

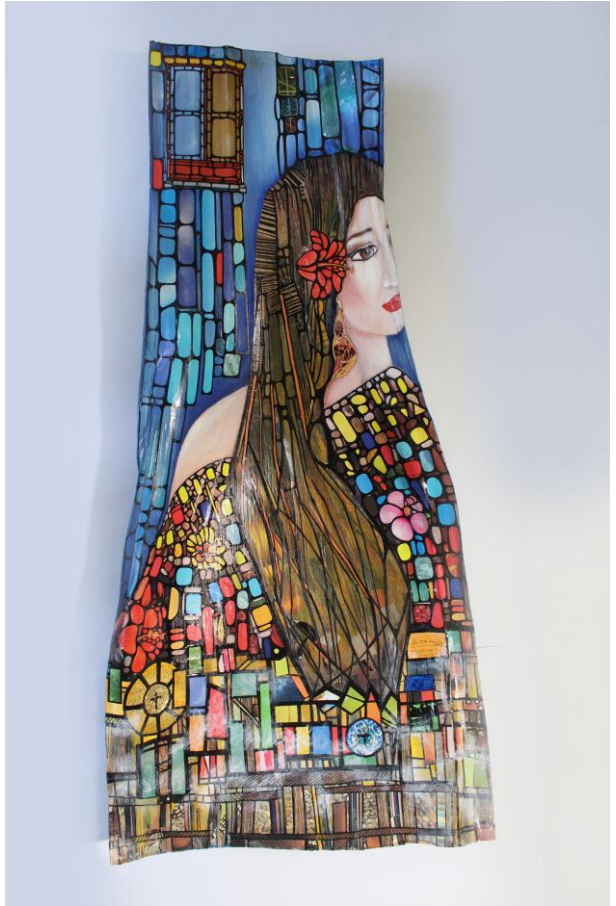
# opción

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# **Collaborating 4Cs framework model and case study-based learning for enhancing language competence**

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## **Abstract**

This paper is a preliminary report on the outcomes of a CLIL (Content and language integrated learning) program interwoven with case study-based learning carried out during an EAP (Employee assistance program) course in a military training center. The case study base learning is an active learning approach which facilitates resourceful contextual information and opportunities for learners. The study shows that upon completion of the CLIL program interwoven with Case study-based learning projects rewarding outcomes in terms of content acquisition, language skills and interdisciplinary competence. In conclusion, military training centres need to create an educational training system where language education is complement of each other.

**Keywords:** Contextual Acquisition, Military Context, Skills.

## Colaborar con el modelo de marco 4C y el aprendizaje basado en estudios de caso para mejorar la competencia lingüística

### Resumen

Este documento es un informe preliminar sobre los resultados de un programa CLIL entrelazado con el aprendizaje basado en estudios de caso realizado durante un curso de EAP en un centro de entrenamiento militar. El aprendizaje de la base del estudio de caso es un enfoque de aprendizaje activo que facilita información contextual y oportunidades para los alumnos. El estudio muestra que una vez finalizado el programa CLIL entrelazado con proyectos de aprendizaje basados en estudios de casos que recompensan los resultados en términos de adquisición de contenido, habilidades lingüísticas y competencia interdisciplinaria. En conclusión, los centros de entrenamiento militar necesitan crear un sistema de entrenamiento educativo donde la educación de idiomas se complemente entre sí.

**Palabras clave:** Adquisición contextual, Contexto militar, Habilidades.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Flipping through the pages of history one could note that English language education has always been an increasing interest of discussion for stakeholders, teachers and students in Malaysia. The wind of change in the education policy of our country has brought numerous changes in the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) education policy of English language teaching and learning. In conjunction with these changes language officers in military training institutions who are assigned the duty of language curriculum planning, embark into

developing materials and designing courses to meet the organizational needs which are continually changing. In the Malaysian Armed forces, English plays an important role in the life and professional career of every soldier. English Language teaching and learning remains a central focus and goal in the area of education and professional training for military personnel. In fact, teaching English is a priority and decisive value across all other disciplines which contributes to achieving the quality of higher or military education and career achievements (Isayeva, 2014; Aldarwish, 2015; Awoonoraziaku, 2015; Ayodeji and Olajoke, 2016; Chellia, 2018; Koumje, 2018; Gu, 2018).

Under the UN flag, our soldiers are assigned tasks as military observers, staff officers and commanders commanding forces comprising of multinationals. In multinational military operations, communication and inter-comprehensibility is an important issue for effective participation and success of military operations. In such a multinational military theatre, the English language is the lingua franca ensuring unified communications and planning of actions for effective military operations. In view of this, English language in the MAF has been given tremendous attention in educating our soldiers to be global warriors and be partners in global military roles. The language teachers in the MAF are continuously looking into a variety of approaches and methods of ESL teaching and learning which could be effective to meet the needs of the learners and to meet the demands of their profession in a multipurpose situation. CLIL as an educational approach blends content and language-based instruction to develop linguistic abilities using language to impart content knowledge and

using content to learn the language. The interwoven of Culture, Communication, Content and Cognitive (4Cs) with case study-based is a pedagogical innovation adapting the theory of higher thinking skills (Bloom taxonomy) to organize and systematically develop communicative competence. The case study based learning is an active learning approach which facilitates resourceful contextual information and opportunities for learners to develop more possible ways to learn and use the language and knowledge practically. CLIL pedagogy interwoven with case study-based learning can be an effective educational practice which most effectively promotes interdisciplinary practices and develops effective content learning and language skills which are applicable in enhancing military training and language competence (Haseeb, 2018).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. The 4Cs of CLIL**

There has been a lot of researchers and discussions on CLIL learning globally. CLIL is implemented in many European nations for the last decade as an important tool for achieving policy aims towards creating a multilingual population in Europe Eurydice. Doiz, reported from a faculty perspective, CLIL program may have the following benefits: improve in individual language proficiency, academic gains in access to teaching materials, and classroom benefits in terms of students' motivation and commitment. According to Coyle et al.

(2010), the 4Cs framework of CLIL is estimated to be a comprehensive approach what has made it distinct from other educational approaches with which it is often associated. The four dimensions or components of CLIL are:

a. Content – the subject matter taught in the target language. It shows improvement in knowledge, skills and comprehension related to specific.

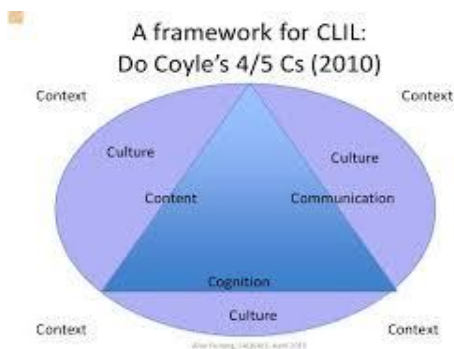
Areas of the curriculum.

b. Communication – using the language to learn and learning to use the language. It involves communicative activities and cognitive process.

c. Cognition – thinking skills to facilitate learning.

d. Culture – to comprehend the role of English language in the own context as well as globally.

According to Coyle et al. (2010), the four components are like building blocks interdependent and should be considered as holistic as shown in the figure below.



Based on the above framework of CLIL, contextualization of culture by Do Coyle, provides avenues for teachers to employ a case study-based learning approach and adapting materials from the present situations and target situations for effective learning. Stern (2009) views cultural context as an interactive platform to respond to the needs of the learners. He further elaborated that these needs comprise of the following:

- a. Individual needs
- b. Society needs
- c. Interactive needs of both individual and society.

Munby (1978), developed a sociolinguistic model which pointed out that content of purpose-specific language programs should specify the needs of target communicative competence. The profile of target competence needs could comprise communicative events (everyday briefings, discussions, dialogues, tasks and duties), settings,

genres, contents and channels of communication. This brings to the attention about the level of English language ability required for communication for a particular situation.

## **2.2. Case Study**

From the aspects of teaching and learning Bruner (1991), pointed quite a range of benefits from using case study method in the language classroom: case study employs active learning, involves self-discovery, builds a critical thinking capacity and is enriched with contextual information. Kerber highlighted that using the case study method in language teaching advocates a systematic development of the following steps:

1. Problem identification
2. Application of analytical tools for accumulating facts,
3. Arriving at a logical conclusion
4. Decision making.

He added that by employing contextual extraction steps in ESL classroom, students develop higher order thinking skills which obviously contribute towards creative language learning and language use. According to Ellet (2007), context is a crucial factor in case



studies which entails a specific role for the reader providing standardized focus, interpretation and yield valuable insights. Oxford, claims that contextual strategies in language teaching enable learners to associate new words, phrases or expressions in a meaningful context for them to remember and use them effectively. The content analysis and the critical thinking skills employed in case study-based learning contribute to learning a potential skill that constitutes interdisciplinary thinking and learning.

### **2.3. Military Cultural Context**

Culture constitutes shared beliefs, norms and values that guide the daily life of the group and desired aims is in life (Zahari, 2013). These beliefs, norms and values are passed down to the current generation through rituals, stories and symbols. The cultural context in learning comprises of the elements such as the setting, teachers, students, instructional methods, materials and the assessment approaches (Byram, 1998). Byram (1998) further claimed that language learning has no function if it is independent of the context in which it is used. Another view emphasized by Halliday (1995) that language instruction, should provide avenues for learners to exposed in the target cultural context to develop skills for effective communication.

An important part of contextual learning displayed by Keyser (1991) draws out that contextual learning takes credits in enhancing motivation, contextual use of new words and gain in vocabulary. According to Liddicoat et al. (2003), language integrated into cultural

context creates meaning: comprehend, creating and interpreting of meaning is solely lies within the cultural framework created by the context. They further elaborated that learning to communicate an additional language effectively includes the awareness of the interwoven of culture and language in relation to the context it is used. Thus, comprehending military cultural context, the planner can go beyond the level of behavior to analyze the kind of tasks needed in order to foster action competence which engages learners to function, especially the so-called higher thinking skills (analysis, evaluation and creativity).

#### **2.4. Interdisciplinary competence**

Jacobs (1989) pointed out that interdisciplinary curriculum intentionally integrated knowledge, methodology and language from more than one discipline to analyze a central theme, issue topic or experience. He further explained that the aim of this approach is to utilize knowledge and skills coming from other disciplines for a specific reason rather than just transferring the knowledge and skill of the discipline. According to Klein (1990), unlike multidisciplinary, which is additive, interdisciplinary is integrative: Knowledge of different disciplines is contrasted and changed by integration. He further added that this integration or synthesis of knowledge is seen as the defining characteristic of interdisciplinary. In view of the definition of interdisciplinary learning, the introduction of case study- based learning and CLIL which involves problems skills, critical thinking and integrating subject content from other disciplines is most likely to develop interdisciplinary knowledge and think skills. This is by virtue of the fact that, in contrast to narrow interdisciplinary thinking,

broad interdisciplinary thinking requires the integration of disciplines across sciences (Newell, 2007).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

**Research Subject:** The study focuses on the linking of the 4Cs components of CLIL and Case study-based learning towards the content acquisition, language skills and interdisciplinary skills. The participants were cadet officers who had enrolled in an EAP in NDUM. There were 84 cadets from 4 faculties as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Course	Research Subjects N=Students
Human Resource	22
Strategic Studies	23
Medical	20
Engineering	19
Total	84

#### 3.1. Procedure

When the survey was administered, the students had received 24 hours (8 weeks) of instruction in an EAP course for 14 weeks with 3 hours of contact hours per week. The CLIL programme of one hour each week is included in the EAP course on the basis of (2+1). Therefore the CLIL

programme compliments with the EAP programme to produce the desired results. The survey was conducted upon completion of the CLIL program to find out students’ perception of Case study and CLIL in terms of the content acquisition, language skills and interdisciplinary skills.

### 3.2. Question design

The instrument used for the students in this study is a 5 point Likert Scale. Section A focused on students’ perceptions on CLIL pedagogy and section B focused on the case study method towards language development. The table below sums-up the percentage of students’ responses to the questions. Mark your choice by choosing one number from 1 to 5: 1- Strongly agree, 2- agree, 3- not sure, 4- disagree, and 5- strongly disagree.

Table 2. Findings of students’ survey in percentage (%)

<b>Section A</b>		1	2	3	4	5
1	The teacher Provides training in careful reading which build confidence and reading skills activities	39.7	43.6	9.6	6.6	0.5
2	The teachers uses bilingualism, translation skills and contextual clues to make me understand better.	19.2	64.8	8.6	7.4	0
3	I developed my reading abilities and use analytical tools to gather information.	23.9	52	10	9	5.1
4	I was able to develop my grammar and use it appropriately	6	20	7	41.7	25.3
5	I developed my vocabulary skills.	35.5	45.6	7.8	9.2	1.9
6	The teachers provides me with supportive materials in each stage of the Speaking stages Fully guided and partially.	31	53	5.2	9.8	1

<b>Section B</b>						
1	Case study method enables me to use the analytical tools to generate facts and ideas from the text	31	53.6	10.7	2.9	1.9
2	Case study materials are rich in context and usually based on real events which are relevant and interest me.	33	35.2	22.9	7.7	1.2
3	Case study method builds my critical thinking capacity which helps me in group discussion and communication activities	33.2	47.6	12.6	4.8	1.8
4	I developed to work in groups which results in teamwork in the classroom	12.4	56.5	20.2	8.9	1.9

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. Content comprehension**

In terms of benefits for students' language, 19.2 % strongly agreed and 64.8 % agreed that understanding the content helps them to familiarise with the vocabulary and by acquiring sufficient vocabulary they were able to involve in the communication tasks assigned to them. From the aspect of bilingualism used by the teachers, 19.2 % strongly agreed and 64.8% agreed that the use of bilingualism really helped them to comprehend the text easily. 31% strongly agreed and 48% agreed to the teachers' concern of providing assistance and scaffolding the reading materials which greatly contributed to their development of communication skills. Learning the target language items, linguistics forms and functions using case study based materials provide plenty of opportunities for learners to sense the appropriateness of language functions according to the context of

language use. In terms of comprehension of contents, learners seem to focus on notions of authenticity and appreciate that CLIL and case study-based learning could give them the opportunity for real target language use in the classroom in a way that general English classes could not.

## **4.2. Language skills**

In terms of specific language skills, students responded that reading and speaking seemed to improve greatly with the CLIL method. It was noticed that students usually use bilingual while working in groups and during the planning stage. Teachers' dual-focus method made them confident to use the language skills more freely and flexibly throughout the course. This achieved two results:

1. Give them practice on communication problems – participating, expression, persuading and discussing.
2. The activities conducted made students aware about the form and functions of language in a particular situation.

In the students' opinion the language skills that benefited them from CLIL are reading (39.7 % strongly agreed and 43.6 % agreed) and the speaking skill (31% strongly agreed and 48 % agreed). Meanwhile, the percentage of students' responded on grammar were

distributed unequally: 25.5 % strongly disagreed, 49.7 % disagreed, 15 % agreed and 3 % strongly agreed.

### **4.3. Case study materials**

As seen from the table, 53.6% of the students agreed and 31% strongly agreed with the case study materials used in the classroom. 33 % strongly agreed and 35.2 % agreed to the question that the case study materials are interesting and relevant to their disciplines. Majority of the students agreed or strongly agreed on the application of analytical tools to gather information which seems to be something new for them and it contributed greatly in terms of language and content acquisition: 31% strongly agreed, 53.6% agreed, 10.7% were not sure, 2.9% disagree and 1.9% strongly disagreed.

### **4.4. Interdisciplinary competence**

There were two questions referred to critical thinking capability and teamwork. Interestingly, the majority of the students supported the aforementioned case study activities requires active participation and involvement to accomplish assigned tasks such as working together, a delegation of tasks, taking responsibility and questioning one another. 12.4% strongly agreed and 56.5% agreed with teamwork concept enhance cooperative learning. It seems that the

cooperative situation creates social interaction which supports social interaction and enhance students' understanding and their communication skills (Shabbir et al., 2016). According to Kagan (1990) cooperative learning approach employed in a language classroom contributes to a variety of learning activities of a subject through a sequence of stages: create, analyze and apply the concept.

In terms of enhancing critical thinking and communication skills the students' responses were: 33.2 % strongly agreed and 47.6 % agreed, 12.6% not sure, 4.8% disagreed and only 1.8% disagreed. Teamwork inculcated during language activities led to the rise of the unity of effort which is the core element in the military learning context. Integrating case study teaching materials brings into the classroom awareness of knowledge fields represented by other closely related disciplines. Through critical thinking, problem solving and teamwork, students are able to transcend skills and knowledge from their own professional field over to another (i.e. strategies studies to human resources, medical to engineering or the vice versa).

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This study suggests that significant outcome with measurable results can be achieved by incorporating case study- based learning and CLIL pedagogy. In order to be more effective, teachers and stakeholders must collectively strive for a balance between the content and the language teacher regarding the issues of materials



development, implementation process, appropriate measurement of program goals and the measurement of outcomes. To optimize this pedagogical approach, military training centres need to create an educational training system where language education are the complement of each other. The ability to integrate knowledge, skills and modes of thinking in two or more disciplines would contribute towards cognitive advancement—such as explaining a phenomenon, solving a problem, or creating a product—in ways that would credit for interdisciplinary teaching-learning. The outcome of this preliminary study using the 4Cs framework needs some kind of scale to gauge the quality of lessons, implementation strategies and English teachers' contribution toward language development inside and outside the classroom. In addition, learners' improvement can also be attributed to the cooperative effort of the content teacher and language teacher the extra classes and self-directed learning centres that are not covered in the scope of this research. This research has offered insights into how CLIL operates and its 4Cs principles are enhanced through case study-based learning that will widen the comprehension of content and language integration in the military context. Finally, this research will be a kick-off for the stakeholders and educationists to provide a more holistic education based on values.

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