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Impact of Content and Language Integrated Learning on Students' Speaking Proficiency at Primary Level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract: *There are different teaching-learning methodologies being used by practitioners. Content and Learning Integrated Learning (CLIL) is one of the emerging language teaching methods. This method is a dual-learning approach which focuses on language learning and content knowledge at the same time. The present research study is about CLIL's impact on the students' speaking proficiency at the primary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The researchers selected grade fifth students for the research. The respondents of the study were 24 in number, divided into two groups, i.e., experimental and control groups. The pre-speaking test was administered to both groups before the intervention. After the pre-speaking test, the experimental group was intervened with the CLIL method. The data analyzed through SPSS showed a significant difference between the scores of post-tests of the control and experimental group. Similarly, very little difference was found in the results of the pre-test and post-test of the control group which showed that CLIL had a positive impact on speaking proficiency at the primary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The present study recommended that CLIL should be implemented at a large scale for learning the English language.*

Key Words: CLIL, Speaking Proficiency, Primary Level, Group Discussion, Pair Conversation, Mini Projects

Introduction

In the current globalized world, European countries have tried to prepare their citizens to be proficient in at least two languages. Through this, they can compete with the international community in every sphere of life. To achieve this goal, they introduced the Content and Language Integrated (CLIL) method in schools. With the use of the mentioned method, the subject and another language can be learned simultaneously (Coyle, 1999). CLIL stands for content and language-integrated learning. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a new methodological approach in language and education. This approach is being used in bilingual education. The term was used for the first time in 1990 in Europe (Coyle, 2006). CLIL is neither a language learning approach nor a subject learning but the

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amalgam of both (Marsh, Coyle & Hood, 2010). This approach combines the non-language subject and language of teaching in the same classroom. Importance is given to both, the language as well the subject. Through this method of teaching, the students not only learn the non-language subject but also the language of instruction. Marsh & Langé (2000) define CLIL as a dual-focused learning approach in which the language of teaching and content are learned simultaneously. It is necessary that there is an additional language used for teaching the subject. It could be a second language or foreign language but not the mother tongue of the students. Students will have to learn both at the same time, the content and the language through which it is taught.

Purpose of the Study

This research study aimed to find out students speaking proficiency after teaching through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at the primary level. CLIL is a modern and new approach to teaching-learning, and to know how much this approach is helpful in our context. Furthermore, this research highlighted the importance of this new methodological approach in terms of improving speaking skills. This approach gives much space for natural and useful interaction in the classroom which boosts students speaking proficiency. Speaking skill is one of the four major (reading, writing, speaking and listening) language skills. It is a productive skill, through which we produce something. It is considered to be the most essential active skill for learning a foreign language (Khamkhein, 2010). Speaking skill has paramount importance in language learning. Without speaking skills language becomes incomplete and insufficient for proper understanding. Speaking is an essential tool to convey ideas, express feelings and explain different discoveries and matters (Conrad & Dunek, 2012). Through different techniques in this approach like role play and scaffolding activities, students get maximum opportunities for speaking. As a result, the students' speaking proficiency even at the primary level was assumed to improve a lot.

Literature Review

The theoretical framework of this research study is traced to the foundation of bilingual education. CLIL is actually the offshoot of Bilingualism (Costa & Angelo, 2011). While the theoretical framework of this study is based on the CLIL model. Various methods were used in bilingual classrooms to promote target language learning, such as immersion programs in Canada and content-based instruction in the United States of America (Somers & Surmont, 2012). Consequently, the CLIL method came as an alternative to all the bilingual learning programs. Furthermore, the CLIL approach is based on four Cs: content, communication, cognition and culture (Coyle, 2007 & Puffer, 2011).). These four Cs should be kept in mind while planning a lesson through CLIL. In addition, the CLIL method helps in the improvement of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) of the students. Bancroft, Hawton, Simkin, Kingston, Cumming, & Whitwell (1979) described two aspects of language: one is social and the other is academic. Kelly (2006) explained the two types as BICS and CALP. In this way, BICS refers to the social aspect while CALP refers to the academic aspect of the language. Coyle (2002) opines CLIL gives a rich environment and opportunities for BICS and CALP. Inter-cultural understanding takes place and all four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) are focused on in the CLIL classroom. In this way, CLIL is more effective in improving the BICS and CALP of the students (Sudhoff, 2010).

Still, the term, CLIL is a new approach for other countries of the world. Even, in countries like Pakistan very few people have heard about this term. Some may hear this term for the first time. Paradoxically, many educationalists use a second language inside the classroom. Interestingly, Pakistan is a multilingual country which has the English language for non-language subjects as the medium of learning. The country has given more importance to the English language in its educational spectrum. Subjects like Mathematics, General Science,

Geography, History etc. are taught in the English language. Proficiency in English guarantees success in an overall educational career (Rahman, 2004). In our context, subjects are taught in the English language. At the same time, importance is given to English language proficiency. Students have to take their exams in the English language. The future success of students is directly linked to the English language. This approach is necessary to be used in our context, to get command of both, the English language, as well as on the subject. According to Kothuri & Nageswari (2011), CLIL has a positive impact on students' vocabulary learning. In addition, it also helps the learners to acquire the language and content of a particular lesson in a better way. Another study conducted by Vency & Ramgenesh (2013) says that Indian education stakeholders try to use CLIL in classrooms. The researchers tried to investigate this issue in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan.

Research Methodology

A quantitative research approach was used for the present research study. This research was quasi-experimental in nature. The researchers conducted this study on primary school students in KP, Pakistan. The sample of twenty-four students from the fifth class was selected through a convenient non-random sampling technique. The students were divided into two groups having equal numbers, i.e., the control and experimental group. The experimental group was taught for three months through the Content and Language Integrated Learning method, while the control group was taught through the traditional method of teaching. During the treatment, the students were involved in different interactive and scaffolding tasks. In such a way, students were exposed to more meaningful conversations. When students had been taught for three months through CLIL, a post-test was administered by the researchers. For assessing the speaking ability of both groups, a speaking assessment test was applied for data collection in the pre-test. Pre-test was taken from the students to know their level of proficiency of the students. After the pre-test, the treatment was provided to the experimental group only while the control group was taught through the traditional method. Both pre-test and post-test were administered by the researchers. The speaking proficiency test was designed by the researchers. The test consisted of basic and simple questions to judge speaking skills. The test measured the sub-skills of speaking: pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, grammatical accuracy, coherence and cohesion. In this way, data was collected from the students. The results of both groups were compared and analyzed. After the data collection, data were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This software is often used for analyzing, manipulating and presenting data in behavioural and social sciences. The data of both the groups; the controlled and experimental groups were analyzed and compared. Similarly, the results of the pre-tests and post-tests were drawn and analyzed by the given software.

Results

Both the pre and post-test measured the same speaking skills. The sub-skills of speaking: pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, grammatical accuracy, coherence and cohesion were specifically measured. In the following table, the results of the sub-skill of speaking (pronunciation) are given in detail.

Table 1. Comparison of Pronunciation between the Pre-test of the Control and the Pre-test of the Experimental Groups.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control-group results	12	10.35	1.50	.440	6.08	0.541

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Experimental-group results	12	10.94	1.84	.551		

In Table 1, the results show the mean value of the pre-test of the control group and the pre-test of the experimental group is the same. An Independent sample t-test was applied to both groups. The participants of the groups though different from one another were from the same level (class). The results of both groups show that the mean value of the control group was 10.35, while the mean value of the experimental group was 10.94. It suggested that there was no significant difference between the mean values of the two groups. Similarly, the standard Deviation of the pre-test of the control was 1.50, while the standard deviation of the pre-test of the experimental group was 1.84. The t-value of both groups was 6.08. The p-value shows that the significant difference is 0.541. The P-value is significant at 0.05. The stronger the p-value, the less the difference. There is an inverse relation between the p-value and significant difference. The higher p-value showed that there was no significant difference between the pre-test scores of both the groups and the groups were homogeneous. Both groups had the same level of proficiency in the English language. The performance of the participants showed that both groups were homogeneous and had the same level of proficiency in terms of pronunciation. The same groups were tested again for pronunciation after the intervention for the experimental groups and the traditional method of teaching for the control group. The following table shows the results of the post-test of both groups.

Table 2. Comparison between the Post-test of the Control Group and the Post-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control group	12	12.25	1.64	.425	4.80	0.001
Experimental group	12	15.93	2.94	.542		

In above table 2, an independent sample t-test was applied to the score of both groups. The statistical values of the results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group were calculated. The Mean value of the control group was 12.25, while the mean value of the experimental group was 15.93. This showed the difference between the values of both groups. The experimental group performed well after the intervention. The standard deviation of the control group was 1.64, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 2.94. Similarly, the standard error mean of the control group was .425, while the standard error mean of the experimental group was .542. The t-value of both groups was 4.80. The p-value of both the groups was calculated as 0.001 at value 0.05. It means there was a significant difference between the scores in the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group. This showed that intervention with the CLIL method improved the pronunciation of the students.

Table 3. Comparison of Vocabulary between the Pre-test of the Control Group and the Pre-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control-group	12	10.05	1.40	.480	5.90	0.510

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Results Experimental-group	12	10.15	1.64	.561		

In Table 3, an Independent sample t-test was applied to the scores of both groups. The results of the pre-test of the control group and the pre-test of the experimental group are given. The mean value of the pre-test of the control group was 10.05, while the mean value of the pre-test of the experimental group was 10.15. It illustrated there was no significant difference between the means of both the groups. The standard deviation of the control group was 1.40, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 1.64. Similarly, the standard error mean of the control group was .480, while the standard error mean of the experimental group was .561. The t-value was 5.90 and the p-value was 0.510. The P-value was compared at the significance level of 0.05. This showed that there was no significant difference between the results of the pre-test of the control group and the pre-test of the experimental group. But the same groups performed differently in the post-test. The following table shows the results of the post-test of both groups in terms of vocabulary development.

Table 4. Results of Vocabulary in the Post-test of the Control Group and Post-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	P
Control group	12	11.25	1.70	.455	4.86	0.001
Experimental group	12	14.85	2.86	.546		

The above table showed the difference between the scores of both groups. Here, in Table 4, an independent sample t-test was applied to the scores of both groups. The results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group when compared showed a difference. The mean value of the control group was 11.25, while the mean value of the experimental group was 14.85. This showed that CLIL improved the vocabulary level of the experimental group. The standard deviation of the control group was 1.70, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 2.86. The standard error of the control group was 4.55, while the standard error mean of the experimental group was .546. The t-value of both groups was 4.86 and the p-value was 0.001 at a significance level of 0.05. This showed that a significant difference was found in the results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group in terms of vocabulary development while utilizing CLIL at the primary level.

Table 5. Comparison of Fluency between the Pre-test of the Control Group and the Pre-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	P
Control-group results	12	9.95	1.35	.470	6.10	0.520
Experimental-group results	12	10.10	1.65	.572		

The data in the above table shows that there was no significant difference in the scores of pre-tests of both groups.

In Table 5, an independent sample t-test was applied to both groups. The results of the pre-test of the control group and the pre-test of the experimental group are given. The mean value of the pre-test of the control group was 9.95, while the mean value of the experimental group was 10.10. This showed that there is no significant difference between the mean results of both groups. The standard deviation of the control group was 1.35, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 1.65. The t-value of both groups was 6.10 and the p-value was 0.520. As the p-value is compared at a significant level of 0.05, so, there was no significant difference between the two groups. It showed that the participants of both groups were the same in terms of their fluency in English at the primary level. But the fluency of the students increased after treatment with CLIL. The experimental group results showed a difference. The following table shows the results of the post-test for fluency.

Table 6. Results of Fluency of English in the Post-test of the Control Group and Post-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control group	12	11.25	1.60	.435	4.90	0.001
Experimental group	12	14.24	2.90	.548		

The above table shows the difference in the results of fluency in post-tests for both groups. Table 6 above, illustrates the results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group. An independent sample t-test was applied to both groups. The mean value of the control group of the post-test was 11.25, while the mean value of the post-test of the experimental group was 14.24. The mean values of both groups showed clear differences between the two groups. It showed that CLIL improved the level of the students after an intervention. Similarly, the standard deviation of the control group was 1.60, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 2.90. Moreover, the standard error mean of the control group was .435, while the standard error mean of the experimental group was .548. The t-value of both groups was 4.90 and the p-value was 0.001. The P-value represents the significant difference between the two groups. Here, Independent t-test the p-value has an inverse relationship with a significant level. The stronger the value, the less significant the difference. A lower p-value shows a higher level of significant difference. So, there was a significant difference between the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group. It means that CLIL has improved the level of the experimental group after the intervention. CLIL showed a positive impact on the student's fluency and speaking skills. The difference between the control group and the experimental group is indicated by the performance of both groups in terms of fluency in English.

Table 7. Comparison of Grammatical Accuracy between the Pre-test of the Control Group and the Pre-test of the Experimental Groups.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control-group results	12	10.15	1.60	.440	6.14	0.560

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Experimental-group results	12	10.75	1.88	.551		

In Table 7, an independent sample t-test was applied to both groups. The results of the pre-test of the control group and the pre-test of the experimental group are given. The mean value of the pre-test of the control group was 10.15, while the mean value of the pre-test of the experimental group was 10.75. It illustrated there was no difference between the means of both the groups. The standard deviation of the control group was 1.60, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 1.88. Similarly, the standard error mean of the control group was .440, while the standard error mean of the experimental group was .551. The t-value was 6.14 and the p-value was 0.560. The P-value is compared at the significance level of 0.05. This showed that there was no significant difference between the results of the pre-test of the control group and the pre-test of the experimental group. Because the p-value is stronger here, that shows the least difference between the two groups. But the post-test results showed improvement in students in terms of learning grammatical accuracy.

Table 8. Results of Grammatical Accuracy of the Post-test of the Control Group and Post-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control group	12	12.25	1.64	.425	20.80	0.001
Experimental group	12	15.93	2.94	.542		

The above table shows the difference in grammatical accuracy of both groups in post-tests. Here, in Table 8 above, an independent sample t-test was applied to the scores of both groups. The results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group are given. The mean value of the control group was 12.25, while the mean value of the experimental group was 15.93. This showed that CLIL improved the level of the experimental group. The standard deviation of the control group was 1.64, while the standard deviation of the experimental group was 2.94. The standard error mean of the control group was 4.25, while the standard error mean of the experimental group was .542. The t-value of both groups was 20.80 and the p-value was 0.001 at a significance level of 0.05. This showed that a significant difference was found in the results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group in terms of grammatical accuracy.

Table 9. Comparison of Coherence and Cohesion between the Pre-test of Control and Pre-test of Experimental Groups.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	P
Control-group results	12	10.25	1.54	.445	1.297	0.541
Experimental-group results	12	10.95	1.96	.591		

In above table 9, an independent sample t-test was applied. The results showed that the mean value of the pre-control was 10.25, while the mean value of the pre-experimental was 10.95. This showed that there was very little difference between the mean results of both groups. Both the groups performed nearly in the same way. The standard deviation of the pre-test of the control group was 1.54, while the pre-test of the experimental group was 2.17. Similarly, the Std. The error means of the pre-control group was .446 while that of the pre-experimental group was .591. The t value was 1.297. The p-value was 0.541 which shows the significant difference between the two groups. The stronger p-value means that there was no significant difference between the two groups in terms of coherence and cohesion while speaking English. There was no significant difference between the pre-control and pre-experimental groups. This suggests that the speaking proficiency level of the pre-control group and pre-experimental group was the same. So, there is no significant difference in the performance of both groups. In addition, it shows that the participants of both groups have a similar proficiency level in terms of speaking.

Table 10. Results of Coherence and Cohesion in the Post-test of the Control Group and Post-test of the Experimental Group.

Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	P
Control group	12	11.83	1.94	.561	4.80	0.001
Experimental group	12	15.83	2.12	.613		

The above table shows the difference between the scores of both groups for coherence and cohesion in their speaking. In the above table, the results of the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group are given. The table shows the mean value of the post-test of the control group was 11.83, while the mean value of the post-test of the experimental group was 15.83. This difference in the mean value of both groups showed that the participants' knowledge of using coherence and cohesion improved after the intervention. The performance of the experimental group was better than the performance of the control group. The standard deviation of the post-test of the control group was 1.94, while in the post-test of the experimental group, it was 2.12. Similarly, Std. Error Mean value was .561 for the post-control group, while in the post-test of the experimental group, it was .613. The t-test value was 4.80. The p-value was 0.001 which showed a significant difference between the two groups. When the p-value is lower, it shows a higher significant difference in the results of the two groups. Table 10 shows a significant difference between the post-test of the control group and the post-test of the experimental group. The significance level was at 0.05 in both tests. This suggests that there was a significant difference between the post-test results of the control group and the post-test results of the experimental group in terms of using coherence and cohesion in their speaking English.

Discussion

Through the CLIL method, the subject and another language are learnt simultaneously in schools as suggested by Marsh, Coyle and Hood (2010). This new methodological approach when applied by the researcher at the primary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also had the same positive impact in terms of learning the subject and the medium of instruction. The amalgam of subject and language learning made it easy for students to learn language indirectly and subconsciously because both the subject and language are given importance at the same time. It is inferred from the above results that the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method improved the English-speaking skills of students. After the intervention, the participants in the experimental group performed better than the participants in the

control group. All the five indicators of speaking; pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, grammatical accuracy and coherence and cohesion showed a significant difference between the results of the control group and experimental group in post-test results. This approach is more useful for the improvement of basic interpersonal communication skills of the students, which makes sure cognitive academic and language proficiency at the same time (Sudhoff, 2010). A clear manifestation of this was found in the results of the study where Content and Language Integrated Learning had a positive impact on students' speaking proficiency. Simply, CLIL does have a significant impact on students speaking proficiency. It improves the speaking skill of the students. The difference between the results of the control group and the experimental group highlighted the improvement of the participants after the intervention. The CLIL had a positive impact on students' vocabulary learning as indicated in other studies like the study by Kothuri and Nageswari (2011). In almost all the five sub-skills of speaking, the use of CLIL showed improvement after the intervention. It is inferred from the results of this research that the CLIL method has a positive impact on the speaking proficiency of students at the primary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These approaches are even suggested for immersion programs (Vency & Ramgenesh, 2013) and content-based instruction in some parts of the world (Somers & Surmont, 2012).

Conclusion

The current research study was based on the impact of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on students' speaking proficiency in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The study found that CLIL had a positive impact on the speaking proficiency of students at the primary level. The findings of the study showed that all the selected sub-skills of speaking were improved by utilizing this approach. Since this approach gives maximum exposure to the target language through other subjects of knowledge. So, students spent a great amount of time with the English language inside the classroom, which proved advantageous for them. CLIL was found more effective in enhancing the speaking skills of the students at the primary level. The students got involved in various activities in the classroom such as group discussions, pair conversations and mini projects; as prerequisite tasks for science subjects. These activities were always motivating for the students to use the English language with one another. More importantly, students were helped by the teacher when they could not explain some concepts in English. This method was totally different from the traditional method of translation where the teacher plays a central role. Here, the students were given maximum opportunities to express their views in the English language with one another. In such a way, their speaking skill marked a clear difference after teaching through this new method. Similarly, this research study concludes that CLIL is good for the primary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in terms of language learning. As the government has changed textbooks from Urdu to English, the CLIL method proved very useful in KP. The students were interested to learn the English language in science class through the science contents. It is found that the study was very effective for students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The findings of the present study suggest that this approach is very useful for students at a lower level and should be implemented at various levels through various methods. Since it fulfils the requirements of the curriculum and the needs of the learners in the given context, it is highly recommended at lower lever like the primary level.

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