

EFFICACY OF CLIL AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN MULTAN, PAKISTAN: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract.

In current education system Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an efficient method of learning as well as critical skills. Due to the growing usage of English as EFL and ESL in schools in the bilingual education countries, the value of being able to teach English language by using the material from the other subject such as biology, history, computer, etc. The current paper provides an overview of four teachers' perspectives on the implementation of CLIL at Community Model High School in Multan, Pakistan and highlights the efficacy of CLIL. The findings identified a number of success variables, including improved oral communication and cognitive abilities, enhanced multicultural awareness, and language development. However, study reveals some drawback of CLIL some teachers revealed that CLIL make learners confused as they are not attuned to study language and Biology simultaneously and the restive role of administration in the implementation of CLIL at school level.

Key Words: Content, Language, perceptions, exposure, communication.

Introduction

The term Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) refers to a teaching “approach where subject matter is taught and learned through another language, effectively integrating content knowledge with language acquisition” (Coyle et al., 2010, p, 39). The technique incorporates language supportive methodologies that initiate a dual-focused style of instructions that takes into account both the language and the content. It is responsibility of the teachers who implement CLIL to ensure that have well-structured lesson planned, clear instructions and objectives and equipped to implement and achieve the teaching objectives (Coyle et al. 2010). The concept is for students to acquire language through a subject in which they may engage in practical exercises and apply the language to situations they would encounter in everyday life. This kind of instruction "forces" students to utilize the language (Rumlich, 2014).

The current paper provides an overview of four teachers' perspectives who used the CLIL as teaching approach to teach English through the content of Biology at Community Model High School in Multan, Pakistan. and highlights the efficacy of CLIL. These four teachers jointly designed a lesson plan to weave a pattern that enables the class instructor to teach English as a compulsory language using the content of several subjects subject to 10th grade learners.

Research Questions.

1. In your opinion how effective is the CLIL approach to teach English as second language?
2. What kind of challenges a teacher faces when implementing CLIL in the classroom?
3. How does a teacher cop-up these challenges?

Literature Review

CLIL is an integrated strategy that ties content learning and language acquisition together (Marsh, 2002). Coyle et al. (2010) state that the content of CLIL refers to the things that teachers will use in the classroom. It offers opportunities for knowledge growth, text comprehension, and language proficiency. CLIL is sometimes referred to as a dual-focused method, which indicates that students are assessed on both their proficiency in the foreign language and the subject's particular content (Maljers, et al., 2010). Both the students' L1 and the target foreign language receive a lot of attention in CLIL programs.

A succinct historical overview of language learning through content is provided to help readers better grasp CLIL and how to use it effectively. Learning content in a second language has historical roots, dating back to when families in ancient Rome taught their children in Greek two millennia ago. The families wanted to guarantee that their kids would have access to Greek language instruction as well as the social and professional benefits that learning the language would provide for them later in life. These instructional activities have been repeated decades later on a global scale. Especially in the global adoption of English language instruction (Hanesová, 2015).

A variety of models should be included in the content, allowing students to gain knowledge from a range of sources including papers, films, photos, listening exercises, projects, blogs, library materials, games, research, interviews, and more. The chosen text ought to be tough, real, and significant and instructor will ensure that the material being taught is connected to the students' existing knowledge. Coyle (2002) and Marsh (2002) provide a long list of the advantages of CLIL, such as promoting economic possibilities, egalitarianism, and social inclusion for students, intercultural awareness and deeper cognitive processing of the subject matter. But above all CLIL focuses primarily on foreign language proficiency. PISA (2000) looked at the cognitive abilities of the younger generation and stated that classrooms needed to be enhanced and these abilities needed to be introduced. In order to support cognitive development, learners must to be provided with a sequence of tasks that fall within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Effective strategies for teaching divergent thinking, problem-solving, met cognitive elements, as well as the researcher's critical and creative thinking, can be found in CLIL. By including student-centered activities that involve high levels of student participation, higher-order cognitive skills can be developed (Rumlich, 2014).

Coyle (2007) suggested the 4CS Framework of education in CLIL to help people understand CLIL techniques better. It outlines the relationships between Communication; Content; Cognition; and Culture. Explaining the 4Cs Coyle (2007) explains that content refers to both the subject matter and the knowledge that the learner constructs about it. The language used to deliver the content information is referred to as communication. In the end, culture affects how a student engages with his surroundings and perceives himself as a member of them.

The concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is not well recognized in Pakistan. The bulk of CLIL research carried out in our nation demonstrate the goal of instructors to attain a high proportion of outcomes on board exams, a deficiency in teacher preparation, and a high level of extramural English usage that contributes to language fluency. Nonetheless, there is a paucity of study on CLIL in Pakistani contexts, most of which concentrate on higher education, and the findings are quite positive. Research on CLIL makes it clear that there are numerous concerns in Pakistan that need to be further investigated and given more attention by the education department in order to fully realize the program's potential and be implemented in the context of Pakistan.

Methodology.

The foundation of this study is based on qualitative research method which involves the structured interviews of four teachers of English who were involved to implement CLIL approach in Government Comprehensive Higher Secondary School, Multan, Pakistan. All the participants were male, in 30 to 45 of age and hold the degree of M.A in English Literature and have 5-10 years teaching experiences. After teaching through CLIL they are asked a long list of questions, as part of PhD thesis. However, in this paper only findings of three questions are provided. The participation in the interview was voluntary with the permission of the Principal of School. It was assured that both quotes and extracts used in this research will be confidential and anonymous. Therefore, participants names are hidden due to secrecy point of view and allotted a code Teacher A, B, C, & D.

Findings and Discussion

Efficacy of CLIL in the Classrooms

To answer the first research question about the CLIL as an effective approach, the varieties of ideas generated. Most of the teachers consider it CLIL an effective teaching and learning approach. Teacher A, who state taught English subject-specific vocabulary, etc., using the content of biology to 10th grade learners. Reveals a mixed reaction. He states “CLIL works but very differently and effectively”. Elaborating his answer, he said that if a teacher had well organized contents-based lesson plan with clear objectives and instruction and he knows how to achieve the objectives of his lesson plan, then CLIL is effective. However, CLIL provides a wider scop to students to learn new vocabulary that is related to their other subjects. It also helps learners to acquire the new technical terms and terminology. CLIL enhances creativity for the teachers and the students as well. In the same line teacher B, a youthful and enthusiastic educator, expounded on his thoughts on the CLIL approach by employing lighthearted sarcastic techniques. He noted that the learners' language development is enhanced when they adopt the strategy as part of their everyday routine in a satirical manner. The biology contents is combined with real-world examples from people's lives, and they are encouraged to write a paragraph in a comic or satirical style in their own words using the terms from digestive system, one of the lesson of biology. Teacher stated it not only enhanced their understanding of bio-technical terms but using such terms in the comic way provided them a chance to project their creative writing. This has developed the interest of the learners as well as created an easy path to cop-up the difficult and unusual vocabulary by relation to the every day life, and it is achieved through CLIL approach.

Sharing the similar experience teacher C said that students can use the writing the respiration system of a living organism, the outcomes were astounding. They have taken various animals and plants to explain respiratory system. This approach not only enhances their English writing skills but also stimulates pupils' inventiveness. “It is strong stamp to prove the CLIL as an effective and practical approach” confirms teachers C.

According to Teacher D, “CLIL is effective because it works in dimensional directions, enhancing the areas of learning of students”. It helps to design a significant portion of the activities in the biology textbook to teach English, such as information sharing, experiences sharing, topic discussion, pair work to develop communicative skills of learners. Hence, CLIL promotes pupils' oral and written learning activities.

Challenges for Teachers

Replying the second question about the challenges a teacher faces when uses CLIL, the various aspects were revealed. Major challenge is to motivate learners, teacher B revealed. This is a solid reason as CLIC is not an established teaching and learning practice in Pakistan. (Toth, 2018). “Teachers needs patient and persistent to implement this approach in the classrooms, so

learners may be attuned with this new teaching and learning approach”, said teacher B. In the same line teacher D revealed “take initiative and start it a teaching approach is a big deal for teachers. It needs courage to adapt a new teaching style that is practical and result oriented. Comparable statement came from teacher A, who whispered that “acceptability [of CLIL] is the foremost challenge for a teacher. Major issue arises from learners, which ultimately invoke the restrictive behavior of school administration. “The implementation of CLIL as a new teaching method is not only time-consuming but exhaustive also”, said teacher C. elaborating his opinion he said that it also needs the expert experience to develop a comprehensive lesson plan. For this purpose, it requires a wide-inclusive knowledge and thorough skill of lesson planning (Cañado, 2017).

Teacher D raised provides the similar reasons and states that to teach CLIL the learners are confused that they focus on content or language. “A large number of students see teaching in schools from examination perspective, that is taken by Multan Board. They are confused whether the similar topics of paragraph, or essay or vocabulary will be included in the exam paper. It perplexes the learners and they don’t take or like CLIL teaching method”, explained by teacher. He also engaged the learners’ language proficiency in L2 with CLIL and states that students’ extremely low proficiency in English is an obstacle to achieve the objectives of CLIL, “because the complicated terms of biology or other subjects of sciences are exclusive to them, and students barely comprehend the material. Similar problem is indicated in the study of Sharwood (2014).

To cop-up the Challenges

Numerous varieties of strategies surfaced when teachers were replying the final research question that how they handle these challenges. Majority of teachers stressed on the teachers’ training, or guidance before the introduction of this new teaching method in the classrooms. They also stressed that the learners should be briefed before the practice of CLIL so “they may distinguish that language learning is not exclusively glued with English textbooks, rather any piece of paper from any subject written in English can be manipulated for teaching language” said teacher D. Nodoubt, a teacher has the ability and power to manipulated the text or adapt or design the material to achieve the objectives of lesson plan (Shaffer and Kipp, 2014, & De Diezmas, 2016). Teachers also encourage that to gain the confidence and experience teachers must be courageous to adapt CLIL as novel way of learning and get rid from stereotype teaching method. “I think to implement CLIL is very much at primitive stage, and it will take time to develop as an established teaching approach” said Teacher A. teacher C was optimist and clarifies that being at initial stage, the teachers are hesitate to adapt it in classrooms and learners are confused of their learning objective which are muddled. Similar is the findings of Dalton-Puffer (2011) in his research.

To handle the English language proficiency issue of learners, teacher A recommend the use of CLIL with comparatively easy subjects such as history, sociology, Islamic study, etc., “since physics and chemistry or other subjects from natural science can be challenging for learners to comprehend the text”. Thence, teacher must decide which topics will be taught in English classroom as part of CLIL. To motivate learners, teacher must involve the learners in the debate and activities. They also stressed on the interest of the learners, “I also try my best to make my lesson plan not only productive but interesting also”. Similar views are suggested by Jäppinen, A.K., (2005) who believes that for cognitive learning development, learners’ interest and motivation is an essential factor.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that the teachers who are using CLIL as a teaching strategy are quite excited and optimist and conclude CLIL as an effective, productive and useful approach

of teaching English language at secondary level. They believe that in a single teaching learners achieve the multi objective, i. e, they are learning English language as well as thorough explanation of content of other subjects. Thus, learners are successfully elevating self-confidence, and get a surprised-support, comprehend the content from other disciplines.

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