CLIL AND ENGLISH TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract

Content language integrated learning (henceforth CLIL) is widely considered as an innovative approach in the present and future foreign language learning (English). CLIL is the integration of language with the content in learning environment which increases students' competence, motivation, and intercultural awareness. In many studies, CLIL is explained based on the advantages and limitation toward students learning process, however, only few studies examine the implication of CLIL toward teachers' competence in the classroom. Therefore, this paper aims to fill the gap by examining how CLIL has implications to improve English teacher competencies in EFL context. This paper addresses CLIL in the framework of definition and rationale, CLIL dimension and methodology, the advantages of CLIL, and the implications of CLIL toward teachers' professional competencies. In line with the implications, this paper mainly focuses on personal reflection, content and language awareness, methodology and assessment, research and evaluation, and learning resources and environments. Additionally, in the methodology, it points out at building students' capacity, co-operating with other teachers, building direction and focus, building safe and meaningful learning experiences, and assessing. Last, this paper presents conclusions and suggestions for potential CLIL teachers.

Keywords: CLIL, Teachers Competencies Improvement

Introduction

Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has become central issue in the field of foreign language teaching and learning (EFL). CLIL is the platform for an innovative approach of far

broader scope than language teaching (Eurydice, 2006).[1] CLIL shares certain features that many experts found to be beneficial for content and language learning in particular. The concept is to create an "umbrella" in which covers different ways of using foreign language (EFL) as the medium of learning instruction. The use of CLIL and the ability to teach it is also an investment for English teachers in particular, an understanding of how to teach a broader range of curricular subjects, could be the key to greater career opportunities (Bicaku, 2011).[2]

Although CLIL has been widely used in Europe, in Asia it is a new paradigm shift in the field of language teaching and learning. Meanwhile, many studies explained CLIL in the framework of foreign language teaching, the influence to student-centered, limitations and possibilities, etc, (Klimova, 2012).[3] Therefore, this paper tries to address the effects of implemented CLIL approach to the improvement of teachers' competencies in Indonesia. How English teachers in Indonesia could improve their professional competences through implemented CLIL approach in language classroom.

CLIL: Definition and Rationale

Content Language Integrated Learning henceforth CLIL is a learning approach that become widely used since 1990. The term CLIL firstly proposed as the dual-focused situation where subject/ content are taught through foreign language, namely the learning of content and language simultaneously. It is an approach for learning content which foreign or second language is used for both teaching the content and the language. . In CLIL, the two elements, content and language, receive equal importance, although the emphasis may vary from one to another based on the particular purposes and situations. The aim is to develop proficiency in both, by teaching the content not *in*, but *with* and *through* the foreign language

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[1]Eurydice, *CLIL at School in Europe*, (Brussels: European Commission, 2006)

[2]Rozeta Çekrezi Biçaku, 2011, CLIL and Teacher Training, *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 3821–3825.

[3]Blanka Frydrychova Klimova, 2012, CLIL and the teaching of foreign languages, *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 47, 572–576.

(Eurydice, 2006).[4] CLIL provides students with more natural environment that reinforces the process of language learning (Lyster, 2007).[5] In relation to language acquisition, CLIL also leads to the improvement of students' proficiency level (Lightbown and Spada, 2006).[6] Next, with the integration of learning content and language, CLIL offers more authentic communicative classroom (Greenfell, 2002).[7] It can be stated that the combination of content and language disciplinary in CLIL could create more meaningful context in the classroom.

CLIL is also a commitment to a combination of language fluency and content accuracy. It's an approach for learning content through an additional language (foreign or second), thus teaching both the subject and the language. This kind of approach has been identified as very important recently since it can provide effective opportunities for students to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for use later. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of students who have not responded well to formal language instruction in general education.

Based on linguistic perspective, CLIL is the natural consequence of true contextualization in L2 classrooms, coming as a result of a necessary evolution in foreign language teaching (Munoz & Luna, 2014).[8] In sum, when CLIL is implemented, both language and content are simultaneously given attention and they are both essential in the learning process. The language is used as a tool to learn the content of the subject, and the content is used as a meaningful medium to learn and use the language

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[4]Eurydice, *CLIL.*

[5]Roy Lyster, *Content and Language integrated teaching: a counter balanced approach* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin, 2007).

[6]Patsy Lightbown & Nina Spada, *How Languages are Learned* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[7] Michael Greenfell, *Modern Languages across the curriculum*, (London: Routledge, 2002)

[8]Muñoz-Luna, R, 2014, From drills to CLIL: the paradigmatic and methodological evolution to-wards the integration of content and foreign language, *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 16*(1), 167-180.

communicatively (Bonces, 2012).[9] To be re-highlighted, the recent process of globalization has made CLIL as a solution for governments concerned with developing the linguistic proficiency of the citizens as a pre-requisite for economic success (Harrop, 2012).[10] As a consequence, the more integrated approach in teaching both language and content, requiring teachers to devote special thought not only about how language should be taught, but also about the educational process in general. The aforementioned definitions clearly show how CLIL not only implies the teaching of Content through English but remarks the importance of language when teaching content.

CLIL: Dimension and Methodology
Dimension

There are five dimensions on the implementation of CLIL, those are language, context, environment, learning and culture (Marsh, Maljers & Hartiala, 2001).[11] Further, Ball (2006) states that these five dimensions are the basis for CLIL and provide a framework for the approach.[12] First, culture dimension contributes to the growth of intercultural knowledge resulting in most of the cases in cultural understanding (Ball, 2006).[13] CLIL is used to encourage students' understanding and awareness in learning through innovative language approach.

Second, the environment, students with good preparation in studies or work that involves different languages, they will ready to face any culture with all the necessary skills in which leads to their proficiency level improvement. Being able to communicate

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[9]Jaisson Rodriguez Bonces, 2012. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Considerations in the Colombian Context. *Gist Education And Learning Research Journal*, 6, 177-189

[10]Ena Harrop, E, 2012, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Limitations and possibilities. *Encuentro,* 21, 57-70.

[11]Marsh, D., Maljers, A., & Hartiala, A,K, *Profiling European CLIL Classrooms. Languages Open Doors.* (Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2001)

[12] Phil Ball, 2006, *Defining CLIL parameters.* Retrieved from http://www.onestopenglish.com/clil/methodology/articles/ April 2015.

[13]*Ibid.*

academically and socially opens new borders and encourages students to explore and travel around the world (Ball, 2006).[14]

Third, the content, CLIL is valued to provide chances to learn the content with different perspectives. CLIL enables students to learn through these different perspectives that can lead to achieving a deeper understanding of the subject matter (Ball, 2006).[15] Marsh et al (2009) claim that "Languages, and the cultures associated with them, sometimes reveal differing world-views that can be seen in the ways in which some content is taught".[16] CLIL is suitable for all levels of education, from elementary to graduate level or vocational to professional level of education.

Fourth, Marsh, Maljers & Hartiala, (2001)[17] affirms that in terms of learning dimension, CLIL complements individual learning strategies. CLIL is specifically geared to learner-centered methodologies that attempt to improve learning by giving attention to individuals' needs in terms of social and thinking skills (Ball, 2006).[18] Similarly, this learning dimension asserts that CLIL could increase students' motivation which is important in their learning process.

Lastly, language dimension, in CLIL, students experience the learning through the integration of language and non-language teaching. CLIL approach stresses language competence in general and therefore includes reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. In the same way, this language dimension proposes that the practicing of oral skills can be done in a 'utilitarian' way that is to provide opportunities to use the language as a tool to communicate (Ball, 2006).[19] This means that methods to be used are the ones that lead to a high degree of interaction within the class. The dimensions are should not be viewed as standing alone, because

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[14]*Ibid.*

[15]*Ibid.*

[16]David Marsh, Peeter Mehisto, Dieter Wolff, & Maria J. Martin, 2009. *European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education -A framework for the professional development of CLIL teachers*. European center of modern languages. retrieved on http://www.ecml.at.

[17]Marsh., Maljers., & Hartiala, *Profiling*.

[18]Ball, *Defining*.

[19]*Ibid*.

they are usually heavily inter-related in CLIL practice (Marsh, Maljers, & Hartiala, 2001).[20] Finally, these five dimensions could improve students' proficiency level by being competent in the foreign language (EFL).

Methodology

One of the most common opportunities in implementing CLIL approach is through reading texts. Through reading, CLIL addresses on the lexical approach and encourages students to notice the language while reading the content. According to the (Coyle 1999), a successful CLIL lesson should combine elements of the following:[21]

1. Content - focusing in knowledge, skills and understanding related to the material.
2. Communication - using language to learn whilst learning to use language.
3. Cognition - developing thinking skills, understanding, and language.
4. Culture – exploring the alternative perspectives and sharing understandings

In a CLIL lesson, all four language skills should be combined (Bicaku, 2011).[22] Listening as normal input activity and reading as the main source of input which is important for language learning. Next, reading is used as meaningful material or as the major source of input. Meanwhile, speaking focuses on fluency with minor important on the accuracy. The last is writing as a series of lexical activities in which content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics are formulated.

The Advantages of CLIL

The growing number of CLIL implemented in the classroom shows many advantages to the CLIL approach. First, motivation, with its integration of language and non-language content, can boost motivation by providing a legitimate and

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[20]Marsh., Maljers., & Hartiala, *Profiling*.
[21]Coyle, D, *Supporting Students in Content and Language Integrated Learning Contexts: Planning for Effective Classrooms*, (London: CILT, 1999)
[22]Bicaku, *CLIL*.

authentic context for language use (Harrop, 2012).[23] Students are highly motivated in such classes as language is used to fulfill real purposes. In CLIL, the language becomes the means rather than the end in itself and this leads to a significant reduction in the amount of anxiety expressed by students (Lasagabaster, 2009).[24] CLIL also provides opportunities for genuine interaction among the students in the classroom. In CLIL approach, the content subject allows the students to engage with the learning process at more creative and challenging level and push the students with the foreign language (EFL) without noticing it. CLIL develops students' confident and enhances academic cognitive processes and communication skills. CLIL encourages intercultural understanding and community values. Students reach proficiency levels in all four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing far beyond what is expected.

Second, language learning, through CLIL language practice and study is multiplied with the number of subjects it is integrated with (Bicaku, 2011)[25]. According to Klimova (2012), CLIL in teaching has benefits to improve language knowledge and communication skills; makes students learn the same way as native speakers do; and deepens awareness of both mother tongue and target language.[26]

Third, related meaningful contexts in CLIL, students concentrate on the content and language is acquired unconsciously and naturally having thus a better chance to foster in the long term memory (Bicaku, 2011).[27] Real context effect in CLIL creates more relaxed learning environment; and improve both the emotional states and the affective filters of the students (Klimova, 2012).[28] In CLIL approach, the context is meaningful and after the students get used to this approach they will not notice about studying the foreign language anymore. Switching the attention to

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[23]Harrop, *Content.*
[24]David Lasagabaster, 2009, Language attitudes in CLIL and traditional EFL classes, *International CLIL Research Journal,* 1:2,4-16.
[25]Bicaku, *CLIL.*
[26]Klimova, *CLIL.*
[27]Bicaku, *CLIL.*
[28]Klimova, *CLIL.*

the context lowers the anxiety provoked by the foreign language barriers. The meaningful context in CLIL may lead to better working environment in school.

Last, time saving, CLIL approach gives chance to more exposure to foreign language (EFL) as the medium of communication (Bicaku, 2011).[29] Better results are expected in less time learning compared to the traditional language class.

The detailed benefits of the exploitation of CLIL in teaching thus might be as follows:

1. it develops intercultural knowledge and understanding, and communication skills,
2. it introduces the wider cultural context,
3. it creates better working environment,
4. it enhances school profile,
5. it improves language knowledge and communication skills,
6. it makes students learn the same way as native speakers do,
7. it deepens awareness of both mother tongue and target language,

CLIL: Implications to teachers' competencies

The implementation of CLIL could also be beneficial toward the foreign language (EFL) teachers' competencies since one of the most important abilities from the CLIL teacher is the language competence. Andrews (1999) states that the foreign language teacher also needs to reflect upon that knowledge and ability, and upon his/her knowledge of the underlying systems of the language, in order to ensure that the students receive maximally useful input for learning.[30]

Teachers' knowledge and skills are necessary to be refreshed and updated since science and technology are growing so fast and there is the needs of high competitiveness to live in modern society. Students' engagement in learning will provide

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[29]Bicaku, *CLIL.*

[30]Andrews, B,W, 1999, Side by side: Evaluating a partnership program in arts teacher education. *International Electronic Journal of Leadership,* 3 (16).

them with hard and soft skill to compete in social life. In this part, the paper addresses the implications of CLIL toward EFL teachers' personal reflection; content and language awareness; methodology and assessment; research and evaluation; learning resources and environment; and classroom management.

1. Personal Reflection

Through the implementation of CLIL, teachers might improve their commitment to one's own cognitive, social and affective development is fundamental to being able to support the cognitive, social and affective development of students (Marsh et.al., 2009).[31]

CLIL teachers are able to:

1. explore and develop their own understanding of, and attitudes towards, generally accepted principles of teaching and learning
2. explore and develop their own understanding of content and language learning; and professional teachers
3. define their own pedagogical and content (subject field) competences, and related developmental needs
4. explore ways of working with students to jointly identify teacher and student socio-cultural, personal and vocational learning needs
5. explore the necessity to cooperate with other teachers and stakeholders, and describe mechanisms for cooperation
6. explore and to manage the multiple roles and identities of a CLIL teacher
7. explore and to manage the impact of one's own attitudes and behavior on the learning process

2. CLIL Fundamentals

An understanding of Content Language Integrated Learning or CLIL's main features, and how these link with best practices in education is central to the CLIL approach to build inclusive and constructive relationships with students and other stake-holders (Marsh et.al., 2009).[32]

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[31]Marsh., Mehisto., Wolff., & Martin, *European.*
[32]*Ibid.*

CLIL teachers are able to:
1. describe core features of the CLIL approach (definition, models, planned outcomes, methodology, driving principles)
2. contextualize CLIL with respect to the school, regional and/or national curriculum
3. explain and discuss CLIL with school's internal and external stakeholders
4. describe strategies for integrating CLIL and existing school ethos

3. Content and Language Awareness

In CLIL, the interdependence of content and language is undeniable to facilitate both content and language learning: enhanced language learning is dependent on content learning vice versa (Marsh et.al., 2009).[33]

CLIL teachers are able to:
1. identify the appropriate content to be taught and obstacles to content learning
2. view content through different cultural perspectives
3. optimize strategies to support language learning in content classes
4. create opportunities to reinforce content learning in language classes
5. apply strategies for fostering students critical thinking about content and language
6. apply strategies for fostering in students the habit of linking new learning with their personal experience
7. draw on knowledge and theories from language learning fields such as SLA to propose instructional and learning strategies
8. promote learner awareness of language and the language learning process
9. devise and implement strategies that take into account key concepts such as (critical) discourse, domains and registers

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[33]*Ibid.*

to promote language and content learning, as well as learning skills development

10. link language awareness issues to content learning and cognition
11. scaffold language learning during content classes

4. Methodology and Assessment

Due to the challenges of learning through an additional language, many aspects of good pedagogy require enhanced and detailed scaffolding (Marsh et.al., 2009).[34] In CLIL approach, teachers could improve their competence in methodology and assessment to create meaningful and supportive learning experiences for the students.

Building learner capacity
CLIL teachers are able to:
1. support students in building their capacity
2. self-motivate; self-assess so that they can become more reflective and autonomous
3. cooperate with other teachers as to reflect on, and improve learning
4. constructively give, receive and use teacher and peer assessment/feedback

Co-operating with other teachers
CLIL teachers are able to:
1. nurture cooperation with colleagues and have a repertoire of cooperation strategies and skills
2. cooperate with other teachers so as to reflect on and improve learning

Building direction and focus
CLIL teachers are able to:
1. work with students to jointly identify students' needs
2. design CLIL modules and lessons within the context of a given curriculum

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[34]*Ibid.*

3. set outcomes together with students regarding language, content and learning skills
4. maintain a triple focus that supports content, language and learning skills development
5. build on prior language and content knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences of students

Building safe and meaningful learning experiences
CLIL teachers are able to:

1. support students in managing the affective side of learning through an additional language
2. create authentic and meaningful learning environments and experiences for students (e.g., group work, peer teaching and work placement)
3. create supportive structures to foster contact and communication with other speakers of the CLIL language

Assessing
CLIL teachers are able:

1. define assessment needs and goals, and to develop and implement related assessment
2. guide students' reflection on previously agreed upon content, language and learning skills, goals/ outcomes, achievements
3. use formative and summative assessment strategies and benchmarking to support content, language and learning skills development
4. introduce the concepts of self-assessment and peer-assessment to support students in taking greater responsibility for their learning

5. Research and Evaluation

Dynamic teacher is the one who follows a personal path of enquiry, reflection, and evaluation to develop the ways and means of learning through research and evaluation (Marsh et.al., 2009).[35]
CLIL teachers are able to:

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[35]*Ibid.*

1. discuss, in a knowledgeable manner, classroom and learner research methodology (e.g., action research)
2. conduct action research in collaboration with other teachers and other stakeholders, including students
3. do research relevant to CLIL and learning in general (e.g., SLA research, psychology of knowledge and evidence-based teaching)
4. critically analyze research articles on CLIL
5. interpret research and evaluation results
6. use self, peer and student evaluation to improve their own practice and student learning.

6. Learning Resources and Environments

CLIL requires specific learning resources, and enriched learning environments (Marsh et.al., 2009).[36] These might help teachers enhance scaffolding and other support systems. At the same time students experiment with language, content, and the management of their own learning.

CLIL teachers are able to:

1. design and use cognitively and linguistically appropriate learning materials
2. assess learning resources and environments and to identify potential difficulties and solutions to overcome these
3. define techniques for developing cooperative networks aimed at choosing, creating, adapting and accessing materials or developing learning resources and accessing learning environments

It is also very important for those teachers who know that their linguistic skills are limited to adapt their content and methods accordingly. Marsh et al. (2009) outline the 'idealized competencies' required of a CLIL teacher:[37]

Language/Communication

1. sufficient target language knowledge and pragmatic skills for CLIL,

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[36]*Ibid.*
[37]*Ibid.*

2.   sufficient knowledge of the language used.

Theory

comprehension of the differences and similarities between the concepts of language learning and language acquisition.

Methodology

1.   ability to identify linguistic difficulties,
2.   ability to use communication/interaction methods that facilitate the understanding of meaning,
3.   ability to use strategies (e.g. repetition, echoing etc. …) for correction and for modeling good language usage,

The Learning Environment

One of the most important abilities of the CLIL teacher is second or foreign language competence. The language teacher also needs to reflect upon their knowledge and ability of the underlying systems of the language, in order to ensure that the students receive maximally useful input for learning process. Teachers who use CLIL need to be linguistically aware, possessing insight into how language functions, in addition to being able to use the language as a tool in the classroom. It is recommended to teachers who know their linguistic skills are limited to adapt/ upgrade their content and methods. It is also reasonable to suggest that teachers with more limited linguistic skills have to pay more attention to lesson planning in order to feel more confident.

Teachers' knowledge and skills are necessary to be refreshed and updated since science and technology are growing so fast and the high competitiveness of living in modern society. Without refreshing or updating teachers' knowledge and skills, teachers may not be able to attract students into learning engagement to provide students with appropriate hard and soft skills for competitive living in modern society. To sum up, the implementation of CLIL approach is in line with the program of Indonesian government that has paid more attention to the quality of teachers in Indonesia.

Conclusions

This paper has approached Content and Language Integrated Learning focusing as an educational approach that share the basic principle that integrates language and content teaching. CLIL not only imply the teaching of content through English but remarks the importance of language when teaching the content. Moreover, CLIL is potential to lead to greater intercultural awareness compared to the traditional content or language teaching. This paper has also shown that there are five dimension of CLIL that could improve students' proficiency level by being competent in foreign language (EFL). Further, CLIL also could improve language and communication skills; create more relaxing learning environment; and provide chance to more exposure to foreign language (EFL) as the medium of communication.

This paper has also focused specifically on the implications of CLIL implementation to teachers' competencies improvement. It is clear that language teacher as the ones who implement CLIL in the classroom, at the same time they could improve their competencies level since CLIL requires teachers to improve their personal competence, content and language awareness, methodology and assessment, research and evaluation, and learning resources and environment. Thus, by mastering all the requirements, it is hoped that teachers in CLIL, especially the language teacher could be more professional as they already update or improve their competencies.

In light of the results of the study, EFL teachers are encouraged to implement CLIL approach in the classroom to leads to higher level of linguistic proficiency and heightened students' motivation during the learning process. Teachers are also suggested to develop the theoretical and methodological competences required for effective CLIL teaching and learning. It is very important for teachers to refresh or update their knowledge and skills so that they can attract students to engage in learning and provide them with hard and soft skills to compete in social life.

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