*Corresponding Author's Email: esentuna@gmail.com
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Nexus from Practical Kitchen to Work: CLIL

Emel Akay[1*], Burcu Yılmaz[2]
[1] Anadolu University, Tourism Faculty, Turkey https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4322-1615
[2] Anadolu University, Tourism Faculty, Turkey https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2994-8201

Abstract

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an innovative educational approach integrating subject matter instruction with language learning objectives. Originating in Europe during the mid-1990s, CLIL has gained prominence for its dual-focused educational model, emphasizing content mastery and language proficiency. This paper explores the foundational principles of CLIL, encapsulated in the 4Cs framework: Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture. It highlights the multifaceted benefits of CLIL, including enhanced language skills, improved cognitive abilities, heightened cultural awareness, and increased student engagement. A significant focus of this paper is the application of CLIL in vocational education especially in the gastronomy and the culinary arts programs. Given the globalized nature of today's workforce, proficiency in English is crucial for vocational students across fields such as tourism and hospitality. By integrating English language instruction with vocational training, CLIL improves language skills and aligns educational outcomes with industry requirements, thereby enhancing employability. This paper demonstrates the effectiveness of CLIL in real-world settings, underscoring its potential to revolutionize vocational education. By preparing students with the dual competencies of vocational expertise and language proficiency, CLIL equips them for successful careers in an interconnected world.

Keywords: gastronomy, CLIL, language teaching, vocational education

1. Introduction

Gastronomy and culinary arts manifest the fusion of culture, creativity, industry, and culinary mastery in a global context. In this versatile field, effective communication serves as the key to success. In this sense, English proficiency emerges as an important factor and offers individuals important opportunities for professional advancement and intercultural interaction.

English language proficiency in gastronomy and culinary arts is valuable in many ways. Firstly, in a globalizing age, culinary establishments increasingly cater to a diverse clientele consisting of individuals from different language backgrounds. English proficiency overcomes language barriers, allowing gastronomy professionals to interact with customers

from around the world, thus expanding global market reach (Smith, 2018). Moreover, in the field of global gastronomy, effective communication with colleagues, suppliers, and customers seems to be very important. English proficiency empowers individuals to express ideas, convey culinary concepts, and use complex culinary terminology with precision and clarity, thus promoting strong collaboration and operational efficiency (Jones & Lee, 2020). In addition, chefs are inspired by different culinary traditions to create innovative gastronomic experiences, developing innovation and intercultural interaction. English proficiency unlocks creativity and innovation in the industry by facilitating the exchange of ideas, culinary techniques, and cultural nuances (Brown, 2019). Moreover, in an increasingly competitive job market, English proficiency serves as a distinguishing factor that increases employability and career opportunities for gastronomy professionals. Individuals proficient in English are in a better position to pursue international career opportunities, intern abroad, and participate in prestigious culinary competitions and events (Garcia et al., 2021).

For these reasons, educational institutions, which are aware that English proficiency has an important impact on success in the field of gastronomy, should give priority to language learning in the prepared training programs. Incorporating English language modules, workshops and immersive experiences into the curriculum equips students with the language skills and cultural competence necessary to succeed in global gastronomy environments (Smith & Johnson, 2020). In addition, this sector involves interaction, collaboration, and authentic communication scenarios. Promoting a learning environment considering these factors can further improve language acquisition outcomes (Brown and Garcia, 2022).

2. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an innovative approach that combines content learning with language acquisition and offers a dual-focus educational experience (Marsh, 2008). It represents an educational approach where non-linguistic subjects are taught through a foreign language. CLIL creates a more engaging and authentic learning environment by embedding language learning in a subject-specific context. The CLIL method always has a dual focus: content and language. Under the influence of a driving force such as socio-economic globalization, CLIL programs have become a mainstream education model in many European countries in recent years due to efforts to gain employment (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010; Gefaell & Unterberger, 2010). CLIL is not a subcategory of English Language Teaching (ELT). It has a dual focus on both language and discipline-specific content. In the CLIL method, the target foreign language is used meaningfully to teach and learn content that is related to a specific curriculum, and language acquisition is achieved at a predetermined level (Wewer, 2017). It aims to provide students with features such as mobility and employability in a globalizing society (Yang, 2016). The CLIL approach gives more importance to content related to the field, and therefore teachers need to specialize in both the field and language teaching.

CLIL is based on several core educational theories and principles. The first of these is Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) proposed by Cummins (1984). According to this theory, he distinguishes between basic interpersonal communication skills and cognitive academic language proficiency. CLIL aims to develop cognitive academic language proficiency through academic content. Secondly, in the Bifocal Learning theory, CLIL supports the simultaneous learning of subject content and language skills. This dual focus increases cognitive engagement and contextualizes language use. Additionally, with its roots in Constructivist Learning Theory and the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978), CLIL emphasizes the importance of social interaction and structure in learning. Students

construct knowledge through meaningful activities and collaboration. Drawing on Hymes (1972) in Communicative Competence theory, CLIL emphasizes integrating communicative competence, language functions, and real-world communication into academic contexts (Fortanet-Gómez & Bellés-Fortuño,2008).

2.1 Key Principles of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL is characterized by its dual-focused educational approach, where simultaneous emphasis is placed on content mastery and language acquisition. It is a pedagogical approach that integrates the teaching of content subjects with the learning of a second language. This methodology is underpinned by several key principles that make it distinct and effective. The four primary principles are encapsulated in the 4Cs Framework: Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

1. Content: The principle of Content in CLIL refers to the subject matter or the specific curricular topics that students are expected to learn. Unlike traditional language classes where the focus is solely on language skills, CLIL places equal importance on mastering academic subjects through the medium of a foreign language. This dual focus ensures that students gain substantive knowledge in fields such as science, mathematics, history, or vocational subjects while simultaneously improving their language proficiency (Coyle et al., 2010).

2. Communication: Communication in CLIL emphasizes the use of language as a tool for learning and interaction. This principle highlights the importance of students not only learning about the language but also using it actively to communicate ideas, participate in discussions, and collaborate on projects. Effective communication involves the development of both receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) within the context of the subject being taught. Language is thus learned in a meaningful and practical context, enhancing both fluency and accuracy (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

3. Cognition: Cognition pertains to the development of thinking skills necessary for learning. CLIL encourages students to engage in higher-order thinking processes such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. By challenging students to think critically about the subject matter and solve complex problems, CLIL promotes cognitive development alongside language acquisition. This principle aligns with Bloom's Taxonomy, which categorizes cognitive skills from basic recall of facts to advanced critical thinking and creative problem-solving (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

4. Culture: The principle of Culture in CLIL focuses on fostering intercultural understanding and global citizenship. As students learn subjects through a foreign language, they are exposed to different cultural perspectives and practices. This cultural awareness helps students develop a broader worldview and appreciation for diversity. It also prepares them to function effectively in a globalized world, where cross-cultural communication and collaboration are increasingly important (Coyle et al., 2010).

Effective CLIL practice requires the integration of these four principles in a balanced manner. For instance, a science lesson in a CLIL setting would involve teaching scientific concepts (Content), using English to explain experiments and discuss findings (Communication), encouraging students to hypothesize and analyze results (Cognition), exploring scientific contributions from different cultures (Culture). This integrated approach ensures that students develop a comprehensive set of skills that are applicable both academically and in real-world contexts. The 4Cs Framework thus serves as a robust foundation for designing and implementing CLIL curricula that meet educational and linguistic goals simultaneously.

2.2 Benefits of CLIL

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) offers a multitude of benefits that enhance both language proficiency and subject matter understanding. This dual-focused approach is particularly effective in fostering comprehensive educational development. Below are the detailed benefits of CLIL, supported by academic research and practical applications.

1. Enhanced Language Skills: CLIL significantly improves language skills by providing students with meaningful contexts in which to use the target language. Unlike traditional language instruction, which often isolates language learning from content, CLIL immerses students in the language through subject-specific content. This immersion promotes natural language acquisition, where students are exposed to and use the language in a variety of real-life contexts. Research has shown that CLIL learners tend to outperform their peers in traditional language classes in terms of language proficiency, particularly in listening and speaking skills (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

2. Improved Cognitive Skills: The CLIL approach encourages the development of higher-order thinking skills. By integrating cognitive and language tasks, CLIL promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Students are challenged to understand and process complex information, analyze data, and articulate their thoughts clearly in the target language. Studies have demonstrated that CLIL fosters cognitive benefits such as improved memory, greater mental flexibility, and enhanced problem-solving abilities (Marsh, 2002).

3. Cultural Awareness: One of the core principles of CLIL is fostering intercultural understanding. Through exposure to different cultural perspectives embedded in the curriculum, students develop a broader worldview and a deeper appreciation for diversity. This cultural awareness is crucial in today's globalized society, where cross-cultural communication and cooperation are increasingly important. CLIL programs often include cultural content that helps students understand and respect different cultures, thereby promoting global citizenship (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

4. Increased Student Engagement and Motivation: CLIL tends to increase student engagement and motivation. The integration of language and content makes learning more relevant and interesting for students. They see the practical application of their language skills in various subjects, which can enhance their interest in both the language and the subject matter. Furthermore, the use of authentic materials and real-life scenarios in CLIL classes can make learning more dynamic and enjoyable, leading to higher levels of student motivation and participation (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008).

5. Enhanced Employability: In vocational education, CLIL can significantly enhance employability by equipping students with both professional and language skills. In fields such as tourism, hospitality, engineering, and IT, proficiency in English or other foreign languages is often essential. CLIL provides students with the language skills needed to access up-to-date resources, communicate effectively in international settings, and perform job-related tasks competently. This dual skill set makes CLIL learners more competitive in the global job market (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

The benefits of CLIL are most effectively realized when its principles are fully integrated into the educational system. This involves careful curriculum design, professional development for teachers, and the use of authentic and engaging materials. By doing so, educators can create a learning environment that supports both content mastery and language proficiency, ultimately preparing students for success in an interconnected world.

2.3 CLIL in Vocational Schools

Vocational education focuses on equipping students with specific skills and knowledge necessary for various trades and professions. In an increasingly globalized world, proficiency in a foreign language, especially English, is essential for accessing up-to-date resources, understanding international standards, and effectively communicating in global industries (Marsh, 2002). CLIL addresses this need by integrating language learning into vocational subjects, thus ensuring that students gain both technical and linguistic competencies. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has proven to be an effective educational approach not only in general education but also in vocational education and training (VET). The integration of language learning with vocational training is particularly beneficial for preparing students for the demands of the global workforce.

In vocational education, CLIL is particularly relevant as it integrates practical skills with language learning, essential for global industries. English, being the lingua franca in many fields, is crucial to access current resources and effective communication. Implementing CLIL in vocational subjects such as tourism and hospitality can significantly enhance employability by providing practical language use in professional contexts (Dalton-Puffer, 2007). Below is a detailed exploration of the use of CLIL in vocational schools, supported by relevant academic research and practical examples.

Effective implementation of CLIL in vocational schools requires several key strategies. Firstly, vocational curricula should integrate language objectives with vocational content, aligning with industry needs and standards. This requires collaboration between language and vocational educators to develop relevant and cohesive learning materials (Mehisto et al., 2008). In addition, teachers need to be equipped with CLIL methodologies and strategies. Professional development programs should focus on enhancing both language teaching skills and vocational expertise. Training should also include the use of authentic materials and real-life scenarios to make learning more engaging and practical (Coyle et al., 2010). Also, effective CLIL teaching strategies include the use of project-based learning, collaborative tasks, and problem-solving activities. These approaches not only promote language learning, but also develop critical thinking and teamwork skills, which are essential in vocational education (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

Despite its benefits, CLIL faces challenges such as a shortage of qualified teachers, limited resources, and resistance to change. To solve these kinds of problems, institutions that adopt the CLIL methodology should provide continuous professional development for teachers to familiarize them with the principles of this approach and to guide them in their implementation processes. In addition, these institutions should take the initiative to develop CLIL-specific resources. Besides, with support from all stakeholders, CLIL should be gradually implemented (Cenoz, Genesee, & Gorter, 2014).

As can be seen, CLIL offers a dynamic and integrative approach to education, particularly in vocational settings. By enhancing both vocational skills and language proficiency, CLIL prepares students for the global workforce. Future directions include ongoing research, methodological innovations, and the expansion of CLIL across diverse vocational fields (Marsh, 2002).

2.4 Use of CLIL in Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Programs

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is particularly well-suited for gastronomy and culinary arts programs. By integrating language learning with professional training, CLIL enhances students' technical skills and language proficiency, making them more competitive in the global culinary industry. The culinary industry is inherently

international, with chefs and culinary professionals often required to work in diverse cultural settings and communicate in multiple languages. English, in particular, serves as a lingua franca in many culinary environments, facilitating access to global culinary literature, recipes, and techniques. Implementing CLIL in culinary arts programs ensures that students develop the language skills necessary to thrive in this international context while mastering the culinary skills essential for their profession (Marsh, 2002).

CLIL can be effectively integrated into various aspects of culinary education. For instance, students can learn how to write and interpret recipes in English. This involves understanding culinary terminology, units of measurement, and cooking instructions. For instance, a lesson could focus on creating a traditional dish from an English-speaking country, with students writing the recipe and instructions in English. This exercise helps students familiarize themselves with the language used in culinary contexts while applying their technical cooking skills (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). Besides, food safety and hygiene are critical components of culinary training. Teaching these subjects in English ensures that students understand international standards and regulations. Students can learn key terms and practices related to food safety, such as proper storage temperatures, cross-contamination prevention, and sanitation protocols. Role-playing scenarios, such as conducting a kitchen inspection or handling a food safety breach, can enhance both language and practical skills (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008). Last but not least, culinary techniques can be taught in English through practical demonstrations. For example, a chef instructor might demonstrate how to prepare a complex dish, explaining each step in English. Students would then replicate the dish, following the instructions provided. This method reinforces technical skills and language comprehension simultaneously. Video recordings of these demonstrations can also be used as learning materials for further practice (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

2.5 Implementation Strategies for CLIL in Culinary Arts Programs

Effective implementation of CLIL in culinary arts programs requires careful planning and a range of instructional strategies:

1. Curriculum Design: Language objectives should be integrated with culinary content. For example, modules that focus on specific culinary skills and related language terminology can be created. It should be ensured that language learning goals align with culinary training outcomes (Coyle et al., 2010).

2. Teacher Training: Culinary instructors should be trained in CLIL methodologies to effectively combine language teaching with culinary instruction. Professional development programs should focus on enhancing both language proficiency and pedagogical skills.

3. Authentic Materials: Authentic culinary materials, such as recipes, menus, and food safety manuals should be used as learning resources. This helps students learn a language in context and understand its practical application in the culinary field.

4. Collaborative Learning: Collaborative projects and group activities where students can practice language skills while working on culinary tasks should be encouraged. For instance, students could work in teams to plan and execute a themed dinner event, with each team member responsible for different aspects of the project in English (Mehisto et al., 2008).

5. Real-Life Scenarios: Real-life scenarios and role-playing exercises should be incorporated into the curriculum. For example, students could simulate a restaurant kitchen environment, taking on roles such as head chef, sous chef, and server, and communicating in English throughout the process.

3. Conclusion

As a result, in the context of a globally interconnected labor market, proficiency in English has become increasingly vital for vocational students in sectors such as tourism and hospitality. Integrating English language instruction with vocational training through CLIL enhances linguistic competencies while ensuring that educational outcomes align with industry standards, thereby improving employability. This study elucidates the efficacy of CLIL in applied settings, emphasizing its transformative potential for vocational education. By equipping students with both vocational skills and advanced language proficiency, CLIL fosters preparedness for successful careers in a globalized economy. The use of CLIL especially in gastronomy and culinary arts programs offers significant benefits by integrating language learning with professional training. This approach not only enhances students' culinary skills, but also equips them with the language proficiency needed to succeed in the global culinary industry. However, it should be kept in mind that effective implementation of CLIL requires thoughtful curriculum design, teacher training, the use of authentic materials, and collaborative learning strategies.

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