Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Contextual Pedagogy for Enhancing Language Competency

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Abstract:

Language learning involves more than merely being told about the language, being given the right knowledge about it, the rules that govern their structure etc. Proficiency in Communication skills in English is required in each and every occupation. There were books and most of these were ill-suited to the needs of the learners. Language is learned to communicate. Learning a language is as crucially dependent on factors within learners. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach is student-centered. Language is a skill subject, where the skills of language have to be actively practiced by the learner, if they are to be enhanced and effectively used. It aims at combining language practice and specific content delivery and fosters target language and intercultural competence acquisition. CLIL increases motivation and confidence in the language and subject. This paper explores CLIL with mixed humanistic approaches motivate the learners to enhance language competency.

Language is used for specific purposes. It may be academic, social, vocational, or recreational but it gives direction, shape, and ultimately meaning to discourse. The ability to communicate in English should be learned appropriately and must be taught effectively. Proficiency in Communication skills in English is required in each and every occupation. Companies expect and examine effective communication skills in English which is one of the basic competencies that every graduate should have to perform at the time of interview. They assert that the ability to communicate in English spontaneously is valuable for obtaining employment and maintaining successful job performance.

The use of electronic aids especially those related to computers has become a common feature of the English Language Teaching (ELT) classroom in recent years. The teacher is meant for a source of knowledge in the traditional classroom but in the 21st century, the name of the teacher is sophisticated as a facilitator in the digital era. The role of computers in teaching and learning is rapidly becoming one of the most important and widely discussed issues in contemporary education policy. Higher education

institutions get advantage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in order to facilitate a rich teaching and learning environment (Beatty, 2003; Chiu, Liou, & Yeh, 2007; Hancock, Bray, & Nason, 2002; Hemard, 2006; Higgins, 1993; Scrimshaw, 1993; Wang & Zhang, 2005; White, 2006). Several studies have found that many factors contribute to the learning of English in India. Among them, the more important appear to be motivation and the extent of availability of the language around the learner.

Limited amount of language was available to the learner in the early years of English in India. There were few native speakers and they did not always use English with their Indian interlocutors. There were few books and most of these were ill-suited to the needs of the learners. So, the learners of that early period used special word lists. Their needs were limited and these lists served them well. By the end of the eighteenth century, more detailed books in grammar, pronunciation and other areas of English appeared. With the transfer of judicial and revenue powers to the British, new occasions arose for a more frequent use of English. Anglo-Indians and servants in the British households are likely to have spoken some English. The motivation to learn English has mostly been of the instrumental kind to learn it, so as to earn a living and some social standing, and for extending the horizon of one's awareness. Until about the decade of the 1960s, one could not pass the school final examination in India unless one passed in English. Now this motivation is also becoming integrative. Many Indians wish to identify themselves with the global culture.

Learning a language is as crucially dependent on factors within learners as it is upon those without. People do not learn a language which they do not want to learn, neither do they learn a language which is not available to them either in visual, auditory or some other form. What do learners learn, how do they learn, what is the role of social factors in this learning and what is the role of individual factors in this learning.

CLIL Principle

Language is learned to communicate. The subject determines the language input. A CLIL lesson is therefore not a language lesson neither is it a subject lesson transmitted in a foreign language. If the language item is presented in a meaningful situation, the learner can deduce its meaning and context from the situation and the mother can be reduced. According to the 4Cs curriculum (Coyle 1999), a successful CLIL lesson should combine elements of the following:

a) **Content** - Subject matter: Progression in knowledge, skills and understanding related to specific elements of a defined curriculum

b) **Cognition** - Learning and thinking process: Developing thinking skills which link concept formation (abstract and concrete), understanding and language.

c) **Culture** - Developing intercultural understanding and global citizenship: Exposure to alternative perspectives and shared understandings, which deepen awareness of otherness and self.

d) **Communication** - Language learning and processing: Using language to learn while learning to use language

CLIL Approaches

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) applies to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content, and the simultaneous learning of a foreign/other language. CLIL approach is student-centered. It aims at combining language practice and specific content delivery and fosters target language and intercultural competence acquisition. It is flexible and adjustable to the learners' needs, level of language competence and level of academic achievement. CLIL has recommended the following:

➢ Humanistic
➢ Lexical
➢ Communicative
➢ Content based teaching

The following humanistic approach insights from psychology and pedagogy.

A. The Silent Way method uses fidel charts and cusiniere rods. The teacher is just a facilitator and speaks very little.

B. Community Language Learning uses the learners form a community, help and aid each other to learn the target language.

C. Suggestopedia uses in reducing the anxiety factor in a learning situation. Fear of failure and anxiety created barriers and the true potential of a human mind could not be realized. It supports fine art especially music as an integral part of the lesson. The functional aspect of the target language is emphasized.

D. Total Physical Response includes a child learned the mother tongue could be duplicated in a foreign language learning situation.

The humanistic approach tends to see language learning as a process which engages the whole person and not just the intellect. It takes into account the emotional and spiritual needs of the individuals. Teaching is an art in which the relationship between human beings, between teacher and taught is crucial to real success. This is one way of distinguishing teaching from training, for the latter can be successful simply through a series of instructions, but the former, necessarily involving basic moral and psychological issues, engages the whole persons of both teachers and learners. Each teacher recreates the principles of teaching in relation to each new class and each new student.
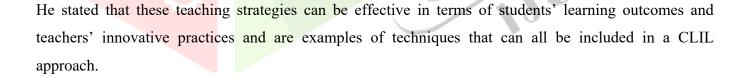
CLIL Activities

CLIL methodology takes advantage of a wide range of teaching strategies.

1. Discussion of grammar and vocabulary based on students' analysis of daily activities.

2. Activities previewing vocabulary in the film, including a vocabulary worksheet.

3. Viewing a segment of the movie.

4. The teacher leads a discussion of the video clips.

5. Discussion of the reading books/articles/Journals/magazines.

6. Students see a short interview in which immigration matters are discussed.

7. Students are given time to read related articles and prepare a class presentation.

8. Wrap up discussion.

According to Hattie (2009) would have a huge impact on learning; in particular, Hattie's some of the favourite teaching strategies are as follows:

1. Direct Instruction
2. Note Taking (Study Skills)
3. Spaced Practice
4. Feedback
5. Teaching Meta-cognitive Skills
6. Teaching Problem Solving Skills
7. Reciprocal Teaching
8. Mastery Learning
9. Concept Mapping

He stated that these teaching strategies can be effective in terms of students' learning outcomes and teachers' innovative practices and are examples of techniques that can all be included in a CLIL approach.

Materials of CLIL

Teaching materials are the resources to achieve language exposure in English Language Teaching (ELT). They are an extremely important part of teaching to get them in the right perspective and recognize their status in equal terms with other two important aspects of teaching namely, the teacher and the learner. According to N.S. Prabhu, learning is dependent not on materials themselves, however sophisticated they are in their design and construction. Brinton et al. (1989) has observed that the activities of language class are specific to the subject being taught and stimulate the students to think and learn the target language in a content based instruction. Such an approach lends itself quite naturally to the integrated teaching of the four basic and traditional language skills. Snow (2001) has asserted that "In order to develop communicative competence, learners must have extended opportunities to use the target language productively. Thus, in addition to receiving comprehensible input, they must produce comprehensible output i.e. explicit attention must be paid to the productive language skills of speaking

and writing". It is believed that academic writing from listening, and reading, and thus require students to synthesize facts and ideas from the multiple sources as preparation for writing.

It's important to note that the content continues through the whole course, not just a handful of specific lessons. A conversation or dialogues on shopping one day, using the bank on another day, making hotel reservations, requesting politely, offering help, giving instructions and directions, leaving a message in English at a different class session is an example of a CLIL class. Met (2008) suggests that "contents facilitate language growth". While students prepare about the certain topic, they should use not only their background knowledge but also to think, and solve tasks. According to N.S. Prabhu, learning is dependent not on materials themselves, however sophisticated they are in their design and construction.

Authors such as Coyle et al. (2010) and Linares et al. (2012) distinguish between language of learning, language for learning and language through learning. Language of learning entails the words, phrases and expressions which are key to access the subject content. The language for learning is needed by students to carry out classroom tasks such as debating or presenting information. The third role of language in CLIL is related to the new language that emerges from the cognitive process in which students are immersed.

In a CLIL, all four language skills can be combined. The skills are seen:

- Listening is a normal input activity and vital for language learning.
- Reading is the major source of input.
- Speaking focuses on fluency. Accuracy is seen as subordinate.
- Writing is a series of lexical activities through which grammar is recycled.

CLIL in the classroom

a) Reflection moments

b) Reviewing content and language

c) Connecting previous and new knowledge

d) Cut scenes and recap

e) Production of artefact

f) Problem posing starting from the video as a stimulus

g) Expressing hypothesis and interpretations of the phenomenon showed into the video.

h) Quizzes (Individual, pair or group quizzes)

i) Think/ Pair/ Share activities

j) Brainstorming

k) Students' PPT presentations and discussions

l) Role Play

m) Critical Debate

n) Case Study

o) Group Discussion

p) Creative Scenarios and Simulations

q) Micro-lectures

Organization of knowledge

Texts are often represented pictures. These structures are known as 'diagrams of thinking', and are used to help learners categorize the ideas and information in a text. Diagram types include tree diagrams for classification, groups, hierarchies, flow charts and timelines for sequenced thinking such as instructions and historical information, tabular diagrams describing people and places, and combinations of these. The structure of the text is used to facilitate learning and the creation of activities which focus on both language development and core content knowledge.

Interpretation of Content

Learners are expected to be able to reproduce the core of the text in their own words. Since learners will need to use both simple and more complex language, there is no grading of language involved, but it is a good idea for the teacher to highlight useful language in the text and to categorize it according to function. Learners need the language of comparison and contrast, location or describing a process, but may also need certain discourse markers, adverb phrases or prepositional phrases. Concord, collocations, semi-fixed expressions and set phrases have also be given attention as well as subject-specific and contextual vocabulary.

The Benefits of CLIL

- Improves language competency and oral communication skills.
- Provides authentic and motivating use of language.
- Promote cognitive flexibility.
- Introduces a wider cultural context.
- Prepares for future studies and working life.
- Increases motivation and confidence in the language and subject
- L2 acquisition takes place in a natural learning environment
- Provides flexibility, dynamism, and versatility

Hence, learning autonomy takes place best through CLIL approach. The functional aspects of language have been emphasized. The material, methods and techniques of CLIL motivates and encourages learners to participate actively in learning and enhancing their language competency. A CLIL lesson looks at content and language in equal measure. Learners learn best by involving in the activities and resources well designed by the facilitator.

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