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The Efficacy of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) : Classroom Perspective

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this study is to investigate teacher's perception towards achieving classroom interaction in the teaching of both language and content and the research sample was students chosen from International Schools in Khartoum .The study employed the questionnaire as a mean for data collection. The results show the role of content teacher methodological approach on enhancing classroom interaction that helps the teaching and learning process run smoothly and it can increase learners' communicative ability. It tells how the students have interaction among them and how the teacher makes interaction with the whole class. The study also explains that in CLIL , the rise of engagement levels is due to type of instructional methods used to a maximum degree of engaging. The study recommended that instructor should engage students in class activities, therefore higher engagement causes better education of content, language learning, and skills development.

Key Words: learning outcomes, Nature of Instructions ,interaction

المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الورقة إلى اكتشاف مدى إدراك المعلم تجاه انجاز التفاعل داخل الفصل أثناء تدريس اللغة ومحتوى المادة الدراسية . استخدمت الدراسة الاستبيان كوسيلة لجمع المعلومات وأوضحت نتائج الدراسة دور منهج الذي يتبعه أستاذ المادة الدراسية في تعزيز التفاعل داخل الفصل والذي بدوره يؤدي إلى انسياب عملية التعليم والتعلم بصورة مرنة ويؤدي كذلك إلى تطوير مقدرة الطالب الاتصالية، وتوضح الدراسة كيف يتم التفاعل بين المتعلمين والمعلم وبين التلاميذ في الفصل. وتشير الدراسة إلى أن تدريس المادة الدراسية عن طريق منهج التكامل بين اللغة والمحتوى الدراسي من شأنه زيادة مستوى ارتباط التلاميذ بالمنهج وذلك على حسب خطة التدريس المتبعة و التي يمكن أن تقود إلى أقصى درجة ممكنة من الارتباط. أوصت الدراسة بأن على المعلم أن يربط المتعلمين بالأنشطة المتعلقة بالدرس لتحقيق مدى ارتباط عالي و الذي من شأنه أن يحقق مستوى تعلم أفضل للمحتوى الدراسي وتعلم اللغة وتطوير المهارات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: حصيلة التعلم، طبيعة التعليم، التفاعل

INTRODUCTION:

Classroom instructions is of paramount nature, and there are countless areas of research investigation. Teaching is often considered to be a rather traditional and slowly changeable profession. However, there are also classes that challenge the view of

teaching, focusing on a particular issue, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning, or CLIL. CLIL focuses on teaching a subject through a foreign language (Coyle Hood and Marsh 2010). If one decides to focus on the role of the teacher, one major part of teaching is the role of feedback.

Recent discussions have maintained that CLIL offers opportunities to improve the process of language learning and language teaching. "CLIL theoreticians and teachers claim that the learning environment created by CLIL increases the learner's general learning capacities, his/her motivation and interest" (Wolff 2005: 9). There is much discussion about the global spread of English as a medium of education. There have been major achievements over in how to teach English as a second/ foreign language. Some approaches to subject teaching have developed radically, others less so. This is also the case with how teachers teach. The following suggestions should be taken into consideration in teaching via CLIL approach:

- As far as the choice of the teaching method is concerned, the CLIL teachers should aim at a combination of content and language focused instruction, which would enable the CLIL learners to use language for genuine communication as well as to attain a high level of content accuracy;
- The CLIL teachers should be careful not to take up most of the available speaking time with their explanations or instructions so the CLIL learners will have an opportunity to have more practice in their target language;
- The CLIL teachers should use the mother tongue only when they find it necessary;
- The CLIL teachers should be provided with opportunities to develop their second language proficiency in all skills as well as to take part in teacher training devoted to bilingual education;

By using authentic teaching material available around and the material that is connected to the experiential and background knowledge of the students, an English class room can be made interactive, interesting, enthusiastic and learner friendly.

Interaction is needed in the classroom activity. It helps the teaching and learning process run smoothly and it can increase learners' communicative ability. It tells how the students have interaction among them and teacher even with the whole class.

Objectives of the paper

The aim of this paper is to present pedagogical considerations that are placed in a CLIL classroom in secondary education. Also the paper aims not to assess Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) but to describe it. Also to confirm that the majority of teaching materials with CLIL methodology is based on annual plans of the contents taught.

Research Problem

CLIL classrooms are not typical language classrooms due to the fact that language is the medium through which content is "transported". Non-linguistic content is used to teach a language and learners acquire new knowledge but in a foreign language. Naturally, they must have some basic knowledge of the language they are learning and be capable of understanding the content. The study tends to examine the CLIL teachers' awareness of certain changes which occur in the CLIL classroom, and their understanding of the process of Content and Language Integrated Learning.

Research question

This research seeks to address the following question:

Does the implementation of CLIL improve engagement in learning the content and language knowledge?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the work on the subject agree in stating that the term CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) was created in the early 90s by David Marsh and Anne Maljers, a group of experts in the European context, with the intention of creating a neutral and accessible term in order to facilitate communication between international professionals in the field (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008). Among the different definitions of CLIL, we find the one provided by Marsh (2002), which is regarded as the most complete since it highlights the purpose of this methodology: "*CLIL refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with a dual-focused aim, namely the learning of content, and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language*" (Ibid, 2002, p.p. 15). This definition is more complete because it highlights the true purpose of the inherent educational paradigm in the CLIL methodology. Through CLIL practice, students learn curriculum content while at the same time, they learn and develop the foreign language. This dual purpose is what makes this new approach the best option in the teaching and learning of a foreign language in a school context. It is of interest to include a different observation about the CLIL methodology posed by Graddol (2006, p.p. 88) who says that CLIL is "*an approach in bilingual education where both curricular content (like Science or Geography) and English are taught and learnt together. The student does not have to have a high level of competence before starting to learn with this new methodology.*" The following definition extends the CLIL potential even further "The CLIL methodology is the use of language to learn. It offers the opportunity for a level special purpose communication not only in language but also in the first language. "Marsh, Marsland and Stenberg, 2001, p.p. 109). According to the authors cited above, the language in CLIL is considered as a "vehicle", not only as an entity in itself. This is a crucial observation that is part of the great social and educational change that took place since the beginning of the development of the internet and globalization phenomenon where the English language becomes an added value within all curricula worldwide that focuses not only on the form of the language in itself but as a tool for learning more.

LEARNING OUTCOMES IN CLIL

Considering that CLIL has even been cast in the role of "a catalyst for change in language education" (Marsh & Frigols, 2007, p. 33), it is not surprising that most of the research on outcomes is in the area of attainment in the CLIL language. In this regard it is important to note that the standard of comparison in such studies are not native speakers of the medium of instruction, but learners studying the target language in traditional foreign language classes, often attending the same school as the CLIL students and usually referred to as mainstream or non-CLIL students.

Given the fact that CLIL students nearly always continue with their regular foreign language program alongside their CLIL content lessons and thus have a time advantage over their peers, it is to be expected that their foreign language test scores surpass those of the mainstream learners. These authors also argued that the specific advantage of CLIL learners seemed to lie in academic vocabulary and words from the 5,000+ frequency range, attributing this to the special learning conditions of subject and content integration.

Finally, the area where a difference between CLIL students and mainstream learners is most noticeable is their spontaneous oral production.

Practical Considerations For Typical CLIL programs in EFL classroom

(Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009) stated that: CLIL is about using a foreign language or a lingua franca, not a second language (L2). That is, the language of instruction is one that students will mainly encounter in the classroom, given that it is not regularly used in the wider society they live in. The dominant CLIL language is English, reflecting the fact that a command of English as an additional language is increasingly regarded as a key literacy feature worldwide. CLIL also implies that teachers will normally be nonnative speakers of the target language. They are not, in most cases, foreign language experts, but instead content experts, because “classroom content is not so much taken from everyday life or the general content of the target language culture but rather from content subjects, from academic/ scientific disciplines or from the professions” Wolff, (2007, pp. 15–16). This means that CLIL lessons are usually timetabled as content lessons (e.g., biology, music, geography, mathematics, physics), while the target language normally continues as a subject in its own right in the shape of foreign language lessons taught by language specialists. In CLIL programs typically less than 50% of the curriculum is taught in the target language. Furthermore, CLIL is usually implemented once learners have already acquired literacy skills in their first language (L1), which is more often at the secondary than the primary level.

In short, CLIL could be interpreted as a foreign language enrichment measure packaged into content teaching.

Nature of Instructions

Forms of instruction that combine content teaching and language teaching are not a new topic in the *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* (see Crandall, 1992; Snow, 1998; Spanos, 1989; Stoller, 2004). Viewing these reports as a series, one When languages and content are integrated, however, different approaches can be observed (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989). Grin (2005 in Coyle, 2007) mentions that more than 216 CLIL experiences could be described depending on the aspect underlined. Coyle (2008) however recommends finding the balance between both ends if real integration wants to be achieved Mortimer and Scott (2003) assert that even if content will define learning outcomes and tasks, language will create chances to understand content. These linguistic objectives will guarantee that students will be able to use the language without mastering the language. Furthermore, CLIL could help students with different levels, interests and skills developing language competence (Dalton-Puffer, 2007). Therefore CLIL has gained importance due to its characteristics, of which the following can be highlighted:

Student-centred learning.

Different learning styles are taken into consideration.

Process and task-centred learning.

Encourages autonomous and interactive learning.

Peer and group dynamics are used.

Tasks requiring meaning negotiation are used.

Inquiry oriented learning.

Use of comprehension strategies.

Peer tutoring.

The use of different materials and resources are fostered.

Practice and reality.

Classroom Interaction

Interaction is needed in the classroom activity. It helps the teaching and learning process run smoothly and it can increase learners' communicative. It tells how the students have interaction among them and teacher even with the whole class. The aim of this study is giving the teacher some suggestions to achieve classroom interaction in the teaching through CLIL. It offers some strategies to improve the interaction in the classroom. Several previous studies about classroom interaction which show the different outcome happen. Several studies show that classroom interaction is important in the teaching learning process. Some studies show that the students' interaction happens in the classroom. By using classroom interaction, the students are more active in the learning process. The result of the study concludes that classroom interaction has important role in the teaching and learning process. interaction between teacher and students and students and students are needed in the classroom activities taking communicative approach. It will maintain communication to happen in the classroom. It will help the teaching and learning process run smoothly. When the teacher and students, and students and students' interactions happen, the instruction will reach the target. The gap between teacher and students in the classroom will disappear. So, the teaching and learning process will be balanced between the teacher and the students. Not only the teacher who will be active in communication but the students will also participate in the teaching and learning process. Ellis (1990) stated that interaction is meaning-focused and carried out to facilitate the exchange of information and prevent communication breakdowns. Moreover, Brown (2015) stated that interaction is the basis of L2 learning, through which learners are engaged both in enhancing their own communicative abilities and in socially, constructing their identities through collaboration and negotiation.

Standard of assessment reveals that, learning is the process of interaction among learners, between learners and teachers and learning source in the learning environment. So because of it the classroom interaction is needed. By interacting other learners and the teacher, learners will increase their language skill and social skill. It is important role of the teacher to make the teaching and learning process by designing the plan well.

Scaffolding in CLIL Classrooms

Within CLIL settings, scaffolding of learners is crucial, as they must develop the ability to articulate complex ideas in a language other than their native tongue, thereby requiring a repertoire of academic skills. Thus scaffolding can serve as an important strategy to realise effective teaching in CLIL. One feature of CLIL that is associated to the way that language learner is challenged in the classroom is its social nature. The learner's "socialization is expressed through the practice of interaction between teacher and students" Gerakopoulou (2011, p.2). Carefully planned lessons, teaching and class activities as well as the assistance

provided by teachers are considered necessary to accomplish interaction during the lesson. The methods and language approaches that the teachers implement to help their learners in order to enhance their cognitive and language aptitudes, expand their comprehension and become proficient and autonomous second language learners are all included in the concept of scaffolding. According to Gerakopoulou (2011) "learning that is retrieved through scaffolding and interaction and the role of the 'reflective practitioner' are considered basic concepts in CLIL education". Therefore, it is imperative that CLIL

teachers should understand scaffolding as they must enact dual classroom roles, namely to assist learners in comprehending content and to acquire language simultaneously.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive and analytical method were adopted for the recent study. For collecting data, a questionnaire was designed and validated by a panel of experts. The questionnaire designed by the researcher himself, was based on these points scale (yes- No To some extent), and was administrated to 50 CLIL teachers from four schools where CLIL approach is implemented. 50 copies were returned from.

The questionnaire was basically administrated to CLIL teachers to obtain their responses regarding the attitudes towards pedagogical practice in CLIL classroom .

PARTICIPANTS

The population of this study is the Sudanese *CLIL secondary schools* teachers (Alqabas International School Comboni Higher Secondary School & Kibeida International School). The sample of teachers chosen to conduct this study was selected from these schools ,they are representing teachers who teach another subject through English .Fifty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to those teachers and the researcher received all copies of the questionnaire.

RESULT AND DISCUSION

The purpose of analyzing data is to obtain useable and useful information. The analysis may describe and summarize the data, identify relationships between variables, compare variables, identify the difference between variables, and forecast outcomes. As previously stated, the data was obtained through the first and second phases of the study. The collected data and information were analyzed in relation to the overarching research question posed in this research. This analysis could ensure validity and reliability of the gathered data.

1- The students know the basic vocabulary?

	Variables	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	30	60.0
	No	10	20.0
	To some extent	10	20.0
	Total	50	100.0

With regard to the basic vocabulary, the majority of respondents known the basic vocabulary for learning new content. Thus, is an indicator that CLIL students develop linguistic competence because of the diversity of academic vocabulary they deal with across school curricular.

2- Do students know how to explain new content in English?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	70.0
No	5	10.0
To some extent	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

It should be noted that this assumption explains that CLIL in classroom broadly consists of introducing aspects related to communicative competence and curricular materials offer the students a natural situation for language development. As a result when they

produce output they do it simultaneously on the base of a solid learning ground driven from both language and content.

3- Do you ask open questions?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Yes	40	80.0
No	5	10.0
To some extent	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

Based on the results displayed in the table, it can be claimed that; The CLIL teacher vary his questions according to the form of task based in the classroom to construct different types of classroom interaction through pacing his lesson. This strategy serves different purposes such as: rising student's awareness in term of forming contexts and develop both cognition and critical thinking as factors being maintained in CLIL approach,

4- I have activities to enhance classroom communication.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	70.0
No	10	20.0
To some extent	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

When students are engaged in a learning activity they are actively working, and both the content and the new language they are studying are in their short-term memory. This is similar to a phrase on a blackboard: if it is not permanently placed in their long-term memory, it can easily be erased or forgotten. Consequently, different types of classroom interaction is due certain classroom pedagogical features that CLIL learners and teachers practice to check understanding content matters.

5- Scaffolding helps to tackle communication

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Yes	30	60.0
No	10	20.0
To some extent	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

The scores shows that scaffolding facilitates learners' understanding of language or content, as well as the production of both. This can be done in many ways, including through the other CLIL elements. Essentially, it displays the teacher's awareness of the difficulties of providing content in a foreign language, which he or she then counters by providing the pupils with the tools and help to work with the materials.

6- Do you use pair work?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	50.0
No	15	30.0
To some extent	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

The data in the table showed that engaging in communicative language tasks through pair work helps a learner develop in an L2 in several ways. Tasks provide an opportunity not only to produce the target language, but also, through conversational adjustments, to

manipulate and modify it Checking and clarifying problem utterances (‘negotiating for meaning’) ensures that task participants receive comprehensible input and generate comprehensible output, both of which have been claimed as crucial to second language acquisition (SLA) so task type is considered significant, with those tasks requiring an exchange of information most likely to prompt negotiations for meaning

7- Can students answer open question?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Valid Yes	27	54.0
No	13	26.0
To some extent	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

The influence of the teacher’s use of questions is vital in creating what interactive learning environment where students can get involved in discussion and knowledge sharing. Thus, not only focus on the traditional distinction between open and closed question but on the contrary, it what makes a question open or closed is the teacher’s feedback or response to the students’ answers to that question. The kinds of teachers’ feedback moves that successfully create an interactive learning environment. For instance, when the teacher distances her/his feedback from being an evaluation of the student’s answer as wrong or right, more communication takes place.

8- Do students speak English with peers while doing pair working?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Valid Yes	28	56.0
No	10	20.0
To some extent	12	24.0
Total	50	100.0

The respondents explained a dilemma of the fact that they attempting to create a situation where students can solve problems through the use of appropriate academic L2, according to the goals of a CLIL classroom, and this particular practice does not necessarily provide that opportunity for the students when they work independently. Therefore, students should do pair work in situation which help them to rise negotiation during doing the task.

9- I always speak in English inside the class

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Yes	40	80.0
No	5	10.0
In some extent	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

The frequencies shows that making English as a medium of instructions in CLIL classrooms requires a teacher a teacher who can demonstrate content knowledge , feel confident about his English skills, to be able to talk about all of these things, because new content is in many ways a new vocabulary, right? The vocabulary to a large extent carries the content and make interaction between the teacher and the learners.

10- Do you feel comfortable with CLIL lesson?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
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Yes	30	60.0
No	12	24.0
To some extent	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0

The data shows that teacher's exists when the teacher asks the class for agreement or disagreement; she/he invites more peer response to the student's answer. This encourages more involvement and participation. When the teacher gives up control over the lesson content and follows the students' ideas as a main drive for furthering the discussion, she/he could create a more interactive learning environment and consequently teachers develop a good perception about CLIL learning.

11- I value the students Improvement of communication

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Yes	27	54.0
No	13	26.0
In some extent	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

By using authentic teaching material available around and the material that is connected to the experiential and background knowledge of the students, an English class room can be made interactive, interesting, enthusiastic and learner friendly, this emphasizes that in the discourse of a classroom, most of the learning takes place and most of the instruction gets accomplished. Schwandt (1994:118) notes that through watching, listening, asking, recording, and examining, learners fashion "meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction.

12- In CLIL lesson the teacher focus on both language and content.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Valid Yes	30	60.0
No	10	20.0
To some extent	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

It is clear that teachers' most important classroom work happens, "where they provide a social interaction within the community of learners such that the learners may move from what they know to what they don't yet know, from their own experiences to a new understanding of the disciplines represented by the content they are studying. CLIL teachers must be aware about delivering language through teaching content.

CONCLUSION

The present study was set out to examine the effects of CLIL teachers methodological approach on students' L1 development, their L2 learning and their content learning in the EFL classes and to investigate the perspectives of secondary school teachers towards the CLIL approach.

The results of this study revealed important information about the effect of teacher's methodological approach and students engagement during teaching in class activity. It showed that the real purposes in the content, interaction and communication, creativity, immediate use of language, participating in group activity

in CLIL class enhance students' attention which leads them to better learning and understanding of the content matter and English language at the same time.

In CLIL class the students should have these authenticity of the setting and performance so the rise of engagement levels in this class, perhaps due to type of instructional methods used to a maximum degree of engaging. It was also found that the level of engagement depends on the way of teaching. This study demonstrated the pattern of higher engagement occurring in CLIL classes and stated that instructor should engage students in the class activities, therefore higher engagement causes better education, language learning, and skills development.

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