



The Effectiveness of using Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Approach to enhance EFL Student Teachers' Cultural Awareness

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بحث مشتق من الرسالة الخاصة بالباحثة

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using the CLIL approach to enhance EFL student teachers' cultural awareness. The study followed the pre-post experimental one group design. The participants were 38 third year students enrolled in English Language section, Faculty of Education, Benha University. To identify the most important and required EFL cultural awareness dimensions for the participants, a checklist of EFL cultural awareness was developed and validated by a number of EFL jury members. A pre-post EFL cultural awareness test was developed. Students were pre-tested, to determine their entry level of EFL cultural awareness. Then, they were trained through the suggested CLIL-based program on how to develop their cultural awareness dimensions (knowledge and situations) and trained adequately through its main four phases: processing the text, identification and organization of knowledge, language identification and tasks for students). The test was re-administered on the participants to assess the progress in their level of performance in EFL cultural awareness. Findings of the study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.01 in the pre-post assessment of EFL cultural awareness in favour of the post-assessment.

Keywords: CLIL approach, EFL cultural awareness, knowledge and situations.

المستخلص

يهدف هذا البحث الى معرفة مدى فاعلية استخدام مدخل التعلم التكاملي للمحتوى واللغة فى تنمية الوعى الثقافى باللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية لدى طلاب الفرقة الثالثة شعبة اللغة الانجليزية بكلية التربية جامعة بنها ولقد تم استخدام التصميم التجريبي ذو المجموعة الواحدة (قياس قبلى بعدى) . ولقد بلغت عينة الدراسة ثمانية وثلاثون طالب من طلاب الفرقة الثالثة شعبة اللغة الانجليزية وتم تصميم قائمة بالمهارات اللازمة لهؤلاء الطلاب لمعرفة مدى توافر هذه المهارات لديهم؛ كما تم تحكيمها بواسطة عدد من المحكمين الخبراء فى مجال المناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية وتم تصميم اختبار قبلى بعدى لقياس هذه المهارات لدى العينة. تم اختبار الطلاب قبلها لتحديد مستوى ادائهم القبلى وتدريبهم خلال البرنامج على كيفية تنمية محددات الوعى الثقافى (المعرفة والمواقف). ولقد تم إعادة تطبيق الاختبار على الطلاب لقياس مدى التقدم فى مستوى ادائهم ولقد اثبتت النتائج عن وجود فرق فى اداء الطلاب قبل وبعد تطبيق الاختبار وذلك لصالح الاختبار البعدى مما يدل على مدى فاعلية استخدام مدخل التعلم التكاملي للمحتوى واللغة فى تنمية الوعى الثقافى باللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية.

كلمات مفتاحية: التعلم التكاملي للغة والمحتوى، الوعى الثقافى باللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية.

Introduction

English language is central to learning :without it people cannot make sense or understand the world around them. In a global world, a common language through which everyone can easily communicate is required. In this setting, English not only belongs to those who speak it as their native language, but to everyone who uses it to communicate with the world. As a result, the importance given to this global language is increasing day by day.

Teaching a foreign language is more than developing in learners linguistic and communicative competence in the target language. It also involves transmitting knowledge about the target culture or the country in which the language is spoken. Liddicoat; Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler (2003:45) define culture as "a complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, behaviours, practices, rituals and lifestyles of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artifacts they produce and the institutions they create". Moreover, Brown (2000: 177) defined culture as "the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time.

Englebert (2004:37) asserted that, "to teach a foreign language is also to teach a foreign culture". It is the context within which people exist, think, feel and relate to each others. It is the "glue" that binds a group of people together. It can be defined as a blueprint that guides the behaviour of people in community and is incubated in family life. It governs our behaviour in groups, makes us sensitive to matters of status, and helps us to know what others expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectations. Thus, culture helps us to know how far we can go as individuals and what our responsibility is to the group.

Clearly, the relationship between language and culture is a complex one. This is evident in what Agar, (1994: 28) has described: "Culture is in language and language is loaded with culture." In fact, the use of a given language reflects the cultural values of the society in

which the language is spoken. As language and culture are two inseparable entities, the incorporation of cultural issues in teaching is inevitably recommended. In contexts where there is no immediate access to the target culture, teachers and the materials being used play a significant role in supplying cultural information. In addition to teachers and realia, textbooks and context can also play a crucial role in supplying students with rich cultural information.(Brown,1994)

Cultural awareness and developing cross-cultural awareness in teaching has been an active area of research in recent decades. In EFL classrooms, as we teach the language, we would automatically teach culture. The forms of address, greetings, formulas, and other utterances found in the dialogues or models our students hear and the allusions to aspects of culture found in the reading represent cultural knowledge. Gestures, body movements, and distances maintained by speakers should foster cultural insights. Students' intellectual curiosity is aroused and satisfied when they learn that there exists another mode of expression to talk about feelings, wants, needs and when they read the literature of the foreign country. The culture of people refers to all aspects of shared life in a community. A language is learned and used with a context, drawing from the culture distinctive meanings and functions which must be assimilated by language learners if they are to control the language as native speakers control it.(Moate,2010:40)

Naqeeb (2012) has provided a solid foundation for the EFL teachers by empowering them and introducing them to the essentials of developing cultural literacy in EFL classrooms. The researcher equipped the EFL teachers with cultural literacy and, at the same time, sets the American Access Micro scholarship Program as a model of cultural literacy promoting program in the EFL classroom. The researcher concluded his paper by recommending those in charge to adopt this new philosophy in teaching English Language as a foreign and consider the basic prerequisites in advance.

EFL Learners should be exposed to these distinctions as much as possible in the foreign language teaching classrooms. Therefore, the reasons for familiarizing learners with the cultural components should be to; develop the communicative skills, understand the linguistic and behavioural patterns both of the target and the native culture at a more conscious level, develop intercultural and international understanding, adopt a wider perspective in the perception of the reality, make teaching sessions more enjoyable to develop an awareness of the potential mistakes that might come up in comprehension, interpretation, and translation and communication. (Cakir, 2006:155)

Zhao, (2010 :102) declared how to foster students' cross-cultural awareness in EFL teaching. The aim of foreign culture acquisition, as he believes, should be (1) familiarizing EFL learner with the mundane situations of the English speaking countries—that is, their customs and habits, life-styles, generally-accepted worldview, etc.; (2) enabling EFL learners to comprehend the interaction between language and such social variables would affect people's way of speaking and conduct; and (3) cultivating the students' ability to objectively assess the culture of the target country.

Karbinar and Guler (2012) aimed at describing the attitudes of language teachers towards teaching culture. The researchers reported that there was no significant difference between native and nonnative English speaking teachers and between the teachers working at a state or private universities in terms of overall attitude towards teaching culture. The higher participation rate in 'training courses on teaching culture' and 'professional development activities' was thought to result in a more positive attitude towards the integration of culture.

Consequently, some researchers conducted studies to develop EFL cultural awareness through using several strategies, programs and approaches, The Content and Language Integrated Learning Approach (CLIL).

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an instructional approach that supports the development of language and content concurrently. This approach involves education, research and innovation, essential processes for the current knowledge world demands. Thus, CLIL becomes a new form of education on which: learners are active participants in their learning development ;process of inquiry and other critical thinking skills are the means to develop problem solving tasks ;and teachers are facilitators in order to empower the learners (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010:55). This indicated that the convergence between both the language and the content aims to develop language skills in the target language as well as develop specific knowledge beyond concepts of the subjects (Gacha, 2014:54).

Moreover, educators need to be aware that using a foreign language when teaching content incurs in language learning since structures, vocabulary, and pragmatics, among other linguistic features are implicit in the topic being taught. The foreign language acts as a vehicle for learning. Therefore, educators plan integrating not only content and language but also procedures by stating how content will be addressed in such a way that it is meaningful for every learner ,no matter their proficiency level (Bonces, 2012:180)

CLIL is an umbrella term as it combines many strategies, with a variety of regional heritage, minority, and /or foreign languages. So, it differs from other approaches in the following points:

- 1- CLIL is adopted mainly for teaching and learning of foreign language -not second language. Thus, it is implemented in nations where students share the same first language and do not have the opportunity to be exposed to the target language outside the classroom.
- 2- It is an integrated approach, where both language and content are integrated in a balanced way.
- 3- CLIL is a cross-curricular approach to learning and aims to enable learners to use their critical thinking in order to integrate, use and transfer newly acquired knowledge

- 4- The integration of content and language with cognition and culture is at the core of CLIL pedagogy. Apart from language and content-related skills, CLIL also promotes thinking skills as well as cultural awareness and intercultural communication skills.
- 5- It promotes a cooperative learning and learners are expected to; earn in pairs or groups, (Dalton Puffer, 2011:185; Darn, 2006:5; Lorenzo, Casaland Moore, 2009: 420; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009: 8, and Pistorio, 2010: 8)

Barris (2013), asserted that although researchers tend to indicate that CLIL benefits their students in both content and language, the methodological resources and guidelines available for teachers to apply it are restricted to the 4CS framework that was presented by Coylee,1999. This framework has been the most common theoretical guidance for planning CLIL lessons and constructing materials because of its integrative nature. It is built on the following principles: Coylee, 2006 :5)

Content:

Content matter is not only about acquiring knowledge and skills .It is about the learners creating their own knowledge and understanding and developing skills (personalized learning)

Cognition:

Content is related to learning and thinking cognition. To enable the learners to create their own interpretation of content, it must be analyzed for its linguistic demands.

Communication:

Language needs to be learned which is related to learning context, learning through that language, reconstructing the content and its related cognitive processes. This language needs to be transparent and accessible interaction in the learning context is fundamental to learning. This has implications when the learning context operates through the medium of a foreign language.

Culture:

The relationship between culture and language is complex. Intercultural awareness is fundamental to CLIL, its rightful place is at the core of CLIL.

Cultural awareness is fundamental to CLIL approach. As people's willingness to cooperate significantly increases, the better they know each other. This means that students need to learn about other countries. CLIL can offer a significant contribution to that goal. Students do not only have to learn how to talk about key issues in the foreign language. They also need to become aware of the hidden cultural codes and the appropriate linguistic and non-linguistic means and strategies to address them (Meyer, 2010:52).

Docyle, Holmes & King (2009:25) asserted that CLIL Approach is an appropriate vehicle for exploring the links between the language and culture identity, examining behaviours, attitudes and values. It involves contexts and content which enrich the learners' understanding of their own culture and those of others. CLIL approach strengthens the cultural awareness and understanding and promotes global citizenship. CLIL actively seeks to promote intercultural understanding by planning and providing rich opportunities to investigate and reflect on different cultures, traditions, values and behaviour. It also involves learning content through another cultural lens. This helps learners to redefine the familiar, offering multiple perspectives and developing knowledge of and understanding about issues of shared global relevance. Themes like these provide an appropriate arena to develop citizenship addressing challenging ideas and fostering a human rights perspective on individual roles and responsibilities.

Logioio (2010) investigated how storytelling through a CLIL approach can contribute to raising cultural awareness. The program includes traditional stories and tales from a diversity of cultures, as a springboard for activities that promote cultural awareness through the teaching of content derived from the stories in English as a second

language. Research data shows that CLIL approach is an effective treatment to raise learners' interest and curiosity for other countries and cultures as well as to facilitate reflection about their own values, practices and beliefs. Students became interested in discovering about other countries and respective cultures. The process covers the stages of discovery, critical thinking, self-reflection, acceptance and appreciation of a diversity of cultures through the context of English language learning. The instructional strategies through this approach allowed students to encounter the foreign cultures with a spirit of research by arousing their curiosity to explore the unknown. By becoming aware of other cultures depicted in the stories students also developed understanding of their own culture and how it is seen from outside.

Context and Statement of the Problem:

In spite of the importance of the EFL cultural awareness, there is a lack among third year students enrolled in English language section, Faculty of Education, Benha University.

Ibrahim (2005) asserted that it is very important to develop the cultural awareness to EFL students. He investigated the effect of using a training program to develop first year secondary students' cultural awareness and critical reading comprehension skills. Mohamed, (2011) agreed with him when he conducted a study to investigate the effect of using a program based on functional grammar on enhancing EFL pre-service teachers' grammatical competence and cultural awareness enrolled in English section at the faculty of education, Minia University.

Elsabagh (2012) stated that it is very important to expose students to the fact that every person's thinking, language and conduct is at least in part based on cultural influence, improving their knowledge of the cultural significance of certain words and phrases in the target language. The researcher conducted a study to investigate the effect of web-based projects on enhancing the cultural awareness and writing competence of first year experimental school students. Moreover, EFL students should understand

and evaluate in a critical way the common stereotypes and generalizations about the target culture .It is the role of the teachers to make students excited and curious about the target culture and to encourage them to be more understanding of its native people. There is a lack in the EFL research that tackled that problem. So, there is a need for effective programs and approaches to help those students. (Shehata, 2013 and Ali, 2015)

To document the problem of the present study, a pilot study was conducted by the present study researcher to identify the cultural awareness among third year students enrolled in the English language section. The participants were 20 students of the third year enrolled in the English language section, Faculty of Education, Benha University. The EFL cultural awareness test adopted from Shehata (2013). It consisted of three parts; part one for testing students' cultural knowledge, part two for evaluating students' attitudes towards the American culture through an attitude scale and part three for evaluating students' cultural behaviours through a situation reaction test.

The findings of the pilot study revealed that about 80% of students were not able to respond to the EFL cultural awareness dimensions on the EFL cultural awareness test. Therefore, there was a low level of third year students' cultural awareness. So, this study proposes a program based on "CLIL" for developing EFL cultural awareness among third year students enrolled in the English language section , Faculty of Education, Benha University.

Questions of The Study

To face this problem, the present study attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the EFL cultural awareness dimensions required for EFL students teachers, Faculty of Education, Benha University?
- 2- What are the features of the suggested program based on (CLIL) approach?
- 3- What is the effectiveness of using CLIL for developing the student teachers' EFL cultural awareness?

Procedures of the Study

- 1- Reviewing the literature related to EFL cultural awareness.
- 2- Reviewing the literature related to CLIL approach.
- 3- Developing the instruments of the study.
- 4- Submitting the instruments to the jury members to verify their validity.
- 5- Modifying the instruments in the light of the jury's feedback.
- 6- Determining the effectiveness of the CLIL approach through:
 - a) Drawing the participants randomly from third year students English language section students.
 - b) Administering the instruments of the study before implementing the CLIL-based program.
 - c) Developing the CLIL-based program and experimenting it to determine its effectiveness in developing EFL cultural awareness.
 - d) Administering the instruments of the study after the implementation.
 - e) Tabulating data of the study and conducting statistical analysis for them.
 - f) Interpreting the findings of the study.
 - g) Providing the recommendations and suggestions.

Instruments and Materials of the study

The following instruments and materials were prepared by the present study researcher to measure the dependent variables of the study:

- a) An EFL cultural awareness checklist .
- b) An EFL cultural awareness test.
- c) A suggested CLIL-based program.

5.1-Validity of the EFL cultural awareness test :

To estimate the cultural awareness test validity, the test was submitted to five Jury members who have travelled to UK or USA in order to judge the and suggest changes to some items that indicate traditions which were no longer existed or practiced. The jury members asserted that the test items were valid.

To estimate the construct validity of the EFL cultural awareness test, the correlation coefficient between the total score for each dimension and the two parts of the test and the total score of the whole test, was calculated. The correlation coefficient and significance level are presented in Table (1)

Table (1): Construct validity of the EFL cultural awareness test

Test Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance
Cultural knowledge	.94	0.01
Cultural situations	.61	0.01
Total	.90	0.01

As shown in Table (1), the correlation coefficient of the EFL cultural awareness test was statistically significant at 0.01. Therefore, the test was internally consistent and valid.

5.2- The Reliability of The EFL Cultural Awareness Test:

The EFL cultural awareness test was piloted on a random sample of third year, English language section, Faculty of Education , Benha University (n= 30). Then, the test was administered again to the same group after two weeks. The Pearson correlation between the two administrations was .90 which is statistically significant at the 0.01. This means that the EFL cultural awareness test is reliable. (see Table 2)

Table 2 : Reliability of EFL Cultural Awareness Test

Test Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance
Cultural knowledge	.90	0.01
Cultural situations	.87	0.01
Total	.90	0.01

5.3- Scoring the EFL Cultural Awareness Test :

The EFL cultural awareness test consisted of 32 MC questions. Each correct answer is given one mark. Therefore, the total score of the test is 32 marks.

Findings and Discussion of the Study

6.1 Findings of the first hypothesis:

The first hypothesis states that "there is a statistically significant difference between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural knowledge in favour of the post-assessment."

In order to verify this hypothesis, the one sample t-test was used to compare the participants' mean scores in the EFL cultural knowledge in the pre- and post-administration of EFL cultural awareness test. Table (3) presents the students' mean scores, standard deviation and the level of the significance of the participants in the pre- and post-assessment of the EFL cultural knowledge.

Table (3): T- test differences between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural knowledge.

Dimension	Assessment	N.	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	D.F	Sig.
cultural knowledge	Pre-	38	11.4	2.6	19.0	37	0.01
	Post-	38	20.6	1.0			

This table shows that the mean scores are **11.4** for the pre-assessment and **20.6** for the post-assessment. The standard deviation is **2.6** for the pre-assessment and **1.0** for the post-assessment. As shown in the table (3) "there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the participants mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural knowledge in favour of the post-assessment. Thus, the first hypothesis was accepted.

6.2. Findings of the second hypothesis:

The second hypothesis states that "there is a statistically significant difference between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural situations in favour of the post assessment."

In order to verify this hypothesis, the one sample t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the participants' in the EFL cultural situation on the pre- and post-administration of EFL cultural awareness test. Table (4) presents the participants' mean scores, standard deviation and the level of the significance in the pre- and post-assessment of the EFL cultural situations.

Table (4): T- test differences between the mean scores of the participants in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural situations.

Dimension	Assessment	N.	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	D.F	Sig.
cultural situations	Pre-	38	6.1	1.7	10.1	37	0.01
	Post-	38	9.3	0.7			

This table shows that the participants mean scores are **6.1** for the pre- assessment and **9.3** for the post-assessment. The standard deviation is **1.7** for the pre-assessment and **0.7** for the post-assessment. As shown in the table (13), "there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural situations in favour of the post-assessment. Thus, the second hypothesis was accepted.

6.3. Findings of the third hypothesis:

The third hypothesis states that "there is a statistically significant difference between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of the cultural awareness in favour of the post-assessment ."

In order to verify this hypothesis, the one sample t-test is used to compare the mean scores of the participants in the overall cultural awareness on the pre- and post-administration of EFL cultural awareness test .Table (5) presents the students' mean scores, standard deviation and the level of the significance of the participants in the pre-and post-assessment of the overall cultural awareness.

Table (5): "T" test differences between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural awareness.

Dimension	Assessment	N.	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	D.F	Sig.
cultural awareness	Pre-	38	17.6	3.4	20.2	37	0.01
	Post-	38	30.0	1.3			

This table shows that the participants' mean scores are 17.6 for the pre -assessment and 30.0 for the post assessment. The standard deviation is 3.4 for the pre-assessment and 1.3 for the post-assessment. As shown in Table (5),"there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the participants mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural awareness in favour of the post-assessment. Thus, the third hypothesis was accepted.

Concerning the first hypothesis,

the findings revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the participants in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural knowledge dimension in favour of the post-assessment as the t-value was 19.08 which is statistically significant at 0.01. This means that the participants achieved more improvement in their cultural knowledge. This findings confirmed the first hypothesis statistically.

The CLIL approach proved to be effective in developing the participants' EFL cultural knowledge. This development can be attributed to various factors. The researcher used authentic and comprehensible input to develop students' cultural knowledge. She invoked interest and curiosity about the target culture. Moreover, she encouraged the participants' awareness to recognize that social factors like age, gender, social class and ethnicity influence how people use the language. After that, the researcher presented to the participants the case that language use changes according to whether the particular situation entails an ordinary routine for people of the target culture or is an unusual and unexpected situations. Furthermore, participants through sessions made sense of why people of the target culture choose to behave in certain ways in certain situations, and ultimately the dimension acquired.

The researcher focused on two major components of culture in the program sessions: big-C culture and small-c culture. She focused on the big C in the sessions as it includes factual knowledge about the fine arts such as music, painting, theatre and film. She also used the concept of small c of culture as it comprised a wide multiplicity of aspects, many of which are inter-connected, including attitudes, customs, social relationships, politeness conventions and the uses of physical space and body language, that were very interesting to students and that was consistent with Clopek (2008:10).

Cultural knowledge is fundamental to CLIL approach. Its right place is at the core of CLIL approach. The CLIL-based program offered a significant contribution to that goal through its sessions . As the participants learned how to talk about key issues in the foreign language and became aware of the hidden cultural codes and the appropriate linguistic and non-linguistic means and strategies to address them, that was consistent with Meyer (2010:20).

Concerning the second hypothesis,

the findings revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the participants mean scores of the in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural situations in favour of the post-assessment as the t-value was 10.15, significant at 0.01. This means that the participants achieved more improvement in their cultural situations where the t-value is significant .This finding confirmed the first hypothesis statistically.

The CLIL approach proved to be effective in developing the participants' EFL cultural situations. This development can be attributed to various factors. The researcher used the dynamic view in teaching culture that required the participants to actively engaged in culture learning. They were encouraged to view cultural facts as situated in time and space and variable across time, religions, classes and generations. The dynamic approach in teaching through the sessions of the program enabled students to have knowledge of their own culture and understanding of their own culturally-shaped behaviours, that was consistent with Liddicoat (2002).

As culture is one of the 4Cs of CLIL approach. So the sessions of the program helped students to be aware speech acts, connotations, etiquette, food and drinks, customs and traditions, dressing arts and literature and provided them the chance to act out being as a member of culture. The researcher used different resources to manipulate EFL cultural aspects. Literature was important part of the program sessions as it presented values that underline the behaviour of characters and points of view of the authors. The participants through the program sessions were not asked to judge these values but to understand them and their dimensions of the cultural aspects. The instructor depended on understanding these values and presenting them to students by selecting literally works of interest and proficiency appropriate to students. Both cultural content and meaning can be approached with them. Stories and plays in drama were the materials that researcher used as they contain real speech and characters interacting in the plot. The researcher guided students to reveal cultural patterns hidden in these works.

Concerning the third hypothesis,

the findings revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the participants' mean scores in the pre- and post-assessment of EFL cultural awareness in favour of the post-assessment as t-value was 20.28 which is significant at 0.01. This means that the participants achieved more improvement in their cultural situations. This finding confirmed the third hypothesis statistically

The CLIL approach proved to be effective in developing the participants' EFL cultural awareness. This can be attributed to the development of its two dimensions: knowledge and situations as presented in the previous two hypotheses.

Thus, the CLIL approach proved to be effective in developing the participants' EFL cultural awareness. This improvement can be attributed to the development of its two parts in the previous three hypotheses concerning knowledge, situations and overall cultural awareness dimensions.

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