



Research Paper

Content Intergrated Language Learning: A Phenomenon in indian Context

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ABSTRACT: Content Integrated Language Learning is gaining much attention recently. It is considered as an alternative method in language classrooms. CILL is otherwise called Content-based instruction. The objective of CILL is mainly twofold: teaching language and teaching content-the specific subject. Though CLIL has the advantage of equipping students with the language skills and the subject matter simultaneously, it has its own limitation in language classrooms. CILL demands more from the curriculum as well from the language teachers. This paper discusses the relevance and the practicality of application in implementing CILL in Indian Context.

Keywords: CILL, Content Based Learning, Language Learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

There has been enormous amount of research going on to see the best possible method of engaging ESL/EFL learners to achieve the maximum results in acquiring English language in order to meet the global demands working towards building knowledge society. CILL is one such method, used mostly in English Language teaching (Dalton Puffer, 2011) as an alternate method to language learning, which emphasis language learning through specific subject matter or specific contents. CILL is otherwise known as Content Based Instruction, English across the curriculum and Bilingual Education. The acronym CILL has taken over the other terminologies. The focus of CILL is twofold: learning English Language and learning specific subject or content. (Coyle, Hood and Marsh 2010). In Europe, The European Commission has come out with an action plan for promoting language learning and linguistic diversity in which CILL is emphasized as one of the methods in engaging young learners (Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 15.11.2007 COM 2007). Similar to Europe, India is linguistically diverse. CILL is at the threshold of classrooms.

What is CILL?

Content Language Integrated Learning is a dual approach in language teaching. CILL is first coined by David Marsh, a University professor in Finland, with an objective of teaching specific subjects in any foreign language. It is an element of bilingual or plurilingual education. Convergence of content and language is the special feature of CILL. In CILL, the content through English language taught will be any specific subject; from general subjects to specific, complex subjects like computer science, business or engineering. For example, a passage from business week will be prescribed as the content for business students or a lesson on Green House Gases for science students or Ampere's Law for Engineering Students. CILL is designed to be taught through a foreign language. English being the lingua franca, CILL is widely used in English language classrooms across the world. It has to be reinforced that CILL is only an approach to language learning and not a separate subject by itself. But, Phil Ball negates this concept and says that CILL is never meant to be a language teaching approach. Rather, it is a form of 'core skill' as referred by David Graddol (1996).

It was first introduced in Europe to inculcate eight lifelong competencies proposed by the European Parliament in 2006. Slowly, the U.S., Canada, and some of the Asian countries introduced CILL in their curriculum. However there is a variation in the way it is implemented. In Canada, CILL is implemented as full immersion programme as well as partial programmes. In Spain, it is practised 50% of the curriculum. In Germany, 20 to 30 minutes of each language class is utilized for CILL.

Phil Ball proposes three dimensions to CILL; conceptual, procedural and linguistic. He asserts that all three dimensions should be employed in CILL in order to make it effective.

Sample

Passage on Fashion

The miniskirt is a skirt whose hemline is high above the knees (generally 200-300 mm above knee-level). Its existence is generally credited to the fashion designer Mary Quant, who was inspired by the Mini Cooper automobile, although André Courrèges is also often cited as its inventor, and there is disagreement as to who invented it first.

Adopted from: bbc.org.uk

The learning takes place at three levels: specific subject, language skills and cultural implication.

Subject specific	Other language skills (lexis, fixed expressions and collocation)	Cultural implication
miniskirt hemline knee-level fashion designer	above the knee(s), credited to, inspired by, invented, cited as, & disagreement as to	miniskirt knee- level inspired disagreement

Features of CILL

Mehisho, Marsh, Frigols (2008) have come out with six specific broad features of CILL: multiple focus, safe learning environment, authenticity, active learning, scaffolding, co-operation. Each main feature has its own sub features. Whereas, Phil Ball specified CILL into two features: Soft CILL - supporting language learning in content class and Hard CILL - supporting content learning in language class. He goes onto redefine the word learning with awareness for a better understanding of CILL. Being aware of the language used in content and being aware of the content used in the language should be integral in learning making the learning meaningful.

How Does CILL Work?

As mentioned earlier, CILL is meant to be taught in a foreign language, which is not the mother tongue of the learners. CILL require collaborative teaching. Language teacher has to become the content teacher and vice versa. However, the practical implication of employing the teachers is difficult. The content or the subject teacher is expected to be well versed in the foreign language they teach and the language teacher is expected to know “more” the content. In both cases, the burden on the teachers is more in a) choosing the authentic content, b) relevancy of the content- relevancy on the level, time, real life implication, and c) knowledge on the subjects.

Outcome Of CILL

CILL is designed to bring out the language skills and the subject knowledge. CILL helps a) to create a conducive environment for learning, b) provides a purposeful language use in classrooms, c) focuses more on meaning than form, d) increases the time allotted to target language and to the content.(Dalton-Puffer,2007; Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2007). Besides these, students will be able to learn vocabulary in their specific subject which will help them in their academic as well as professional performance.

Framework CILL

Zydati’s framework of 4C is widely recommended in CILL curriculum: Content, Communication, Cognition and Culture. Content focuses on the subject matter on which a discussion is built on. Communication focuses on the specific language skills and grammatical aspects of the prescribed content and Cognition focuses on higher order thinking skills, whereas Culture deals about the cultural implication of the content. Coyle. D.(2005), designed a 3A tool for CILL teachers to follow. This 3A tool consists of Analyse, Add and Apply. These are done in stages. Firstly, the content should be analysed for its relevance and quality. Next, the content should be added to the target language, and finally, the content has to be applied.

Education In India

Education system in India is based on 3 types: federal, state and private. The medium of instruction is Hindi, English and other regional languages. The gap between public and private institutions has already made an impact on English medium schools and vernacular medium schools. Furthermore, there are few schools and colleges follow international franchised programmes which complicate the system. The divide between private and public, local and international education create knowledge resources and employment opportunities

unevenly available to students. Some state governments and vernacular language activists strongly against the domination of English. They fear the existing vernacular languages might disappear from India. In spite of all the differences, the demand to learn English and is increasing. The reasons are a) employment, b) social status c) feeling superior over others who do not know English, d) considered as 'elite' society, etc.

English in India

As mentioned earlier, similar to Europe, India is linguistically diverse. India is highly multilingual and every state follows at least 3 languages except Kerala which is closer to monolingual. Despite being the foreign language, English is enjoying the high stature of "lingua franca of India" language or the 'associate' language as David Graddol puts. According to the census data released in 2009 in 10.4% which makes 126 million people in 2010 speak English (David Graddol). However, the proficiency of English is not the same. Those who claim to speak English cannot read and those who read cannot write. The proficiency level of English varies according to socio economic and geographical conditions.

CILL in India

The possibility of integrating CILL in language classrooms is a challenging task in India because of its different types of educational system and diverse cultural background. Though Central and State governments do have the power to update and upgrade the educational system they might face difficulty at policy level. Even so, it might take a long time to implement CILL and by then, CILL might lose its relevance or its popularity. However, Private institutions have their autonomy over their curriculum and so introducing CILL could be possible. However, they have to face certain challenges.

Challenges

The challenges that may possibility affect CILL in India as follow:

- Designing a uniform curriculum for central, state and private institution would be challenging task.
- Each board caters to different social, economical and cultural backgrounds.
- The institutions affiliated to central and state government universities may have to wait at the policy level.
- At tertiary level, only the autonomous institutions will be able to implement CILL.
- The subject teachers are not language specialists. Though they use English to teach subjects in English medium schools, many subject teachers do not know the nuances of English language.
- English teachers may not have in depth subject knowledge
- Selection of the content for the specific subject is more challenging as India is culturally diverse.
- Unavailability of adequate English faculty members in colleges and universities.
- In order to address the two previous points, collaboration between subject teachers and language teachers should take place. How they are going to do?
- English language is not offered in some universities and colleges, even at the first year level as a common subject. So, how to apply CILL?
- It has to be decided whether to integrate CILL at school level or tertiary level?
- CILL is a long term concept. It has to be integrated into a broader curriculum which again calls for policy level changes.
- CILL will create inequality in the quality of students which will add on to the already existing socio, economic divide in employment.

II. CONCLUSION

Though CILL is gaining attention in few countries, it has its own implications from policy level to practical classroom level. Since India is multilingual and multicultural, it is too early to say whether it is good or bad in Indian context. The educators, the central, state and private universities in India have to call for an in depth study on the relevance and the feasibility of CILL.

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