

The Implementation of Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Approach in International Baccalaureate (IB) Curriculum in Developing English Students Competences

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of the application of the content language integrated learning (CLIL) approach in improving English language learning outcomes in the international baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach by describing in detail the application of CLIL in the learning process in the IB curriculum. This study uses three data collection instruments, namely interviews, observations and questionnaires. The data analysis technique used is drawing conclusions and presenting data obtained from respondents. From the research conducted, it was found that the CLIL approach to the IB curriculum has a significant impact on improving English language learning outcomes. The three main approaches brought by CLIL are contextual, communicative and psycholinguistic. This third aspect is an integral part of the development of English skills, where English is taught in an authentic context directly and communicatively in its implementation, and in addition by considering the theory of second language acquisition as the basis of its learning activities. Hence, the learning atmosphere that is built provides comprehensive input to students. Therefore, the CLIL approach can be practiced and adapted by many educational institutions to improve the quality of English competency.

Keywords: *Implementation, CLIL, Approach, IB, Curriculum*

1. INTRODUCTION

The language policy in the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum plays a paramount role in the success of the IB program. IB believes that the ability to communicate in various languages can support the development of literacy for all students. This is because IB uses a multicultural approach to its curriculum which allows IB schools to be very inclusive by accepting students from different backgrounds including race, languages and nationality (Syaepul Uyun, 2018).

There are several languages used in the IB curriculum for their learning process. These languages are English, French, Arabic, and Spanish. Thus, of all these languages, English is considered the

most widely used priority language in almost all IB programs worldwide. (IBO Language Learning, 2015a, 2015b). Therefore, the position of English is very vital in the IB curriculum. It is not only the subject of learning but also the main subject of its instruction (Ballantyne, Charlene, 2017).

The significant position of English policy in IB curriculum, is not only used as a language of instruction, but also used as a system media to achieve the general objectives of this curriculum, namely the multicultural approach (IBO, 2014). This paradigm in the IB curriculum, consequently built into the standards and practices for IB programmes and utilizing that the English has really significant role in IB, it is to provide effective instruction in the academic language needed for success in the content areas (IBO, 2015). Teachers must be prepared to integrate academic language teaching into the teaching of the disciplines. This approach also can be called CLIL or content language integrated learning (Syaepul Uyun, 2018).

Referring to several previous studies, it can be said that the IB teaching concept implements Content and Language Integration learning (CLIL) (Coyle, 2008). This teaching approach integrates language and content simultaneously and in a meaningful way (Schleppegrell, 2004); (Anstrom, 2010; Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2002; Dicerbo, Anstrom, Baker & Rivera, 2013; Schleppegrell 2004; Schleppegrell & O'Hallaran, 2011; Swales, 1990 in Ballantyn and Rivera, 2017). In this sense Alejandra (2020) argued that CLIL in IB would have some aspects in common. First of all, in both programmes one of the goals is that the students become proficient in their L1 and L2 at the same time they are acquiring academic knowledge. Secondly, for the most part of the students the language of instruction at the school is their L2.

IB or International baccalaureate curriculum was develop by International Baccalaureate Organization known as IBO. The main goal of this organization is to develop character and helps them to create a better future world through intercultural understanding and respect (IBO, 2008). This program motivates students to be more active and compassionate to understand diversity and create multicultural atmosphere in an educational system (Deviana, M Geby. Emili, 2022). The great idea of multiculturalism has inspired many educators and school in conducting the ideology in their school. This idea has brought English into the significant position in developing both language and also content (Alejandra, 2020). It is similar to Dewey philosophical view on education which is said that education cannot be separated from the nature of human which is the social believers. Education must be led from this belief, thus education can produce much more benefit to the human itself (IBO, 2014).

Since English is essential in IB, consequently, this requirement directly impact into the standards and practices for IB programmes in its instruction. IB program has utilized at least four major languages used. Among all of them English is the one which is used widely all over the world for the program. So that is why English has significant role in IB, for the effective instruction (Fong, 2017). It is done to success both the language and the content. Teachers must be prepared to integrate academic language teaching into the teaching of the disciplines (Bunch, 2013; Heritage, Silva & Pierce, 2007; Wong-Fillmore and Snow, 2000).

The strong instructional approaches to integrate language and content in meaningful ways not only can support and extend to attention to the vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structures indirectly but also students understanding of the content can be achieved effectively. So both content and

language is taught indirectly (Coyle, Hood, Marsh, 2010). In these approaches, students are encouraged to think strategically about their approaches to language, formulate goals, monitor their own performance, be conscious of commonalities between their languages where appropriate, and consciously draw upon their own prior knowledge of subject matter (Coyle, 2007).

It is paramount to say that in IB instruction the English should be viewed as interconnected aspects of a continuum in the holistic process of learning. This theory brought from Hong (2008) which is said that language development is determined along with the development of human cognition which also determines by the development of each individual's cognitive stages. Learning in the IB Curriculum allows student to reach a level of language ability more quickly. This is due to comprehensive input (Krashen, 2007). However, even so, this development will certainly be influenced by many factors, such as motivation, environment and genetics (Harmer, 2007). For example, in the development of English we know two domain terms, namely BICS and CALP. Someone may be fluent in basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in English, but not in cognitive academic language proficiency CALP (Cummin, 2001) in IB learning, both BICS and CALP can be developed simultaneously, but of course BICS is the main focus.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that the approach used in the IB curriculum, namely CLIL or content language integrated learning, can be one of the options in designing the English learning process, where language learning is carried out simultaneously with content learning. Referring to previous research, it was found that the English language skills of students who study at educational institutions using the IB curriculum tend to have better English skills compared to those who study in schools in general (Deptiana, Emilia, 2022).

However, in the Indonesian context, this situation seems ironic. Where in several reports the English language skills of Indonesian in public schools are actually the opposite. Those who study in public schools seem to struggle more in achieving English learning goals. The annual report issued by Education First (EF) regarding the English proficiency index of Indonesians is still categorized as very low, and places Indonesia in 79th position out of 113 countries studied (EF Report, 2023). This situation places Indonesia far behind Malaysia and Singapore.

Another similar finding was also found from Syaepul Uyun's (2018) research, an evaluation conducted by the Ministry of Education every year. It was found that in reality schools only produce a few graduates who have good English language skills. In fact, they have studied English for at least six years at school, from elementary school to high school, but that does not guarantee that students can communicate well in English (English Language Competency Standards of the 2013 National Curriculum, attached, p. 539).

These phenomena lead the author to the opinion that this situation may be a reflection of the actual situation in the field. Although some academics argue that it is natural to find such problems because English is not the first language of our students in Indonesia (Crystal, 2003; Brumfit, et al., in Tran (2012). However, these problems still need to be considered to find solutions. Thus, it is important for all elements to find, prepare, design, and evaluate the most appropriate approaches, strategies, methods, and techniques for teaching English (Richards, 2001; Syaepul Uyun, 2023).

To answer this problem, the CLIL used IB Curriculum can be an interesting object to study. This situation has attracted the attention of researchers to study further how the concept and implementation CLIL in developing English competencies. This research was conducted at one of the IB schools in Bandung, namely Tunas Unggul Primary School which is located on Pasir Impun Street no 94 Mandalajati Bandung. The approach used in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used is a qualitative method with a descriptive design. This means that the data produced will be analyzed and interpreted in the form of descriptions and focus on contemporary phenomena in the context of real life (Yin, 2002, 2008). The researchers also have taken many actions and gone directly to the research location (Creswell, 2014). This was done to understand and explore certain situations, events, groups or social interactions that occur. At this stage, researchers will explore the available literature and resources related to the English language teaching process through the CLIL approach to the IB curriculum.

This research was conducted at Tunas Unggul Primary School Bandung. This school is one of the developing private schools in Bandung city that has used the IB curriculum. This school is located at Pasir Impun Street no 94 Mandalajati Bandung, this school was founded in 2000, and has been using the IB curriculum for a long time. The research was conducted from August to October 2024. To obtain valid data, policy makers and the extended family of Tunas Unggul Primary School have become research participants. Namely school leaders including directors and principals, teachers and also students. Participants have been selected based on purposive sampling where all people selected are based on background, settings that can provide important data information for this study.

In collecting data, researchers will use three instruments. The three instruments are believed to provide accurate (valid) results. The instruments are: interviews, observations and document analysis.

3. DISCUSSION

Content language integrated learning or CLIL is a learning approach that integrates content teaching with language teaching. This approach allows students to study academic material in a foreign language, (often English), so that they not only gain content knowledge but also improve their language skills. This approach is based on several basic learning theories that support its effectiveness such as constructivism and comprehensible input theory from Krashen (Coyle, 2014).

According to the data gained, as a focus study, there are at least three aspects which are very significant that we have analysed from the CLIL in its implementation. The aspect of contextual teaching learning (CTL), communicative language teaching (CLT) and psycholinguistic paradigm colorize the fundamental concept of the practice of CLIL.

The first is contextual teaching learning (CTL). In its implementation, CLIL is used as a learning approach to achieve the school's vision of global perspective. Tunas Unggul expects its graduates to be able to compete in the global world with a strong character. The school believes, one of the considerations to pursue the global perspective in education is by giving them an access to elevate to go to the stage. This goal is also in a line to the theory of English as a global language where English can be one of the tools to reach this goal (Cristal, 2007). The school recognised English is necessary to be thought to the students and must be the priority. It is in line with Dakowaska and Kusnierrik (2015) who said so. Therefore, the school needs to design an English instruction as well as the program in order to achieve the goal. The purposes to encourage English as learning habits in order to design an efficient curriculum (Richards; 2001). By doing so, English is seen as a tools for communication and not only as a subject of learning. So, the process of learning will be more contextual.

The second one, it can be seen that through the CLIL the process of communicative language teaching (CLT) is also campaigned in CLIL. This is in line with the approach brought by the English curriculum from the government, namely the communicative approach. communicative approach which is developed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995). consists of five dimensions of competencies, those are discourse, socio-cultural, aksional, linguistic, and strategies. These five dimension is also in a line with three dimension in CLIL which are content, language and cognition (Coyle, 2010). The school translated this concept as their view toward the learning English which must be communicative. The school believes that teacher task is not to teach about English, but to teach students how to use English as an effective learning tool. So in this context, language elements such as pronunciation, grammatical construction, structure and vocabulary, are more appropriately seen as tools rather than as learning goals (Harmer, 2007). This is in accordance with what Cummin (2001) said that the context in teaching English must be revealed in order to help learner to achieve their ability oftinally (Cummin, 2012).

On the other hand, another strong character from CLIL is a theory of second language acquisition which become a strong fundamental concept of this approach. It should be emphasized that the implementation of CLIL is not only applied in formal learning within the intra-curricular. However all elements of the curriculum, including co-curricular and extracurricular activities, also needed to be involved in order to form a complete approach (Krashen, 2007). This concept is actually very relevant to the theory of teaching a second language to foreigners. The approach's view on how to teach English is the same to Yang Hong's argument in his journal entitled second language acquisition (2015). He said that a comprehensive approach to learning a language will be very effective method in learning a language. The CLIL approach allows students to provide a lot of inside where the language being learned is really used comprehensively, not only in English lessons, but also in other subjects and all elements of the curriculum at school. This is in line with Krashen's theory (2007), namely the theory of second language acquisition with its five hypotheses, namely the input hypothesis, acquisition and learning, monitor, natural order, affective filter hypothesis (Syaepul Uyun, 2022).

Stephen Krashen put forward several important hypotheses in his theory of second language acquisition (SLA). Here are his main hypotheses:

- a. Input Hypothesis: it States that language acquisition occurs when students are exposed to input that is slightly higher than their current level of understanding ($i+1$). This means that in order to learn a language, students need to receive information that is challenging but still understandable. CLIL approach allows students to gain additional understanding that will enrich both their understanding and knowledge of the language.
- b. Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis: Separates between "acquisition," which is the natural process of learning a language through experience, and "learning," which is the conscious process of understanding the rules and structures of the language is necessary. Through the CLIL. Students are likely to use the language unconsciously and without preparation. Students are required to understand a concept using their second language. The more exposure students to various activities in English, the more opportunities they will have to develop their second language.
- c. Monitor Hypothesis: it explains that students use the knowledge they learn to monitor and correct the language they produce. in CLIL-based learning, students can also monitor themselves on the understanding of the content and language they get. they will build a zone of proximal development in learning both language and content. This process is essential for them not only to monitor their own development, but also to build self-learning mechanism.
- d. Natural Order Hypothesis: this hypothesis believes that that there is a natural sequence in learning language structures, which is not influenced by teaching. Some language elements will be learned before others, regardless of the order of teaching. According to this theory, people will be good at speaking when they listen a lot. On the other hand, people will be good at writing when they read a lot. the practice of this theory in the concept of CLIL-based learning is also indirectly practiced, When the atmosphere is created as fully English, students input in daily life will be fully cover with these skills, so indirectly CLIL gives students more exposure to English usage.
- e. Affective Filter Hypothesis: it states that emotions, such as anxiety or motivation, can affect students' ability to receive input. When students feel comfortable and motivated, they are more open to learning. In the CLIL-based learning process, in the early stages, students may experience a lot of anxiety and low motivation, but as adaptation is completed, their adjustment will actually change to high motivation.

CLIL provides learning activities for all subjects fully in English. This is important to create an environment that supports the situation by providing easy-to-understand input for learning (Krashen in Hong; 2012). Thus, the school implements a language policy as a form of rule that must be obeyed by all stakeholders. The use of English as the language of instruction is a must for English subjects, and also urges all subjects to use English at least when opening and closing classes. Although teaching in this school has not fully used English, the process will run according to stages.

This finding is in line with research conducted by Natascha in 2012 at the Tompson Kongsburg International School in Norway. The research discussed the implementation of language teaching in IB schools. It was found that individual teachers' beliefs that their education and experience in integrated language learning provided significant improvements to the development of students'

language skills. The level of students and the type of classroom interaction that occurs between teachers and students are aspects that can contribute to language development.

In addition, Cummin (2001) and Brown (2007) also provide an understanding that activities in the classroom also need to be strengthened by activities outside the classroom that allow second language teaching to become meaningful learning using activities that combine student needs, personal interests, and goals and are contextual to their environment.

Referring to the IBO language regulations (2014), if we look at the language learning strategy used by IB, this program uses a four-dimensional strategy in language learning adapted from Cummins (2001). The four dimensions are background knowledge, scaffolding, extending language and affirm identity. These four dimensions are very important in ensuring student participation, encouraging involvement, and successfully building understanding in language learning. As illustrated in Figure 1:

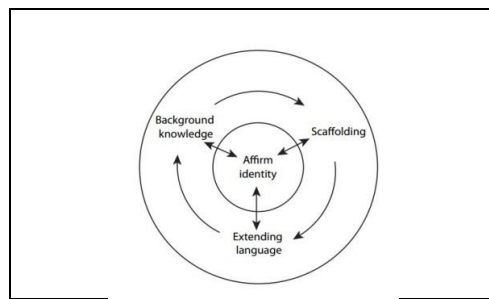


Figure 1. Language and Learning Cycle of Good Practice

- a. Activating initial understanding and building background knowledge: It is necessary to understand together that in learning a language, the environment plays an important role in supporting the effectiveness of language acquisition. This is as conveyed by Krashen (2007) $i + 1$, that new knowledge and understanding are built based on previous conceptual knowledge in a continuous learning process. Psychologist Vygotsky in his theory of constructivism learning (1978) introduced the term zone of proximal development (ZPD) where new learning can take place if there is support. ZPD is outside the zone of previous knowledge, it is a place where learners can work independently without mechanism support from the environment, but they develop knowledge through their own independent mechanism. Therefore, referring to Cummin (2001) it is important for teachers to always do warming up, or stimulation in learning in order to re-explore students' previous knowledge and learning experiences. By doing this, learners will indirectly be able to develop their proximal zone through independent mechanisms.
- b. Scaffolding learning: in supporting the effectiveness of language learning, scaffolding can be a good illustration to use. Therefore, providing a lot of support and assistance at the beginning of learning will be very important in the effectiveness of learning. Scaffolding is a temporary strategy that allows students to complete tasks that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to complete. Therefore, teachers must always be more flexible and be a good helper for them in the teaching process. Several things that need to

be considered such as prerequisite systems, motivational support, familiar topics, need to be considered by teachers when teaching. In learning English, for example, children cannot be taught recount texts before they first learn past tense. The scaffolding learning method will make it easier for students to create a working mechanism for understanding new things that are more complex than previous learning. This mechanism is also closely related to the prior knowledge mechanism.

- c. Expanding the language: in the process of acquiring a second language, teachers can help students by providing a structured and comprehensive task system. Second language acquisition will be more effective by providing structured tasks in the form of projects, readings, reports or presentations and so on. In Krashen's theory (2007), the more students are exposed to a second language, the faster the language acquisition will be obtained.
- d. Affirming identity: Language is an integral part of identity, which ultimately determines how a person will act. Both mother tongue and second language have an equally important position in building meaning that is closely related to a person's relationship with what they feel about what is happening in their environment. Harmer (2007) said that in some aspects such as emotional conditions will greatly influence the acquisition of a second language. This situation also encourages the characteristics identified in the IB Learning Profile and encourages responsible and internationally oriented behavior. Situations where identity is not affirmed can have a negative impact on learning by causing low self-esteem and social emotional problems in learners. For example, such learners are unable to develop many of the characteristics of the IB learning profile, intercultural awareness, and international orientation.

In order to support the English instruction, the program provided by the school is also valuable. The school notes that a strong environment that pays attention to language use will have a positive impact on language learning itself. This concept is indeed outside the CLIL approach, but the IB learning concept strengthens the school's view of the importance of policy makers developing language use regulations in schools. Therefore, the school develops several programs such as English development activities outside of class hours for both teachers and students, then consequences for those who do not comply with language regulations, development of language interests and many more. All programs under control language institution.

This policy encourages all parties, including students, teachers, and school stake holder, to use English in communication. Moreover, this program actually has many benefits to improve students' English skills. Referring to Burn (2012) on the concept of teaching English, there are three different aspects that analysed, those are cognitive, sociocultural, and emotional aspects. According to the author personally, all of these concepts are deliberately applied in this policy. It has encouraged second language acquisition. Because when students use English to communicate, indirectly, they learn vocabulary, pronunciation, and word structure. This shows how cognitive aspects are included in this program (Thonbury, 2006).

Furthermore, Burns (2016) argues that spoken language is produced for a specific purpose and thus functions to fulfill the daily transactional and interactional purposes of its speakers. From a

cultural perspective, to achieve this goal, speakers are required to understand and use different genres (or culturally influenced discourse stages). All of these concepts are actually worked out by the policy. The use of English depending on their environment. This action is supported by Cummins (2001) who emphasized that the context of application in English practice is very important for students to acquire basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS).

In addition, students will enjoy it, if they all do this together without forcing them. This means that they can learn in favour conditions and achieve the best results in English classes. Attitudes and emotional factors play an important role in the language learning process. Students' attitudes towards language learning also affect them outside the classroom. Burden's research (2004) in Burns (2016) proves that positive attitudes bring positive results in language learning. Similar arguments are expressed in other studies by Hong (2012).

The author also proves this because the majority of students have good Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). Because if students are enthusiastic about learning a foreign language such as learning English, their positive attitude will help them in learning. On the other hand, if he thinks English is a very difficult language and learning the language is just a waste of time, then this negative attitude will definitely hinder his English learning.

4. CONCLUION

In conclusion, the implementation of CLIL in IB curriculum has significant impact to the development of English competencies. The strong character of CLIL which are contextual teaching learning, communicative language teaching and psycholinguistic paradigm had built a strong foundation to the practice of this approach in the instruction. it is important to build English atmosphere in the environment. On the other hand, strong concept of learning from IB such as prior knowledge, affirming identity, scaffolding and extending learning also in a line to the character of CLIL which where they can be combined together to mutually strengthen one concept against another, or not taken and only using the CLIL approach in learning, or maybe vice versa.

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