CLIL TO DEVELOP HOTEL MANAGEMENT (HTM) LEARNERS' VOCABULARY; ONGOING RESEARCH

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Abstract: This paper aims to provide insight into ongoing experimental research on CLIL carried out as a part of a PhD programme at VIT University, India. This paper presents the research design in details. The research project involves two experimental classes and two control classes in the Vellore region of Tamilnadu, India. The participants are monitored through face to face meetings, *e*-learning platform and a corpus which is kept throughout the process. The participants were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups; the experimental group was instructed via the suggested methodology whereas the control group was taught generally. The results of the paired sample *t*-test demonstrated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of their post score.

Keywords: Brochures, Content and Language Integrated Learning, E-learning, Vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

English is the predominant language utilised in international communication for worldwide business, including hotel business. English education for the HTM learners is essential because English is the main language used for the spread of knowledge. English comprehension in the HTM course is vital in order for learners to be up to date with current innovations. It is used as the medium of communication in the hotel business because those who work in the business encounter different types of travellers of a high percentage speaking various languages other than one's own.

Teaching learners in a second or foreign language 'is as old as education itself' (Coyle et. al., 2010: 2). A two thousand year old example is when the Roman Empire took over Greek land. As a result, children of Roman families were taught non-language subjects in Greek by Greek tutors; which expanded their professional opportunities and gave them openings to settle down in Greece. Another example is when Latin became and remained as lingua franca in European education until the sixteenth century (Simensen 1998: 103).

It was primarily the wide experimentation of immersion programmes in the 1960s in Canada that led to the modern version of CLIL (Simensen 1998: 103). This is where the main evidence for the CLIL approach lies (Marsh 2009: vii). The target language for English speaking communities in Canada has been French, whereas English has been the target language for the French-speaking communities (Navés 2009: 22). Some schools in Quebec have taught the majority of their curriculum

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in French to English speakers. In *early immersion* programmes, instruction in the target language starts in the first grade (kindergarten). In these programmes pupil are taught second language literacy before the literacy of their first language. While delayed immersion programmes take place in elementary schools (when pupils are between 9 and 10 years old) the late immersion programmes are initiated with pupil between 11 and 14. Furthermore, during the first three years of French total immersion programmes, the pupil are taught entirely in French. Later on the amount of English instruction is gradually increased. In comparison, around half of the classes are taught using French in partial French-immersion programmes (Naves 2009).

The term 'Content and Language integrated Learning' (CLIL) was established in 1994 by a company of experts financially supported by the European Commission. In an interview, Marsh (2010) stated that when he was working in Northern Europe for the European Commission, children were leaving school after eight years of French and Spanish without being able to string a sentence together. Marsh then became part of a research team investigating practices where the methodologies were successful at language and content learning and provided pupil with an enjoyable experience. The term 'CLIL' was chosen in order to reflect the experts' shared perception of the similarities which they found in different 'methodological practices' of bilingual teaching across the world (Marsh 2009: vii). Thus, CLIL was launched as an umbrella term to include the common characteristics found in bilingual teaching practised worldwide. CLIL was used to 'describe and further design good practice as achieved in different types of school environment where teaching and learning takes place in an additional language' (Coyle et. al., 2010: 3).

In order to grasp the theoretical concepts of CLIL, the experts first closely examined the works of Vygotsky, Piaget, Bruner and Skinner (Marsh (2009: vii) then analysed the available research evidence. The purpose was to view the outcomes from different teaching approaches towards bilingual education in order to find elements that could be useful and suitable in various contexts.

Coyle et. al., (2010: 41) presented a framework- the 4Cs, for understanding the main principles of CLIL practices, which they proposed are the key aspects for the successful planning and implementation of CLIL.

CLIL has been considered to promote a more holistic view on integrated learning, as it acknowledges content and language as interconnected and interdependent elements. Crandall (1994), cited in Coyle et. al., (2010: 41), argued that it is not possible to develop academic knowledge and skills without language, since content knowledge is embedded, discussed and constructed through language. In addition, academic language skills cannot be acquired in a context without content. Language and content are thus closely linked together and cannot develop

without the other. According to Coyle et. al., (2010: 41), as the 4Cs proposed CLIL is effective through.

- progression in knowledge, skills and understanding of the content
- engagement in associated cognitive processing
- interaction in the communicative context
- development of appropriate language knowledge and skills
- the acquisition of a deepening intercultural awareness, which is in turn brought about by the positioning of self and 'otherness'

CLIL provides opportunities to break down barriers between departments because it creates a need to discuss pedagogies and educational principles that are relevant across various subjects (Wiesemes 2009: 45).

Teaching vocabulary plays a crucial role in ELT as "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed (Wilkins 1972, p. 111-112); lexis is the heart of language (Lewis 1993, p. 89). As students develop fluency in English, it is significant to develop personal vocabulary learning strategies to acquire productive vocabulary knowledge. Though the students instinctively recognize the importance of vocabulary to their language learning, they "carry around dictionaries and not grammar books" (Schmitt 2010, p. 4); and so there is a gap in acquiring apt vocabulary learning strategy. The learners frequently use 80% of vocabulary (headwords) from the provided texts (Nation (1997). In the interval of teaching, the focus on head words improve the usage of vocabulary and "it is impossible to use English language effectively without the headwords" (Nation and Newton 1997, p. 239).

Nation (2001) suggested effective second language instruction to focus on vocabulary, which is also cited by Anderson (1991). Richards and Renandya (2002) insisted on extensive reading to develop the right and general vocabulary. While learning new words, Baker et. al., (2003) advised the learners to move from association with one narrow meaning to content of a word through comprehension in much broader and deep ways.

Vocabulary lives in the heart of content learning as it serves as a proxy for students' understanding of concepts. Vocabulary is a significant predictor of overall reading comprehension (Baumann, Kameenui, & Ash, 2003) and student performance (Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). When readers know a lot of words, they can read more complex texts. When writers know a lot of words, they can compose more sophisticated documents. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are grounded in the formulation and understanding of written and verbal messages. Without meaning, words and phrases are nothing more than a nonsensical string of sounds or letters.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

The aim of the present study is to investigate the effect of CLIL instruction on Hotel Management learners' content vocabulary knowledge. The study also aims at answering the following research questions:

1. Will the two groups (CLIL and non-CLIL) achieve similar scores in first vocabulary tests taken during the research?
2. Will CLIL learners achieve higher scores in Content vocabulary test than non CLIL learners?

The second year hotel management of two colleges from Vellore, each consisting of about 60, served as the research and the control group, respectively. The experiment instruction based on CLL was designed and implemented by the author of this paper. They were instructed in English as the medium language and involving the following subject areas: (i) Hospitality, (ii) cooking terminology and (iii) English language teaching. The main goal of this research project is to develop students' content vocabulary. The materials created by the students during the project were crafts and posters. Other forms are also including handouts and answer sheets.

The research tools of the study were three vocabulary tests, which aimed to examine learners content vocabulary knowledge. Both CLIL and non-CLIL group were tested on the same content every time. The test was distributed twice; the beginning of the research and the second time after CLIL instruction had been completed. Only their vocabulary was tested.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

As for the collection of qualitative data, classroom observation and document analysis were done by the researcher. One activity was given to them. The 8-sessions experiment was conducted in order to study the students content vocabulary development.

Activity 1: Students need to decide their favourite place or hotel. Once the students decide their favourite place or hotel, ask them to create a travel/hotel brochure to share information about it. They can draw pictures, use photography and write details about what they want to see or they have seen. In the end, they should create their own souvenir.

Students have chosen different topics and themes for their brochure designing. Researcher helped them to recall the information.

Step 1: students need to collect the information required for the brochure

Step 2: they need to select the theme for their brochure

Step 3: they have to use the color papers provided by the research and design the brochure

Step 4: they need to use proper vocabulary and write the details about their hotel/menu/resort of their choice.

Sample images of students' brochures were displayed in the appendix.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Regarding our first research question whether the two groups of learners (CLIL and non-CLIL) will achieve similar results in 1st vocabulary test, as can be seen in the table below both groups performed similar in 1st test. Vollemer et. al., (2006) found that CLIL instruction results in deeper semantic processing and better understanding of curricular 'concepts'.

TABLE 1: BOTH THE GROUPS' MEAN SCORES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN CONTENT TESTS

	Test 1		Test 2		Test 3	
	Mean Score	*Stand. deviation*	*Mean score*	*Stand. Deviation*	*Mean score*	*Stand. deviation*
CLIL	6.8	1.3	13.0	1.37	16.8	1.6
Non-CLIL	5.1	2.1	6.0	1.8	6.6	1.3

Post-test

A post-test was conducted to check the effectiveness of CLIL vocabulary instruction that was employed during the experiment. The post-test consisted of 20 marks and all the 120 students were tested. The experiment was focused in the post-test area was; Brochure designing. The target words that were focused in each section of the test were content words which were taught from selected corpus during the intervention.

The pre-test and post-test were compared and analysed by using paired sample *t*-test. The comparison between pre-test and post-test are tabulated using paired sample *t*-test (Table 2).

TABLE 2: TEST RESULTS OF VARIABLE IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

	Pre-Test		Mid test		Post test	
	Mean	*Std. dev*	*Mean*	*Std. dev*	*Mean*	*Std. dev*
CLIL	6.8	1.3	13.0	1.37	16.8	1.6

After analysing the learners' performance and analysing the mean scores of each section it is evident that they performed well. The students were advised to practise continuously in order to develop their word knowledge.

TABLE 3: RESULTS OF PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST MARKS

	Mean	*Standard deviation*	*Std. Error mean*	*Sig (2tailed)*
Pair: Pre & Post	−10.0000	1.9658	.2538	.000

According to the test done, signified P value is lesser than 0.05. The P value attained implies the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test. The signified values below 0.05 indicated the efficiency of the approach used in this study.

With respect to the effect of CLIL on learners' language performance, our second research question was that will CLIL learners achieve higher scores in Content vocabulary test than non CLIL learners. In order to investigate their language performance, the same content vocabulary test was administered twice – once before and once after CLIL instruction to both CLIL and non-CLIL learners. The results of these tests indicate an improvement in their content vocabulary. The test values of experimental and control group paired and compared using paired sample *t*-test and the mean score and standard deviation scores are mentioned in below Table (4).

TABLE 4: PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST VALUES

		Paired Differences			*Sig. (2-tailed)*
		Mean	*Std. Deviation*	*Std. Error Mean*	
Pair 1	Pre-test – Control Pre test	1.6333	2.5443	.3285	.000
Pair 2	Pre-test – Mid	−6.2167	1.6984	.2193	.000
Pair 3	Mid – Post test	−3.7833	.7152	.0923	.000
Pair 4	Pre-test – Post test	−10.0000	1.9658	.2538	.000
Pair 5	Post-test – Control Post test	10.1167	2.2177	.2863	.000

Concerning the vocabulary gains, CLIL group's language performance improved in language test 2. At the same time, it is evident that the difference between language test 1 and language test 2 in the CLIL group is higher. This finding indicates higher language gains for the CLIL group .Our findings agree with those of previous studies which have shown that CLIL practice has a positive impact on foreign language learning in educational contexts (Cenoz and Perales 2001, Serra 2007).

CONCLUSION

This paper presented the attempt of developing content vocabulary through CLIL approach on Hotel management learners. Elicited by findings of similar previous studies within the European educational context, we aimed to investigate whether CLIL instruction has a positive impact on hotel management learner's vocabulary.

The results of our preliminary study have indicated both language and content gains for the CLIL learners involved and thus seem to support the extension of the project to other level.

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