which 60,2% (68 participants) were pre-service teachers completing undergraduate degrees at the three host universities; 33,6% (38 participants) were in-service teachers with degrees in language teaching, engaged in several activities offered by the universities, such as graduate courses, teaching practicum partnerships, and even professors from the host universities; and 6,2% (7 participants) of them were in-service English language teachers who had a degree in other fields.

The overall goal of the project was to improve interaction, language and content development, as well as to promote the internationalization of the curriculum of English language teacher education programs by bringing new perspectives on the teaching of English via technology and CLIL/Bilingual Education. More specifically, it aimed to:

- a) bring new perspectives for English language teachers education programs in Brazil;
- b) internationalize the curriculum through the interaction with the U.S. specialist;
- c) promote opportunities for interacting in English with the Virtual Specialist and teachers from Paraná;
- d) develop content and pedagogical knowledge related to technology and CLIL.

## 5. THE COURSE: RATIONALE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Graduate fellows at the Language Studies Program at UEL, the three course coordinators have collaborated in several projects focused on English language teacher education since 2008 (CALVO et al, 2009; CALVO et al, 2020; EL KADRI et al, 2009). Then, the joint proposal to the “Virtual English Language Specialist Program” emerged as part of their collaboration. The universities in Paraná State are long-time partners with the U.S. Consulate in São Paulo, especially the State University of Londrina which has received some grants in the English Fellow Program twice before.

Concretely, for the project presented here, the Specialist designed the course and led a series of workshops for the 113 registered participants over a five-week span. As the instructor of the course, the Specialist provided weekly one-hour synchronous sessions via the Zoom Platform<sup>4</sup>, with additional asynchronous activities through a Google Classroom site created for the course, where participants engaged in interaction in smaller groups, analysis of video lessons, exploration of technology tools, reading tasks, and online discussions reflecting on how to adapt CLIL practices to their teaching contexts in Brazil. An option to conduct a small-scale classroom-based ethnographic project was also offered, but unfortunately no participants took advantage of this opportunity, most likely because of the constraints they were experiencing related to remote teaching.

Week 1 of the course focused on theoretical foundations of bilingualism and language learning (GARCÍA, 2009), and principles of sociocultural theory (WALQUI, 2006) that form the basis of CLIL approaches. The main features of CLIL were examined

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4 The team selected Google Meet to be the platform to be used for the synchronous meeting as it was the official platform of most of the public universities. However, due to the number of participants, we decided to move to Zoom platform.

through the 4Cs framework (COYLE, 1999), with an exploration of classroom practices that reflect each component of the framework (content, communication, cognition, and culture). Asynchronous tasks involved the analysis of a video lesson *vis-a-vis* the incorporation of the 4Cs and the creation of an infographic, through the use of digital tools such as Canva ([canva.com](https://canva.com)), Piktochart ([piktochart.com](https://piktochart.com)), and Easel.ly ([www.easel.ly](https://www.easel.ly)). Participants also reflected on their own language learning experiences, and discussed how they would modify the video lesson to meet the demands of their teaching settings in Brazil.

In Week 2, participants continued to examine CLIL principles and practices, with a particular emphasis on the development of listening and speaking skills. Three main concepts were discussed: authentic input; intentional scaffolding; and rich interaction and output (MEYER, 2010). Classroom strategies addressing each of these concepts were also explored, such as instructional conversations (MELLOM et al., 2019), multimodalities (KENDRICK et al., 2010), as well as various structures for cooperative learning (WRIGHT, 2019). Asynchronous tasks again included the analysis of a video lesson, with participants creating a short video on FlipGrid ([flipgrid.com](https://flipgrid.com)) to discuss their analysis. Participants also reflected on two activities that they might implement in their classrooms, which would reflect the CLIL principles examined during the week.

During Week 3, participants were introduced to the concept of translanguaging (GARCÍA; WEI, 2014) and explored different pedagogical strategies for encouraging translanguaging practices, such as linguistic landscape activities (DAGENAIS et al., 2009) and the creation of identity texts (CUMMINS; EARLY, 2011). The workshop also examined CLIL lesson planning, focusing on the creation of language and content objectives (ECHEVARRIA et al., 2013), and the structuring of activities in three phases: “pre,” “during,” and “post” (BRINTON et al., 1994). Several examples of tasks for each phase were presented, emphasizing the development of reading and writing skills, such as graphic organizers, language experience approach (TAYLOR, 1992), and digital storytelling (RANCE-RONEY; YOUNG, 2010). Asynchronous activities for the week included analysis of a video lesson where participants re-created the language and content objectives, and described the tasks implemented in each phase of the lesson. They used Jamboard ([jamboard.google.com](https://jamboard.google.com)) to display their analysis in visual form. Additionally, they reflected on their own past challenges when learning to read and write in English, and discussed specific CLIL practices that they could use in their classrooms to minimize these challenges for their future students.

Week 4 focused on the development of three types of language awareness in the

CLIL classroom: metalinguistic awareness, metacognitive awareness, and sociocultural awareness (GOTTLIEB; ERNST-SLAVIT, 2014). Examples of classroom practice to develop each type of awareness were explored, with a particular emphasis on strategies to teach grammar and vocabulary, such as syntax surgery (HERRELL & JORDAN, 2012), sentence dissecting (HARTUNG-COLE, 2015), cross-linguistic connections (BEEMAN; UROW, 2013), and the use of environmental print (OAXACA, 2010). Asynchronous tasks again included the analysis of a video lesson, with participants reflecting on how the teachers provided opportunities for students to build the three types of language awareness. They created a digital story to present their analysis, utilizing digital tools such as Pixton ([pixton.com](http://pixton.com)), Storybird ([storybird.com](http://storybird.com)), Animoto ([animoto.com](http://animoto.com)), and Makebeliefcomix ([makebeliefcomix.com](http://makebeliefcomix.com)). Also, they reflected on how they would incorporate the digital tools that they had so far explored in the course in their classrooms, in a remote teaching environment.

Finally, week 5 focused on assessment, and explored concepts such as purposes of assessment, summative versus formative assessments, and authentic assessments for the CLIL classroom (GOTTLIEB, 2016). Participants also learned about how to create and utilize rubrics to align assessments with instructional goals, communicate expectations, provide purposeful feedback, and gather evidence to inform instruction (LENSKIE et al, 2006). Asynchronous tasks for this last week included the analysis of a video lesson on how the teacher utilized a rubric to evaluate students' achievement of lesson objectives and to inform instructional decisions. Participants also reflected on how they would incorporate authentic assessments within their own teaching practice. Finally, they created a lesson plan incorporating the CLIL principles and practices presented throughout the course, integrating at least one digital tool for formative or summative assessment, such as mentimeter ([mentimeter.com](http://mentimeter.com)), Kahoot ([kahoot.com](http://kahoot.com)), SurveyMonkey ([survemonkey.com](http://survemonkey.com)), and ClassMarker ([classmarker.com](http://classmarker.com)).

## 6. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT? AFFORDANCES PERCEIVED BY THE PROFESSORS

By analyzing the experiences provided by the course, some affordances were perceived by the professors in charge of the initiative, which are discussed in the three following categories: affordances to the course participants; affordances to the professors; and affordances to the home institutions.

Regarding the participants' interactions during the synchronous sessions, as well as through their engagement in the asynchronous assignments, we can observe **four main**

**affordances that are interrelated.** Due to the main focus of the course, the pre-service and in-service teachers could *learn about CLIL*, as every week they were exposed not only to the theoretical foundations of the approach, but also to meaningful examples of practices in the perspective. Such affordance was observed, for example, in Week 1, when students built an infographic to represent how teachers can incorporate the features of CLIL (content, communication, cognition, culture) in the lessons.

From the 48 turned in infographics (participants were allowed to work in groups), we perceive that students displayed not only a good command of the theoretical principles discussed, but also were skilled at conveying their understandings into a multimodal text, and all of it was done in/through the use of English language, which highlights another potential affordance provided by the course, *opportunities to practice their language skills*, especially by writing, in this specific activity. Regarding language practice, it is worth mentioning that, during the course, translingual practices were welcomed, especially because Portuguese and English were languages available to all the participants. However, English was the language used in the majority of the interactions of the group during the five weeks.

Intertwined with it, weekly the participants had the chance to *articulate the use of technological resources* presented by the Language Specialist as ways of demonstrating both their understanding about the CLIL approach and developing their digital/multiliteracy skills for language teaching and learning. Just like in the activity mentioned above, throughout the course this affordance could be seen as the participants were encouraged to engage through varied online tools. For instance in Week 2, Flip Grid, a platform for recording short videos, was introduced to students so they could present their understanding about three CLIL principles (Authentic Input, Intentional Scaffolding, Rich Interaction and Output), specifically focusing on the development of oral language skills.

Beyond the aforementioned affordances, we could also perceive that an affordance provided by the course was the *reflection about pedagogical issues specific to English language teaching*. Every week there was a “Teachers reflection” task in which participants could address distinct aspects of teaching practices concerning the CLIL approach, both considering their experiences as students and teachers in Brazil, so they could explore possibilities of implementation in their classes, bearing in mind contextual aspects of their teaching realities. In this regard, we can mention an activity from Week 3 in which participants were encouraged to reflect about a video of a lesson about reading and writing in English. Using a jamboard, they could discuss their own experiences

in teaching and learning those skills. Students reported their struggles with spelling, grammar, punctuation and other structural aspects, which greatly made them feel insecure while learning English. On the other hand, through both their visual representation of the video lesson and their consideration on how helping their students to overcome those difficulties, the participants resort to CLIL principles as possible strategies.

As for the professors in charge of the initiative, **two interrelated affordances stand out**. The possibility of *collaboration both through the course planning as well as through researching/learning together in an international online experience* were of major contribution to our professional development. The four professors who could work a lot together, sharing our experiences, views on the topic and also the workload of the project itself which allowed us to learn together with the other and about the other, revising sometimes not only our theoretical and practical knowledge but also our attitudes on the way we deal with what it is proposed. In a general way, during the meetings for the course organization, we could observe attempts to accommodate the suggestions brought by our peers in a way to acknowledge each other's' views and contributions.

Finally, concerning our home institutions, **two main affordances can be highlighted**. First of all, the initiative *allowed the universities to incorporate new perspectives in their curriculum*, as the partnership with the Language Specialist allowed their students to learn about issues that are not covered by their local courses. Besides that, the network built through the course helped to *develop activities for the Internationalization of the curriculum*, that is, an Internationalization at Home practice, as the online experience could integrate intercultural and international integration in a kind of a “domestic learning environments” (BEELEN & JONES 2015, p. 69).

Limitations are also part of the concept of affordances. *The major limitation was the lack of time* which, in this experience, impacted all the three categories engaged in the initiative. Concerning the course participants, having limited time for interaction does not mean, however, that they were not engaged in the asynchronous tasks - these activities were indeed a rich opportunity to be involved in the theme of the course with the other participants, posting their comments and assignments for later feedback. Participation, however, during the synchronous meetings was limited due to the format chosen by the coordinators and the lecturer. We decided for a more transmissive lecture during the synchronous meetings due to the high number of participants, the internet connection limitation of some teachers and the background knowledge we had on the resistance of open microphones and cameras during remote teaching. Yet students could post their questions and discuss in the room chat, and they were also encouraged to open their



microphones and interact.

Also, we expected that one of the affordances would be that teachers would *interact with peers from different regions of Paraná*. However, it did not happen as much as we expected during the synchronous class, since just a few teachers felt comfortable to discuss or interact using the chat or opening the microphone.

From all the activities proposed, we consider that the *ones which involved an ethnographic case study were the least chosen*, which also came up as a course limitation. This was probably because some of the students do not have so much experience as teachers and mainly due to the limited time available for the course.

Another limitation was that *we expected participants would benefit from building a community*. However, the length of time of the course was short, only five weeks, and therefore, there is lack of evidence that the creation of a learner community might be fostered by this experience. Nevertheless, the Google Classroom is still on and there is a possibility that this group might keep interacting and learning together.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we aimed at describing the course syllabus and the activities implemented in a course on CLIL and technologies in order to examine the affordances that could derive from the initiative. By adopting the concept of affordances as “the opportunities/possibilities of actions that are provided by the environment and perceived by the engaged agent in the relation of a specific activity that forges the meaning making” (EL KADRI, 2018, p. 32), our analysis demonstrates that the course provided affordances for the course participants (pre-service teachers and in-service teachers), the professors in charge of the course, their home institutions as well as limitations of the initiative. The table below summarizes the findings.

**Table 1-** summary of the affordances identified

Perspective	Affordances
Course participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• learn about CLIL;</li><li>• opportunities to practice English language skills;</li><li>• articulate the use of technological resources;</li><li>• reflect about pedagogical issues specific to English language teaching.</li></ul>

Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborate through the course planning;</li> <li>• collaborate through researching/learning together in an international online experience.</li> </ul>
Home institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporate new perspectives in their curriculum;</li> <li>• develop activities for the Internationalization of the curriculum.</li> </ul>
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of time;</li> <li>• no interaction with peers from different regions from Paraná;</li> <li>• no involvement with ethnographic case study activities;</li> <li>• no community building.</li> </ul>

For the course participants, it allowed them to learn about CLIL, to have opportunities to practice their language skills, articulate the use of technological resources and also to reflect about pedagogical issues specific to the English language. For the professors, it allowed us to collaborate through the course planning as well as through researching/learning together in an international online experience. The affordances for our institutions include the incorporation of new perspectives into their curriculum as well as the development of internationalization at home practices.

Regarding the limitations, it was clear to us the limited time was key. Generally speaking, it affected the opportunities for interaction in several ways, which suggests that longer and more sustainable activities would allow participants to take the most of international initiatives like the one presented here.

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