

Implementing Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Through Group Discussion in Reading Comprehension Class

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Abstract

Utilizing CLIL through group discussions has significantly enhanced the learning experience in accounting. To achieve this, CLIL is frequently integrated into reading comprehension classes to directly gather responses from international accounting program students through group discussions, aiding in managing and monitoring student engagement and comprehension. The study aimed to explore students' perspectives on the utilization of CLIL through group discussions. Six students from the international accounting program participated in a reading comprehension session employing the CLIL method through group discussions. Researchers conducted interviews to assess students' views regarding the expectations, benefits, and drawbacks of utilizing CLIL through group discussions. Findings revealed that participants perceived several advantages of using CLIL through group discussions, including improved comprehension of the material, opportunities for students to exchange their understanding, and increased motivation. However, challenges such as students' limited English fluency leading to prolonged discussions and potential misunderstandings of the material were noted. It is suggested that CLIL through group discussions be considered as an effective technique for enhancing reading comprehension.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension; CLIL; Group Discussion

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advances have resulted in many daily activities becoming digital, including reading activities. Because of this, students find it difficult to understand reading. Iyare et al. (2018) showed that independent literature has investigated the integration of technology in classrooms and its impact on reading comprehension, but empirical research linking the two phenomena has typically focused on evidence from developed countries. It is not only developed countries that are affected by technology, but developing countries like Indonesia are also affected. The level of interest in reading in Indonesia is still far below other Asian countries (Pakistyaningtyas et al., 2019). However, reading has a big impact on improving reading comprehension skills. Khan et. al (2020) stated this is an important element in language learning that requires good understanding to achieve the necessary understanding.

Reading comprehension is a very important skill in English, especially for students. They must be able to explore implicit and explicit information from the text by analyzing

each sentence in depth. This allows them to interpret the text carefully and provide appropriate answers to the questions asked. Nurjanah (2018) showed that each student faces unique challenges in taking reading comprehension tests, depending on their level of mastery. Those who have extensive vocabulary knowledge or a good understanding of grammar will find it easier to comprehend reading. However, each student may experience different difficulties, requiring diverse teaching approaches and learning activities to meet their individual needs. According to Febriani et al. (2019), a study involving 70 students majoring in English who had taken the TOEFL exam revealed difficulties in various aspects such as reading comprehension, motivation, background knowledge, strategies, and language proficiency. Satriani (2018) found that one of the obstacles for students in understanding texts is the complexity of vocabulary and grammatical structures that are new to them. The result of reading comprehension difficulties is a lack of time to take exams. Students also stay in the exam room until all the tests are finished and ask for extra time to complete the reading sections (Hezam et al., 2021).

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a language teaching methodology such that the main emphasis is not on 'form', but on 'content'. Coyle et al. (2010) defined that Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an educational approach that emphasizes the use of additional languages in the content and language learning process. CLIL is one of the general approaches used to overcome the current problem of learning two skills simultaneously, namely language skills and content knowledge. In general, CLIL is a term that refers to a bilingual approach to content-based education that has been implemented in various global education systems over the last two decades (Chostelidou & Griva, 2014). The main focus of the CLIL method is to encourage students to learn through language and use language as a learning tool (Diezmaz, 2016). This method was also introduced in response to widespread recognition that presenting curriculum content in a second (target) language can provide benefits in improving subject understanding and target language skills. Sanad & Ahmed (2017) showed that the application of the CLIL method has been proven to improve students' ability to understand reading, expand their vocabulary, and improve their memory in learning English.

Several studies have been conducted to explore how effective the use of CLIL is in the context of reading comprehension in the classroom. By using appropriate methods and materials, CLIL learning has been proven to provide effective learning results. Waluyo et al. (2021) revealed that teachers generally tend to choose to implement a CLIL approach by utilizing online resources in their teaching, and they see it as something useful and valuable to apply in classroom learning. Using the CLIL module can help students improve their reading skills. Bayram et al. (2019) have found that a CLIL teaching approach that emphasizes content helps improve students' reading comprehension. BinSaran (2021) stated that with this approach, learners of English as a foreign language will be exposed to authentic texts where their language skills will develop naturally, helping them achieve learning goals and improving their communicative and linguistic competence. Surdyanto, A., & Kurniawan, W. (2020) also stated that by using relevant and interesting reading material, students are encouraged to be involved in reading texts and exploring the learning presented in the module.

Researchers can explore the variety of learning techniques applied in the CLIL method to gain student interest. Guntur et al. (2021) stated that techniques that can be used include quizzes, group presentations, group teaching, and group discussions. Siregar et al. (2020) found that small group discussions were very useful and had a positive impact on students' reading comprehension. This technique can encourage student participation and create an orderly classroom environment in accordance with learning objectives (Fajar, 2021). The use of discussion techniques along with a small group approach can

help strengthen students' roles as active readers and thinkers. Arisman & Haryanti (2019) stated that signs of an effective discussion are a flowing exchange of information. This is beneficial for students to feel comfortable in conveying their ideas without feeling anxious or embarrassed.

The research mentioned focuses on examining the effectiveness of incorporating CLIL into reading material through individuals, with limited research regarding the advantages and disadvantages of group discussion techniques in this context. Therefore, the research question is as follows.

1. What do students feel when using CLIL with group discussion techniques in reading comprehension?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using CLIL with group discussion techniques in reading comprehension?

The aim of this research is to determine students' perceptions of group discussion techniques in reading comprehension in order to obtain more detailed information about this during learning and to find out whether group discussion techniques are recommended for use. The novelty of this research is that it can find out in detail the feelings, advantages and disadvantages of CLIL by using group discussion techniques in reading comprehension.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This qualitative study adopts a case study design to investigate participants' perspectives regarding the use of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method in reading classes. Recognizing the need for a research strategy that encompasses design logic, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis, the study aims to facilitate a comprehensive and detailed exploration of individuals' views and opinions on the topic. This approach aligns with the principles outlined by Merriam and Tisdell (2015), emphasizing the importance of employing a research strategy that enables thorough examination and interpretation of qualitative data. The selection of a case study design was motivated by the unique context of the research location, where the CLIL method is predominantly utilized in individual courses within the English language department. However, the implementation of CLIL through group discussions remains limited. In light of this context, a case study approach was deemed appropriate for investigating the distinct phenomena associated with the use of CLIL in reading classes. By focusing on a specific case, the study seeks to delve into the intricacies of CLIL implementation within this particular context and uncover insights that may not be apparent through broader research methods. Through the case study design, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges, benefits, and implications associated with the adoption of the CLIL method in reading instruction. By exploring participants' perspectives and experiences, the study seeks to illuminate the factors influencing the effectiveness and feasibility of CLIL implementation within the context of reading classes. Ultimately, the research endeavors to contribute valuable insights to the existing literature on CLIL methodology and inform educational practices aimed at enhancing language learning outcomes.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was carried out at a state university located in East Java, Indonesia, renowned for its international class study program. The study focused on a specific group of participants consisting of six students enrolled in the university's international accounting program. Deliberately selected for their prior exposure to the Content and

Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method, these students had previously engaged in group discussions as part of their reading instruction. Given their familiarity with the CLIL approach, this cohort was deemed ideal for exploring the effectiveness of the method in enhancing language acquisition and content understanding. From this group, four students were randomly chosen to participate in in-depth interviews, providing valuable insights into their experiences with the CLIL method. This sampling strategy aimed to ensure a diverse range of perspectives and experiences among the participants, thereby enriching the qualitative data collected for analysis. Through these interviews, researchers sought to gain deeper insights into the students' perceptions, challenges, and successes in utilizing the CLIL approach within the context of their academic studies. By selecting participants from the university's international accounting program, the research aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of the CLIL method's applicability and effectiveness in a specialized academic setting. The deliberate choice of participants with prior exposure to CLIL methodology further facilitated a focused examination of its impact on language learning and content comprehension. Overall, the research design and sampling strategy were carefully tailored to yield comprehensive insights into the implementation and outcomes of the CLIL approach within the context of higher education in Indonesia.

Instruments

The information in this research was collected through semi-structured interviews with students, which aimed to understand how they viewed the use of the CLIL method in learning to read through group discussions with a focus on in-depth understanding. Semi-structured interviews are a method for obtaining contextual qualitative data without binding the interviewer's ability to ask additional questions based on the interviewer's responses (Aung et al., 2021). These questions aim to understand participants' expectations and perceptions regarding the use of the CLIL method in reading material through group discussions. Interviews were conducted in reading classes. The participant's primary language, and transcriptions were carefully made from audio recordings that had been approved by the participants. Participant anonymity and data confidentiality were guaranteed.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis served as the primary methodological framework employed in this study to meticulously examine and document recurring patterns, commonly referred to as themes, identified and substantiated through recorded interviews. Following the approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), the transcription and subsequent analysis of all interview data adhered to the principles of thematic analysis. This methodological choice was grounded in its suitability for capturing the rich and nuanced insights conveyed by participants, thus enabling a comprehensive exploration of the research topic. The process of theme development unfolded through a deliberate and iterative engagement with the data, guided by a commitment to understanding and contextualizing participants' perspectives. By systematically identifying, categorizing, and interpreting themes that emerged from the interviews, researchers aimed to construct a coherent "thematic map" that encapsulated the key findings and insights gleaned from the data. This rigorous approach facilitated a nuanced and in-depth analysis of the collected data, shedding light on the complexities and nuances inherent in participants' experiences and perspectives. To operationalize Braun and Clarke's method effectively, several key steps were followed. Initially, the data underwent a process of coding, wherein segments of text were systematically labeled and categorized based on their thematic content. Subsequently, these coded segments were synthesized and grouped together to identify overarching themes that encapsulated common patterns or trends across the dataset. Finally, an

iterative process of data review and refinement ensued, wherein researchers critically examined and revisited the data to ensure the identification of salient themes aligned with the research question.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Various topics emerged after analyzing the interview recordings using the thematic analysis coding method, as shown in Table 1. The following explanation explores various ideas covering the positive and negative aspects of the system. This research aims to explore students' expectations regarding the use of CLIL through group discussions in learning to read.

Table 1. Perceptions of International Class Accounting Students in Using CLIL through Group Discussions

Categories	Themes	Example
Student Feelings	Enthusiasm	Utilizing CLIL in group discussions should be enjoyable, innovative, and engaging.
	Efficiency	Lecturers can explain the material through the CLIL reading module.
Advantages	Enjoyable	CLIL has a "language curriculum" method through "content".
	Motivation to learn English	Students become more enthusiastic about learning accounting material using the CLIL method through group discussions.
Disadvantages	Comprehensibility	Material explained with CLIL through group discussions is easier to understand compared to individuals
	Takes a long time	Group discussions took a long time because some students were not fluent in English.
	Misunderstandings in interpreting material	Misunderstanding of the material because students lack basic English.

The students conveyed their views on employing CLIL via class discussion groups as a means to enhance involvement, enjoyment, creativity, and overall enthusiasm towards learning reading comprehension content. Students have studied accounting courses very difficult. Because students' English skills are lacking and the terms used are different from English in general. Students feel confused in understanding reading material. CLIL can help students to interpret difficult reading passages.

After doing the reading comprehension class, the participants explained the advantages and disadvantages of using CLIL through group discussions. All participants clearly expressed that the use of CLIL through group discussions significantly improved comprehension and understanding of the learning material. The researchers noted that factors that can have a positive impact from using CLIL through group discussions are that it can help to increase vocabulary and make it easier to understand learning material. This is because not all students majoring in international accounting come from international high schools. Apart from that, lecturers' consistent involvement not only provides material in the form of articles but also reading modules. Integration of learning

tools such as modules used with CLIL can help improve students' understanding of the material provided.

The implementation of CLIL through group discussions as an English language learning teaching technique has shown a positive influence on student motivation. One of the key factors is that the use of CLIL is used to overcome the problem of learning two skills simultaneously, namely language skills and content knowledge. Students feel more motivated and interested in learning the language more widely. Apart from that, the benefits of CLIL through group discussions can help students to exchange ideas regarding the content of the module reading. The following is an example of students' opinions regarding the advantages of using CLIL through group discussions in reading comprehension classes.

"Using CLIL through discussion groups can be effective. The lecturer provides literature reading modules. If there are students who do not understand the material, we can exchange ideas about the material or problems discussed to gain new knowledge and understanding."

"Before using the CLIL method, I had difficulty understanding reading because my basic English was not fluent. I studied using a module that uses Indonesian to make it easier for me. However, because learning in class uses English, over time, English modules are used more often to make it easier for me to understand accounting terms. However, after the lecturer applies the CLIL method with group discussions, learning can be made more effective. This is because the CLIL method indirectly combines language and integrated content so that it can save time and educational resources because in the same time period it can improve the "language curriculum" through the "content" that we learn."

However, research findings suggest that using CLIL through group discussions can be a significant barrier. Some students in my class have low English skills. This results in errors in reading comprehension because we understand things differently. In addition, group discussions require a long time. This is because there are group members who are not fluent in English. Because of these problems, the process through group discussions requires human resources who have a basic understanding of English. The following is an example of students' opinions regarding the disadvantages of using CLIL through group discussions in reading comprehension classes.

"The disadvantage of the CLIL method and the group discussion technique is that sometimes we understand things differently, for example, after I read material A, I found the explanation of the material to be "A", but after reading material A, I thought it was "B", there was a misunderstanding in the meaning of the material."

"Using the CLIL method with group discussion techniques is quite time consuming in a collaborative activity. This is because there are group members who are not fluent in English."

According to the interview findings, it seems that all students anticipate that utilizing CLIL via group discussions will be enjoyable, imaginative, and captivating. Additionally, they desire that instructors effectively integrate and elaborate on the material within the CLIL approach. Students also articulated a range of benefits and drawbacks encountered during the learning journey.

Discussion

As stated in the findings, using CLIL with group discussions can make it easier for students during learning. The modules used in accounting learning use many words that students do not understand. The English used is different from English in general. Students

hope that learning with the integration of content and language in reading comprehension can facilitate learning because students think this method can help students understand learning modules. This is due to the relevance of the material discussed in class to the student's major and the real situation around him (Rosyida & Effendy, 2022). These results indicate that CLIL can help students to interpret difficult reading passages. The English used is different from English in general. Students can improve their English skills by increasing their vocabulary. Hajri et al. (2021) indicated that CLIL-based teaching has a beneficial effect on increasing students' vocabulary. These methods and techniques also can facilitate faster adaptation to the application of curriculum. This is as stated by Hamidavi et. al (2016) CLIL is an innovative learning method that has a significant and positive impact on the teaching and learning process in the educational context. Applying CLIL during learning will create an environment where students are required to activate skills such as critical thinking, practicing problem solving, maintaining effective communication, and collaborating in teams (Mukadimah & Sahayu, 2021).

In addition, the findings of the research showed that using CLIL with group discussion techniques helps students to understand in detail the meaning of reading material. This is because having group discussions can help students to discuss the material. Rahmat & Jon (2023) explained that group discussion allows them to interact with fellow students rather than just participating in class discussions with the teacher as the main guide. Group discussion can help students to exchange ideas regarding the content of the module reading. Every member who has difficulty understanding the text will get help from friends who understand to make it easier to complete the task (Maslina et al., 2020). This activity increases students' excitement and motivates them to study English texts with great enthusiasm.

While the findings of this study shed light on the advantages of employing the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method with group discussions, they also underscore certain drawbacks associated with this approach. One notable limitation highlighted in the research is the challenge posed by prolonged usage of group discussions within the CLIL framework. According to Lestari (2019), the extended duration required for group discussions can impede the efficacy of the CLIL method, as students may require additional time to formulate their thoughts and engage in meaningful discourse. Moreover, the findings suggest that misunderstandings may arise during group discussions, further complicating the implementation of the CLIL method. Qurays et al. (2023) emphasize that many students exhibit low fluency levels in their speech, often resorting to the use of unnecessary words and lacking clarity of purpose when engaging in discussions. Such challenges can hinder the effectiveness of group discussions as a pedagogical tool within the CLIL framework, as they may impede students' ability to effectively communicate and comprehend content in the target language. These findings underscore the importance of carefully considering the limitations and challenges associated with the use of group discussions in conjunction with the CLIL method. While group discussions offer valuable opportunities for collaborative learning and language development, educators must be cognizant of the potential obstacles that may arise, such as the need for extended timeframes and the risk of miscommunication. Addressing these challenges requires thoughtful instructional design and pedagogical strategies aimed at fostering effective communication and maximizing student engagement within the CLIL context.

Considering both the advantages and disadvantages identified in the study, researchers advocate for the utilization of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) with group discussions in the context of reading comprehension instruction. While certain drawbacks, such as prolonged discussion times and potential misunderstandings,

may arise, strategies can be implemented to mitigate these challenges and maximize the benefits of the approach. One recommended strategy for addressing the disadvantages associated with CLIL and group discussions is the provision of facilitators to guide students during reading interpretation sessions. Facilitators can play a pivotal role in clarifying misunderstandings, providing additional explanations, and fostering productive discourse among students. By offering guidance and support, facilitators can help students navigate complex reading passages more effectively and ensure that discussions remain focused and fruitful.

Furthermore, the division of tasks and allocation of specific time frames for discussion can help streamline the process and prevent discussions from becoming excessively lengthy. By breaking down reading tasks into manageable segments and setting clear time limits for each discussion session, educators can ensure that students engage in focused and efficient collaborative learning experiences. Additionally, the use of translator applications can serve as a valuable tool for facilitating comprehension and communication, particularly when students encounter language barriers or unfamiliar vocabulary during reading activities. By implementing these strategies, educators can harness the benefits of CLIL and group discussions while minimizing the potential drawbacks associated with the approach. By providing targeted support, structuring discussions effectively, and leveraging technology to facilitate communication, educators can create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that promotes language development and enhances reading comprehension skills. Ultimately, the integration of CLIL with group discussions represents a promising approach for fostering meaningful learning experiences and advancing students' proficiency in reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION

CLIL can help students understand reading modules. CLIL can also facilitate faster adaptation to curriculum implementation. This method shortens the time for learning reading comprehension because it can hone students' abilities through the material studied in a short time. Students can use group discussion techniques to collaborate in discussing reading comprehension material using the CLIL method. The technique of learning reading comprehension and group discussions using the CLIL method is practical in the sense that students can understand the terms practically. This is because the group discussion technique used in the CLIL method allows students to increase their vocabulary and makes it easier to discuss reading comprehension material. The difficulty that students experience when discussing in groups using the CLIL method is when students have group friends whose English skills are not fluent so that students are less able to interpret the learning material. Lack of group discussions can also cause students to misunderstand the explanation of the material. Obstacles when conducting research are due to the limited number of students in the study program.

RECOMMENDATION

To encourage further research, it is necessary to conduct research investigations into the use of the CLIL method with discussion groups with a larger number of participants in the context of undergraduate reading learning. This research only focuses on limited student perceptions regarding the use of CLIL with group discussion techniques. Therefore, it is recommended for future researchers to investigate student and lecturer perceptions regarding the use of CLIL with discussion groups with a larger number of participants in reading comprehension.

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