FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the implementation of Integrated Language Teaching (ILT) in the classroom, a method combining listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills within a single educational framework. By emphasizing the interconnectedness of these skills, ILT mirrors real-life language use and fosters holistic language development. The article traces the evolution of language teaching methodologies, from the Grammar-Translation Method's focus on rote learning of grammar and vocabulary to the Direct Method's emphasis on oral communication and immersion. It highlights the mid-20th century Audio-Lingual Method, which prioritized repetition and drills but was criticized for neglecting meaningful communication and individual learner needs. The emergence of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) revolutionized language instruction by integrating digital tools, offering immersive and engaging experiences. The article also delves into Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which combines subject matter instruction with language learning, addressing the dual need for subject competence and language proficiency. CLIL is noted for enhancing language skills more effectively by immersing students in subject-specific contexts, thus fostering practical language use and cultural understanding. The article underscores the benefits of ILT, particularly CLIL, in boosting student confidence, engagement, and motivation. By using a foreign language to learn subjects, students develop practical language skills and reduce language anxiety. The interactive and real-world focus of CLIL activities promotes a dynamic and supportive classroom environment, making learning more relevant and enriching. Ultimately, ILT offers a comprehensive and effective approach to language education, preparing learners for authentic communication and enhancing their overall educational experience.

Keywords: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), language skills integration, evolution, grammar, translation method, direct method, audio-lingual method, authentic communication, fluency, language acquisition, contextualized learning, motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Integrated Language Teaching (ILT) is an educational approach that combines multiple language skills–listening, speaking, reading, and writing–within a single learning framework. Rather than teaching these skills in isolation, ILT emphasizes their interconnectedness and promotes the simultaneous development of all four skills through contextualized and meaningful activities. This approach mirrors real-life language use, enhancing students' fluency, competence, and cultural awareness. By integrating various skills into meaningful activities, ILT prepares learners for authentic communication, fostering a more holistic and

effective language learning experience. Douglas defined integrated teaching "is a term used to refer to teaching a foreign language through a content-based subject. That way language is integrated into the natural context and taught through real life situations in order to motivate students to acquire language for the sake of communication. Therefore, integrated language teaching gives preference to natural language acquisition rather than forced language learning" [Brown H Douglas. Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. – San Francisco State University: Pearson Education ES, 2014. – P. 224.].

1. The evolution of language teaching methodologies

A dynamic process influenced by a variety of linguistic theories, educational philosophies, technology breakthroughs, and the shifting demands of language learners, language teaching approaches have evolved over time. Integrated techniques that combine the best features of several disciplines have increasingly emerged as a result of this evolution. In the early stages, language instruction was predominantly shaped by the **Grammar-Translation Method**, which focused on the rote learning of grammar rules and vocabulary via translation tasks. This approach, which gained popularity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, placed emphasis on improving proficiency in reading and writing the target language. According to Marianne Celce-Murcia, systematic grammar study of classical Latin and other classical texts had once again regained dominance in European schools and universities by the early nineteenth century. The analytical Grammar-Translation Approach established itself as a standard technique for teaching Latin and, consequently, other modern languages. Instruction is given in the native language of the students.

a) There is little use of the target language for communication.
b) Focus is on grammatical parsing, i.e., the form and inflection of words.
c) There is early reading of difficult texts.
d) A typical exercise is to translate sentences from the target language into the m other tongue (or vice versa).
e) The result of this approach is usually an inability on the part of the student to use the language for communication.
f) The teacher does not have to be able to speak the target language [Marianne Celce-Murcia. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language 3rd ed. January 1, 2001 P. 4-6.]

Other strategies, including the Direct Method, surfaced as discontent with the Grammar-Translation Method's shortcomings increased. Originating around the same time as the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method prioritized oral communication and immersion in the target language. Nadia Batool explains "the Direct Method is also called the Natural Method that is very popular which enables the students to do a particular thing which give the opportunity to the students to communicate with someone you share or exchange information with them in foreign language which consist of a set of sounds or written symbols" [International Journal of English Language Teaching Vol.5, No.1, pp.37-40, January 2017 Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) 37 The direct method: A good start to teach oral language Nadia Batool1* , Muhammad Anosh2 , Anam Batool3 , Nadeem Iqbal4 National College of Business Administration and Economics D G Khan Campus 1, 2, 3 Ghazi University D G Khan.].
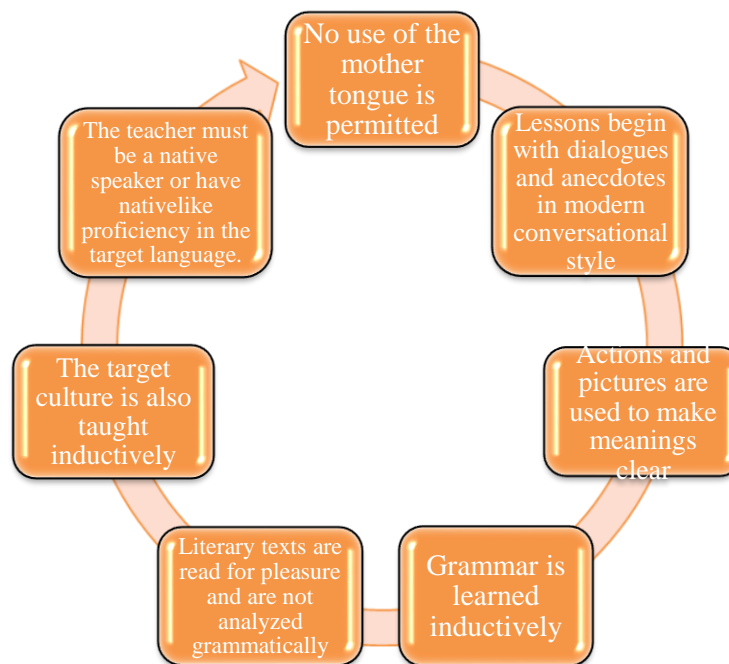
Figure 1. Direct Method. [Marianne Celce-Murcia. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language 3rd ed. January 1, 2001 P. 6.]

The mid-20th century witnessed the rise of the Audio-Lingual Method, influenced by behaviorist theories of language acquisition. "The Audio-Lingual method focuses on oral skills. It aims to improve students' speaking achievement. Language items are presented to students in spoken form without reference to the mother tongue so that they can learn language skills effectively. The goal of the Audio-Lingual method is, via teaching vocabulary and grammatical patterns through dialogues, to enable students to respond quickly and accurately in spoken language". [Egamberdiyeva Nodira Hamidovna. Audio lingual method of language teaching. Web of Scientist: International Scientific Research Journal. ISSN: 2776-0979, Volume 3, Issue 5, May., 2022430. P.431.]. This approach sought to improve language accuracy through practice, exercises, and habit building. The Audio-Lingual Method, however, came under fire in the 1960s for its disregard for the unique needs and preferences of each student and its lack of emphasis on meaningful communication. A primary concern was its insufficient emphasis on meaningful communication. The method focused heavily on repetition and drills, which often involved memorizing dialogues and patterns without context, leaving learners ill-prepared for real-life communication. Additionally, the method relied on mechanical and rote learning. The repetitive drills encouraged rote memorization, enabling learners to produce correct forms without genuinely understanding or being able to use the language spontaneously [Richards J.C., Rodgers T.S. The Audio-lingual Method. Approaches and Methods in language teaching. Cambridge University Press. P. 65.].
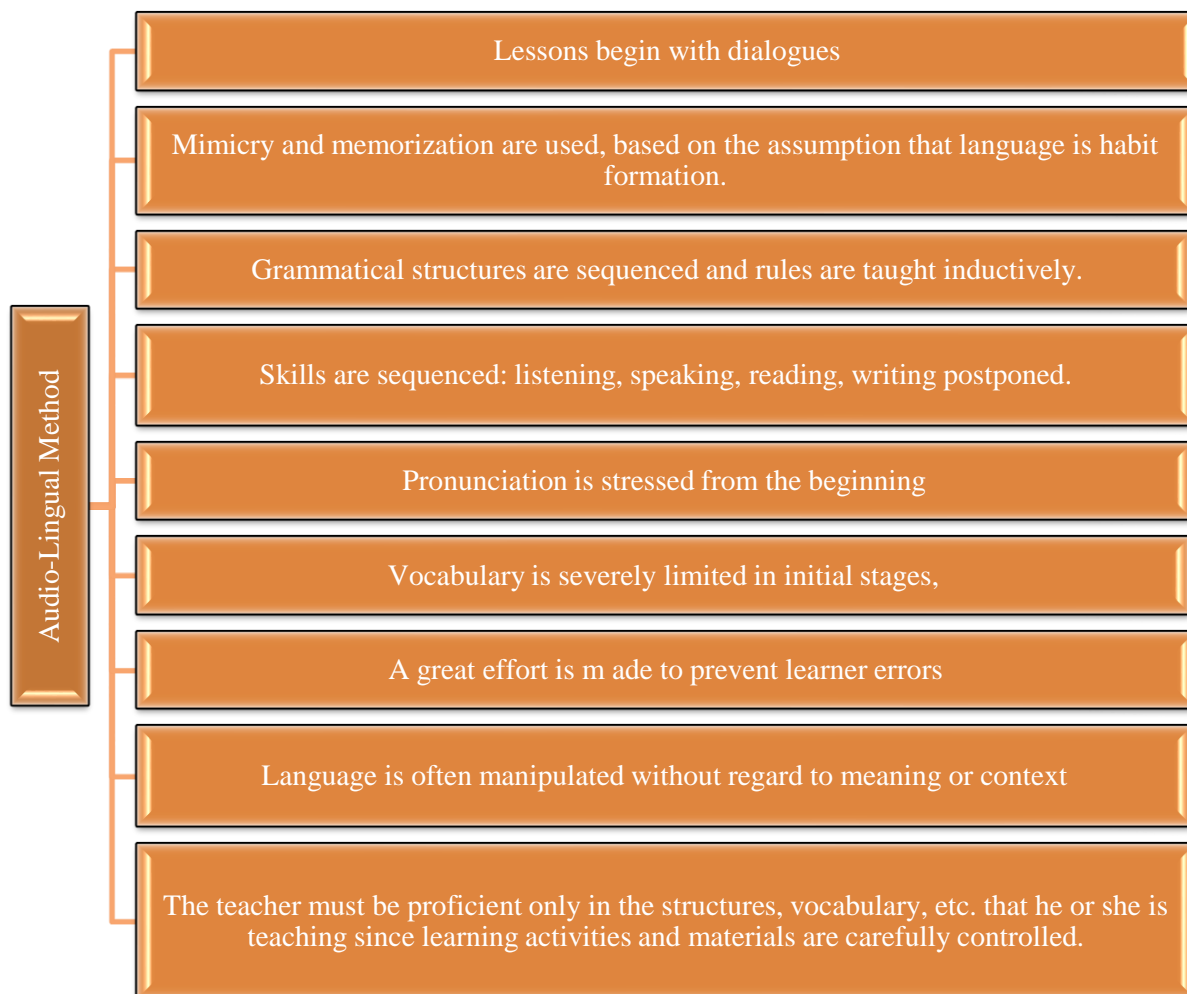
Figure 2. Audio-Lingual Approach. [Marianne Celce-Murcia. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language 3rd ed. January 1, 2001 P. 7.]

Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), which integrated digital tools and resources, transformed language training with the introduction of computers and the internet in the late 20th century. TELL offers interactive and captivating learning opportunities through language learning software, multimedia resources, and online communication platforms. As opposed to the grammar-translation method's context-limited exercises or the audio-lingual method's repetitious drills, TELL provides immersive, rich context experiences that support a variety of learning styles and encourage both correctness and fluency in everyday speech.

"Technology-enhanced language learning uses computer technology, including hardware, software, and the internet to enhance the teaching and learning of languages by,

Technology-enhanced language learning by:	Using a hand-held electronic dictionary to look up a word in class
	Chatting with a friend on Instant Messenger using a little English
	Reading news website
	Participating in an online discussion board
	Doing a computer-based language exercise from the CD that comes with a textbook
	Searching for a word in a corpus to see how it's used
	Playing World of War craft in English
	Texting a classmate in English

Figure 3. Benefits of TELL. [K Kranthi. Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL). International Journal of Business and Management Invention ISSN (Online): 2319 – 8028, ISSN (Print): 2319 – 801X www.ijbmi.org || Volume 6 Issue 2 || February. 2017. P. 31.]

In addition to that, the advent of the internet and digital communication has hastened significant changes in vocabularies at the same time shaping language in unprecedented ways. "Language grows and continuously adapts, evolving as we come up with better words that reflect our society or culture. In particular, it mirrors the complexity with which our lives intertwine with technology. When our technology evolves quicker than ever before, so too does our language. Because, as with technology, we strive to optimize language so we can communicate complex ideas, with the minimal amount of ambiguity in the most efficient way. Many experts believe the amount of technical vocabulary and slang we use in everyday life is currently growing faster than ever before. With roughly half of the world's population now connected to the internet, we see massively increased levels of communication. Ideas, words and phrases are being generated and circulated at a staggering rate" [https://www.languagewire.com/en/blog/how-language-evolves. How technology drives language evolution.].

Vocabulary Change	Example	Explanation
Acronyms and Abbreviations	LOL (Laugh Out Loud)	The internet has popularized the use of acronyms and abbreviations for efficient communication in online chats and social media platforms.
Internet Slang	"YOLO" (You Only Live Once)	New slang terms have emerged to reflect internet culture and trends, often originating from memes, viral videos, or social media trends.
Neologisms	"Selfie"	The internet has given rise to new words and terms to describe phenomena unique to online culture, such as "selfie" for a self-portrait photograph taken with a smartphone.
Emoji and Emoticons	😂 (Face with Tears of Joy)	Emoji and emoticons are used to convey emotions and reactions in digital communication, adding nuance and expression to text-based conversations.
Borrowing from Other Languages	"FOMO" (Fear Of Missing Out)	The internet has facilitated the borrowing of words and phrases from other languages, reflecting the global nature of online communication and cultural exchange.

Figure 4. The Internet's effect on English language vocabulary.
[https://toppandigital.com/translation-blog/how-the-internet-is-changing-language/#e.
How the Internet is Changing Language.]

2. Benefits of implementing integrated language teaching in the classroom

Amid the ongoing evolution of language teaching methodologies, **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)** emerged in the early 1990s as a significant advancement. "The term CLIL was coined by David Marsh, University of Jyväskylä, Finland (1994): "CLIL refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language". However, CLIL teaching has been practiced for many years, from the Babylonian era to the early sixties when bi-lingual education was introduced in many schools around the world" [https://www.onestopenglish.com/clil/what-is-clil/ "What is CLIL?"]. CLIL is a synthesis of content education and language acquisition, building on the groundwork established by previous approaches such as the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method. CLIL was created to meet the needs of both subject matter competency and language proficiency. It was influenced by the effectiveness of immersive approaches as well as the cognitive advantages associated with bilingual education.
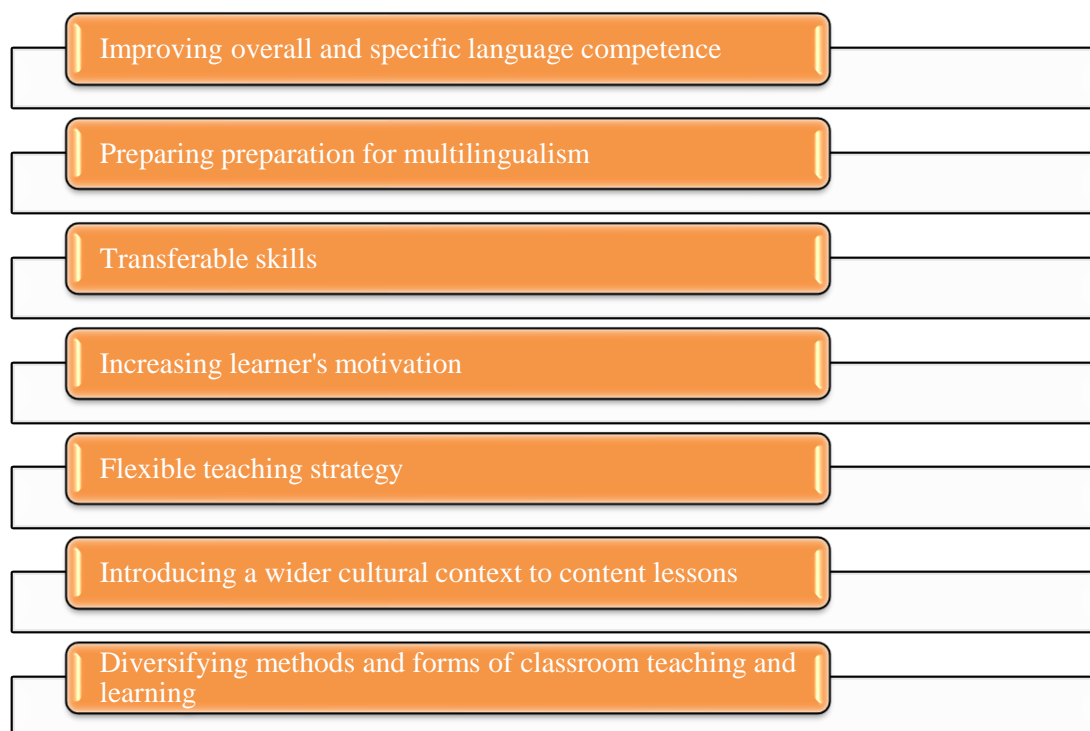
- Improving overall and specific language competence
- Preparing preparation for multilingualism
- Transferable skills
- Increasing learner's motivation
- Flexible teaching strategy
- Introducing a wider cultural context to content lessons
- Diversifying methods and forms of classroom teaching and learning

Figure 5. Benefits of CLIL.

With content and language integrated learning (CLIL), students have a rare chance to pick up a second language while studying relevant subjects. Students learn language skills in a way that may not be possible with traditional approaches when language training is integrated with other disciplines, like science or history. By immersing students in subject-specific environments, this technique more effectively improves language competency and fosters natural and practical language use. Students might be highly motivated to learn subjects in a foreign language when they perceive a need for their acquired language abilities. This incentive frequently ignites a sincere curiosity about the subject matter being taught as well as the language. Moreover, CLIL lessons frequently incorporate cultural elements relevant to the target language, providing students with insights into the customs, traditions, and perspectives of native speakers. The interactive nature of CLIL, with its emphasis on collaborative activities and real-world applications, makes learning more engaging and relevant. A crucial component of CLIL is collaboration between subject and language instructors, which develops a cooperative learning environment and advances educators' professional development. Language teachers frequently need to increase their knowledge and skill set in order to implement CLIL, which creates chances for ongoing professional development. Furthermore, CLIL may be customized to fit numerous languages and topic areas and is adaptable to a range of educational levels, from elementary schools to universities. By creating a dynamic and supportive classroom atmosphere, CLIL not only enriches language proficiency but also cultivates a more confident and engaged student body.

CLIL has a significant effect on pupils' self-confidence. Students interact with a foreign language in meaningful, useful ways when they use it for academic purposes, which demystifies the language and lessens language anxiety. Regular exposure to the language in a variety of settings makes pupils feel more at ease and less anxious about making mistakes.

Success in understanding and communicating complex subject matter in a foreign language provides a significant boost to their self-esteem and self-efficacy. Moreover, the supportive environment of CLIL encourages risk-taking and resilience, as errors are seen as a natural part of the learning process, further building their confidence. Macarena Navarro and Eduardo Garcia detailed in their research that educating through this method can positively influence to learners' self-esteem, efficacy and motivation as well as self-confidence. ["Are CLIL Students More Motivated? An Analysis of Affective Factors and their Relation to Language Attainment Porta Linguarum". January 2018. Porta Linguarum Revista Interuniversitaria de Didáctica de las Lenguas Extranjeras. DOI:10.30827/Digibug.54023. Macarena Navarro-Pablo and Eduardo Garcia-Jimenez. P, 75-76.].

Regarding their involvement, students are kept actively engaged in their education via CLIL's emphasis on interactive, real-world learning. The method's range of exercises, including group projects, talks, and practical work, accommodates various learning preferences and maintains an engaging and dynamic learning environment. Students are more motivated and interested in the language and the subject matter since they are active participants rather than passive information consumers. Additionally, the cultural aspects of CLIL lessons provide students with a broader worldview, making the learning experience more enriching and relevant to their lives. Higher levels of engagement and improved overall educational outcomes are the results of this holistic approach to teaching, which encourages a stronger connection to the subject matter.

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