

On CLIL Theory and Its Inspiration for EFL Teaching Reform in College

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Abstract: CLIL is the content and language integrated learning, which adopts the foreign language as non-verbal teaching language for the foreign language is considered as the carrier of professional knowledge. Meantime, the content provides authentic communicative context and media, thus the two mutually promote common improvement. English teaching in the College focuses on the language teaching, consequently, it is difficult to mobilize students' learning enthusiasm for the courses are monotonous; furthermore, students would become complacent or even lose interest in learning. CLIL is used to reach the effect that students can acquire both foreign language skills and subject knowledge as well. Language functions not only as the Learning content, but also as the learning tool, enabling EFL learners to experience the instant benefits and practical significance and the leaning efficiency can be improved as well. Therefore, CLIL is not only a teaching mode, but also a teaching philosophy. This paper aims at analyzing the teaching philosophy of CLIL to offer some teaching models and inspiring hints to English as foreign language instruction.

1. The Research Origin and Current Situation of CLIL Teaching Philosophy

English teaching bears the historical mission of higher education in China, cultivating English professionals with high humanistic literacy, proficient English language skills, solid knowledge of English language and literature, and related professional knowledge. They can use English and their native language to engage in various tasks such as education, management, translation, foreign affairs, foreign trade, research, etc. English teaching plays an important role in curriculum construction. The traditional English classroom is still dominated by teachers, emphasizing the input of language knowledge and emphasizing how teachers teach rather than how students learn. Teachers should change their teaching philosophy, fully and reasonably utilize online teaching platforms and micro course teaching resources, such as Superstar, Wisdom Tree, etc., but many frontline teachers still have not changed their traditional teaching thinking mode, unable to fully and effectively utilize information-based teaching resources, limited to traditional classroom activities, and difficult to effectively implement blended teaching models. Teachers should change their teaching concepts and follow CLIL teaching philosophy, CLIL is not only a teaching model, but

also a teaching philosophy; The CLIL teaching concept has attracted the attention of the education community around the world in recent years. CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) refers to the integrated learning of language and content, which regards foreign language as the teaching language of non-linguistic subjects, making language a carrier for mastering professional subject knowledge. Somers (2021) points out that “CLIL motivation does not consist of ‘L2 learning motivation + subject learning motivation’ because, in their own words, “neither construct is any longer recognized to exist in its own right, but has been assimilated into the construct of an integrated content and language learning motivation” [1]. Knowledge content provides a real communicative context and medium for language learning, and the two mutually promote and improve. The predecessor of CLIL education model is the "immersion" teaching model, and the subject content teaching of "immersion" teaching is actually a process that emphasizes both language teaching and understandable input. A second language is not only the content of learning, but also a tool for learning. Deficient classroom management and poorly adapted materials (Otwinowska, 2013)[2] or teacher-centered and monological lessons (Sylvén, 2017) [3] are pinpointed among the factors responsible for creating an unsatisfactory learning environment. Immersive teaching has transformed traditional and isolated foreign language teaching towards a combination of foreign language and subject knowledge teaching. In the 1980s, some scholars in Europe proposed the CLIL teaching concept based on the "immersion" teaching model. By the mid-1990s, CLIL began to be widely popular in the education field of non-English speaking countries in the European Union. The application of CLIL in Europe was mainly achieved by teaching mathematics, history, and other subject knowledge in foreign languages. Language and subject knowledge are mutually contextual, and students not only acquire subject knowledge, but also acquire language incidentally. One way to learn a foreign language is content-based instruction in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programs (Genesee, 2014) [4].

Many scholars at home and abroad have conducted relevant research on the teaching concept of CLIL. Dallinger et al. (2016) showed that prior achievement was the most important confounder when estimating the CLIL effect on English proficiency. [5] Coyle (2006) [6] believes that the CLIL teaching method improves second language learners' language proficiency by providing authentic and meaningful language input to learners. It enables learners to fully accept understandable language input in a natural context, and through meaningful and interactive learning processes, complete cognitive tasks through mandatory output and other strategies, not only successfully achieving second language acquisition, but also generating strong motivation for language in this natural environment. Furthermore, teacher enthusiasm (Kunter et al., 2013) [7] and self-efficacy (Holzberger, Philipp, & Kunter, 2013) [8] is very important.

2. Current Situation of EFL Teaching in Colleges

Due to the limitations of theoretical understanding, most teachers in colleges still generally use traditional teaching methods such as grammar translation in EFL teaching. A very few teachers use teaching methods and means that reflect new teaching concepts. From the perspectives of teaching effectiveness and students' proficiency in using English, traditional teaching methods are far from adapting to the development of society. In the EFL environment, college students do not fully possess autonomous learning abilities due to individual differences and different learning foundations, and need to be trained under the guidance of teachers.

During the process of learning English, students in colleges generally experience a sense of difficulty. They lack interest in learning, are in a passive learning state, and lack initiative and enthusiasm in learning. Many teachers' outdated teaching methods and various other factors have put the EFL teaching in colleges in a dilemma of stagnation. The EFL English teaching in colleges

is solely based on language as the teaching purpose. Therefore, the common problem with most English courses is that the content is repetitive and monotonous, and students' learning enthusiasm is difficult to mobilize, resulting in many practical situations such as EFL learners' complacency, laziness, decreased learning interest, and insufficient learning motivation. Under the guidance of CLIL teaching philosophy, English courses use English as a carrier to learn knowledge from other disciplines, and put the learned language into practice. EFL learners can experience the "immediate benefits" and practical significance brought by English in a timely manner, thereby improving their learning efficiency. Students learned English mainly at school. In the following years, social media, streaming services for films, series, and music emerged, and students encounter English increasingly outside of school (Sundqvist & Sylvé, 2016) [9].

3. Characteristics and Framework of Teaching Mode under CLIL Teaching Philosophy

David Marsh (2012) [10] believes that the CLIL teaching model has five characteristics, namely culture, environment, language, content, and learning characteristics. According to the characteristics of CLIL, teaching subject knowledge in the target language can deepen learners' understanding of the differences between their mother tongue and target language, cultivate their interest in second language learning, and comprehensively improve language communication skills. Under the guidance of CLIL teaching philosophy, in EFL teaching, CLT, PBL, and TBL teaching modes can be comprehensively applied to design Tailor make courses (specifically designed for students), enabling learners to improve their original learning strategies and comprehensively improve their practical abilities in using English through various teaching methods and classroom practical activities. Instructional quality in English and History based on the core dimensions: classroom management, teacher support, cognitive activation (Fauth et al., 2014) [11].

CLT teaching mode: The CLT teaching method focuses on helping students how to use the target language in different contexts and understand the functional uses of language use. Emphasis is placed on learning how to communicate in the target language through interaction, using real-life language materials in learning contexts, providing opportunities for students to focus on the language and learning process. Students' self-experience has become a crucial part of classroom learning, attempting to combine classroom learning with language usage situations outside of the classroom.

Functional ideation theory, cognitive theory, language acquisition theory and humanism theory are the four main theories of CLT's multi theory combination. CLT emphasizes teaching the form and function of language in a certain context, and emphasizes the learner's subjective factors and psychological environment; Combining individual skill training with comprehensive skill training, with a focus on comprehensive training, ultimately achieving the goal of comprehensive language use in communication. In terms of using CLT, it is necessary to follow the guiding principles of CLT based on practice and individual differences among students, with language function projects as the outline, and improve communication ability as the goal of language teaching. Emphasis should be placed on the interdependence between language and communication, which can further improve students' four basic language skills. Many cross-sectional studies have been conducted on CLIL-effects on students' English skills (Navés and Victori, 2010) [12]. Taking all these into consideration, according to the guiding principle of CLT, according to students' aptitude, teachers should create teaching links in the process that are suitable for the students' level and individual factors of Wuhan Donghu University. The CLT classroom format is flexible and diverse, with rich content, which is conducive to stimulating students' learning interest and strengthening learning effectiveness. Schools usually select appropriate students based on their perception of likeliness to succeed in CLIL (Zydatiþ, 2007) [13].

The guiding principle of CLT is that teachers need to help students overcome anxiety, use English in a relaxed environment, and improve their comprehensive language skills. For instance, online autonomous learning and team cooperative learning are the foundation of classroom teaching activities. Teachers are required to timely release teaching resources such as micro courses, PPTs, and related electronic materials through relevant online platforms, allowing students to learn independently online in advance. Through independent learning and group discussions, students' autonomous learning abilities are fully utilized, promoting their understanding and comprehension of language knowledge. This is different from the usual preparation work. Through team learning, a student-centered learning philosophy has been established, which can fully mobilize students' enthusiasm and prepare for face-to-face teaching. Online self-directed learning places higher demands on students' self-directed learning. Teachers need to teach according to their aptitude, and the content of online teaching should also vary depending on the level and foundation of students, which cannot be generalized. If the difficulty is too high, students will not be able to fully absorb knowledge, and there will be a fear of difficulty, making it difficult to achieve the expected results; If the difficulty is too small, it is not challenging for students and it is also difficult to stimulate their interest in learning. Therefore, the most important part of online self-directed learning is that teachers need to select learning content in advance, combine it with students' actual level, stimulate their interest in learning, and students can better complete self-directed learning tasks through teamwork. On the basis of completing online autonomous learning and team cooperative learning, enter the face-to-face classroom teaching link. The face-to-face classroom teaching process remains a key arrangement in the teaching process. Teachers need to dynamically arrange classroom teaching content based on students' learning outcomes. If the student has already completed the autonomous task well, the teacher does not need to repeat the explanation in class; If the student still has any questions, they need to repeat the relevant difficult points. The importance of face-to-face classroom teaching is self-evident. After students complete group discussions, written materials are formed and presented in front of the entire class: firstly, students have the opportunity to showcase online learning content; secondly, students increase their interest and fun in learning through classroom demonstrations. Sun Xiaoyu thinks that it is important for us to use different modes for the Chinese Education. [14] After the student presentation, the teacher should express their opinions in a timely manner. Finally, the teacher analyzes and explains the language points and key and difficult points in the text to promote students' digestion and absorption. Through classroom demonstrations, teachers can clearly analyze the effectiveness of students' self-learning. Through the continuous cycle of students' classroom demonstrations, teacher reviews, and knowledge consolidation, it promotes students' comprehensive mastery and absorption of language knowledge points. The class participation in CLT learning modes is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Class participation in CLT Learning Modes (The guiding principle of CLT)

Class	Week (90minutes/Two Periods)														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Experimental Class	33.15	34.57	35.34	34.49	35.26	37.49	47.91	39.55	36.42	30.45	36.45	30.29	32.67	35.35	42.20
Traditional Class	17.12	18.25	15.19	11.87	17.30	14.92	25.35	20.17	17.32	13.26	17.22	15.56	15.10	17.55	19.34
Points Difference	16.03	16.32	20.15	22.62	17.96	22.57	22.56	19.38	19.10	17.16	19.23	14.73	17.57	17.80	22.86

PBL teaching mode (project-based learning), emphasizing students' active learning rather than teachers' teaching in traditional teaching; PBL is a student-centered educational approach and principle that requires students to complete a series of individual or collaborative projects, with the help of others (including teachers and learning partners), utilize necessary learning materials, solve real-life problems, and acquire knowledge and skills. It designs realistic tasks that emphasize setting learning into complex and meaningful problem scenarios, solving problems through learners' autonomous exploration and cooperation, thereby learning the scientific knowledge hidden behind the problems, forming problem-solving skills and self-learning abilities. The class participation in PBL learning modes is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Class participation in PBL Learning Modes (The guiding principle of PBL)

Class	Week (90minutes/Two Periods)														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Experimental Class	37.22	33.65	37.39	36.42	33.46	37.60	40.68	37.96	35.45	34.33	37.98	33.45	37.79	35.43	35.65
Traditional Class	17.35	18.29	17.22	13.80	18.45	12.85	18.29	23.65	17.10	14.98	16.19	18.66	17.35	15.87	18.21
Points Difference	19.87	15.36	20.17	22.62	15.01	24.75	22.39	14.31	18.35	19.35	21.79	14.79	20.44	19.56	17.44

The TBL teaching model, also known as Task based Learning, is a teaching approach that teachers guide language learners to complete specific and implementable teaching tasks in the classroom. One key aspect of the application of task-based teaching mode is that teachers should guide students to practice around specific communication and language projects in designing teaching activities based on their actual English proficiency. Teachers design specific and actionable tasks, and students master applied English by completing specific tasks. The task-based teaching model has operability, and the practice process can also be monitored, which is of great help in improving students' English application abilities such as expression and communication. The task-based teaching model reflects advanced teaching concepts and is an effective foreign language teaching method worth promoting. The class participation in TBL learning modes is shown in table 3.

Table 3: Class participation in TBL Learning Modes (The guiding principle of TBL)

Class	Week (90minutes/Two Periods)														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Experimental Class	35.26	35.55	36.32	36.78	35.25	36.27	39.23	36.91	34.41	34.27	36.92	32.29	36.77	34.49	34.46
Traditional Class	16.25	17.27	18.29	17.86	17.40	15.82	18.26	20.28	17.19	15.92	17.11	16.45	17.39	15.68	19.10
Points Difference	19.01	18.28	18.03	18.92	17.85	20.45	20.97	16.63	17.31	18.35	18.47	15.84	19.48	18.81	15.36

Teachers can follow the following Teaching Steps: step 1: The teacher designs a 3–5-minute short dialogue called "warm up", which is an introduction to communicative teaching and takes the 5-minute English conversation between students after class as the scenario. Teaching Step 2: Look

at the picture and speak, 8-10 minutes. Mobilize students to apply English for oral communication practice, and provide effective input for explaining the text in scenarios (non-linguistic contexts). Teachers make full use of textbook images to guide students in describing the images, asking students questions, and designing relevant heuristic questions, in order to mobilize students and help them communicate, setting the scene for explaining the text. Teaching step three: Listening training. By allowing students to listen to the text and deepen their understanding of the pictures and scenes, students can combine interesting pictures and input knowledge in a relaxed atmosphere. Teaching Step Three: Properly explain and analyze the language points in the text. Teaching Step 4: Based on the level of students, perform the following options (retelling, scenario play performance, teacher-student role-playing, group practice) to test the classroom effect and meet students' sense of achievement.

4. The Enlightenment of CLIL Teaching Concept on EFL Teaching Reform in Colleges in China

CLIL is a broad teaching model that includes various teaching methods and modes for foreign language learning. The meaning of CLIL is also diverse, with a focus on using foreign languages for both language learning and thematic content learning, which can be described as "killing two birds with one stone". The feasibility and systematicity of the CLIL teaching model can provide an efficient and scientific approach and strategy for the implementation of the current college English curriculum ideological and political education.

According to the current EFL teaching situation in colleges, the application of CLIL teaching philosophy can promote English teaching. Under the guidance of CLIL teaching philosophy, English courses use English as a carrier to learn knowledge from other disciplines, allowing students to immediately put the language they have learned into practice, enjoy the "immediate benefits" and practical significance brought by English, and increase their motivation to learn the language. One of the goals of English teaching is to guide students in reading English books, journals, and literature related to their major, so that they can further improve their ability to read and translate English scientific and technological materials, and be able to use English as a tool to obtain the information required for their major. The EFL teaching in colleges should develop towards academic English, so that language skills training can serve to improve academic professional knowledge and abilities. English language skills and subject knowledge complement each other to achieve a win-win teaching effect. Surmont et al. (2014) suggested that CLIL-students possess raised metalinguistic capabilities triggered by the usage of two languages which lead to a better understanding of abstract concepts [15]. Meantime, the final examination scores as shown in Table 4 and Table 5, which further demonstrates superiority of CLIL. The test scores analysis of experimental class is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Analysis of test scores of experimental class

Analysis of test scores (Grade 21 English Class 2: 26 students) (Experimental Class)							
Score	90-100(Excellent)	80-89 (Good)	70-79 (Qualified)	60-69 (Pass)	<60 (Fail)	Average score	The standard deviation
Number	4	18	3	1	0	85.42	4.26
Proportion	15.38 %	69.23 %	11.53 %	3.86%	0.00%		

The test scores analysis of traditional class is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Analysis of test scores of traditional class

Analysis of test scores(Grade 21 English Class 3: 26 students)(traditional classroom)							
Score	90-100(Excellent)	80-89 (Good)	70-79 (Qualified)	60-69 (Pass)	<60 (Fail)	Average score	The standard deviation
Number	2	15	6	2	1	81. 79	7. 14
Proportion	7.60 %	57.69 %	23.07%	7.84%	3.80%		

5. Conclusion

After the completion of classroom teaching activities, it is also necessary to analyze the students' mastery level based on their specific performance in the classroom, and arrange offline consolidation and expansion tasks in a timely manner. If students are unable to solve the problems they face in online self-study and group collaboration, they need to consolidate and expand in a timely manner after class. Some students may not fully understand the sentences in the text, while others may not fully understand the meaning of the text. Teachers should also promptly answer students' questions. Currently, the application of online and offline blended teaching models guided by the CLIL concept is becoming increasingly widespread. The maturity and use of 5G information technology have given higher education teaching models a new direction of development. Teachers need to combine the characteristics of the times, keep up with the times, effectively utilize various platform resources, such as micro lesson videos, electronic courseware, etc., continuously enhance students' learning interest, cultivate students' humanistic literacy, train students' English language skills, continuously promote students' intelligence and emotions, and cultivate competitive international talents.

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