

Students' Perceptions on CLIL Implementation in China, Japan and Indonesia

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This research aims to illuminate the perceptions of Asian postgraduate students on the implementation of CLIL in English Language Teaching. The research questions are focused on identifying their views on whether CLIL is applicable in their teaching and learning context and if their general attitude towards it was negative or positive, as well as the reasons behind their arguments. Using mixed methods research, data was collected from questionnaires and interviews in order to explore the participants' perceptions of the phenomenon. Findings suggest that CLIL cannot be successfully implemented at the moment in Indonesia, Japan or China unless some more drastic steps are taken by the governments and Ministries of Education of these countries.

Keywords: [CLIL implementation] [postgraduate student perceptions] [Asia]

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1. Introduction

The objectives of this research were to investigate the attitudes of Asian postgraduate students towards implementing CLIL in their teaching context and to explore the efficacy of the approach. Coyle et al. (2010:1) define CLIL as a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language. That is, in the teaching and learning process, there is a focus on content, and on language. Each is interwoven; even if the emphasis is greater on one or the other at a given time.

The researcher was particularly interested in this topic as she wanted to explore the applicability of communicative teaching methodologies in Asian countries in order to teach English as a foreign language. The first step in this process is this specific study which she hopes to complement in the future by doing experimental research and collecting data in the field. Regarding the design of the study, the first chapter contains a literature review on the presence of CLIL in the three countries. The second chapter illustrates the research

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methodology followed to answer the research questions, in the third, the results of the study are introduced while in the final chapter, the findings of the research are discussed and compared with previous studies. The researcher wanted to gather and combine in one study the attitudes of students from three Asian countries.

The research questions were: 1) what are the attitudes of Asian MSc students towards the implementation of CLIL in their teaching context? 2) Is the implementation of CLIL applicable in the Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian context? The researcher applied a mixed methods approach, by combining questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in order to gain a spherical view of the matter in question. In the first phase of the research, the questionnaires were distributed electronically in order for the researcher to obtain a general overview of the educational systems in Japan, Indonesia and China, and, more precisely, of English education in these countries. In the second phase of the research, 4 participants were interviewed and provided their insights on the subject. From the analysis of the data, common patterns emerged among the perceptions of participants. The findings indicated a general reluctance of the participants towards the implementation of CLIL in Indonesia, Japan and China due to the fact that CLIL does not correspond partially to the traditional teaching methodologies that the students and teachers are used to following. The contribution of this research was to demonstrate the commonalities and differences in perceptions concerning CLIL implementation between Japan, Indonesia and China.

2.1. CLIL and its evolution

This chapter will introduce Content-based Instruction, the rationale for its application and the implementation of CLIL in Japan, Indonesia and China. Furthermore, a brief background for the teaching History of Art through CLIL will be presented, along with the rationale behind this research.

Marsh (2002:15) defines CLIL as:

“An umbrella term which refers to a dual-focussed educational context in which an additional language, thus not usually the first foreign language of the learners involved, is used as a medium in the teaching and learning of non-language content.”

An additional definition is provided by Eurydice (2006: 8), where CLIL is used:

“as a generic term to describe all types of provision in which a second language (a foreign, regional or minority language and/or another official state language) is used to teach certain subjects in the curriculum other than language lessons themselves.”

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) originated in the immersion programs of Canadian schools in the mid- 1960s (Naves: 2009). These immersion programs aimed to cultivate the bilingual skills of students (Do Coyle et al.: 2010). French was gradually introduced as the language of instruction (Naves: 2009). Another predecessor of CLIL is Content-based Instruction (CBI), a teaching methodology applied in the United States, where language and content are integrated (Ibid: 2009). CBI is described by Stryker and Leaver as a holistic and global approach to foreign language education (1997). For them, the term CBI does not necessarily correspond to a methodological approach but it can refer to a philosophical orientation, a syllabus design or a framework. A curriculum in order to be characterised as a CBI curriculum has to satisfy three criterion: it needs to be based on a subject-matter core, to demonstrate authenticity and to fit the needs of students (Ibid: 1997). Content-Based Instruction has many variations and adaptations: sheltered content courses, adjunct courses, theme-based and area studies modules, Language for Special Purposes, discipline-based instruction, FLAC (Stryker & Leaver, 1997: 3).

The implementation of CLIL in the European context has been documented by many researchers (Wei & Feng: 2015; Heras & Lasagabaster: 2014; Eurydice: 2012), especially after 1966 when the term CLIL was adopted. It englobed the aforementioned teaching approaches and included teaching subcategories such as immersion, bilingual education and content-based instruction (Naves: 2008). CLIL is often identified as an evolution of CLT (Duenas: 2004). Its characteristics are that the learning of a foreign language is integrated into content subjects, for instance, mathematics, history, science. Its attractiveness as a teaching methodology is due to the fact that it contributes to the development of social, cultural, cognitive, linguistic, academic skills of students and promotes the values of multilingualism and multiculturalism, creating a Europe of integration, understanding and mobility (Montalto et al.: 2016). According to Maljers et al. (2007: 40), CLIL has a dual purpose: to support the minority languages and to enhance the teaching of all foreign languages. They continue by saying that in CLIL lessons it is more common to teach a certain percentage of the curriculum in the target language and full immersion programmes are not that common.

2.1.1 CLIL rationale

The most common theoretical framework which underpins CLIL is the 4C model. According to this model content, communication, cognition and culture are integrated (Coyle et al.: 2010). As these elements are interconnected, effective CLIL results through progression in knowledge, interaction in the communicative context, development of appropriate language skills, acquisition of an intercultural awareness and engagement in associative cognitive processing (Coyle et al., 2010: 41).

The arguments supporting CLIL as a teaching methodology are based on SLA research. More precisely, CIL creates the necessary conditions for second language acquisition to occur. According to Krashen's Monitor Model (1982) when a learner is exposed to a comprehensible input she/he is then able to retain the second language. When teaching a second language, students need an instruction where the emphasis is given on content rather on the form (Swain: 1985): something that correlates with the principles of CLIL (Duenas: 2004). Swain's Comprehensible Language Output Hypothesis is another theory which supports the benefits of CLIL in Second Language Education (Dalton-Puffer: 2007). CLIL stresses the importance of producing meaningful language, its implementation creates the appropriate opportunities for students to use the language productively (Duenas: 2004; Lasagabaster & Sierra: 2009B). Furthermore, CLIL can be supported by the Interaction Hypothesis articulated by Long and Vygotsk's Sociocultural Theory. According to Long (1996), language acquisition is enabled by using the target language in interaction. Long states that students can develop their language proficiency through conversational interaction (Ibid: 1996). In CLIL lessons, the interaction between the students, as well as between the students and the teachers is emphasised (Mattheoudakis et al. 2014). According to Vygotskys Sociocultural Theory, cognitive development is a construct of society and it is developed through interaction (Gabillon & Ailincai: 2013). The most important concepts in Vygotsky's theory are the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and the idea of scaffolding. The meaningful communication and group work in CLIL lessons contribute to the development of students' cognitive and linguistic skills.

The benefits of CLIL in Second Language Education include the motivation students show towards language learning in CLIL lessons (Stryker & Leaver : 1989), due to the fact that learning a foreign language through CLIL is viewed as a communicative tool (Huttner & Smitt: 2013). Studies indicate that CLIL as a methodology enhances the levels of motivation and the interest of students in the language itself (Lasagabaster: 2010; Lasagabaster & Sierra: 2009^A). Moreover, subject-related intercultural learning is promoted, learners are able to view the content from different perspectives with the help of the foreign language, and they develop more accurate academic concepts (Montalto et al.: 2016). Other benefits resulting from the implication of CLIL in the classroom are the enhancement of self-confidence and literacy of students, as it is described by Stryker & Leaver in their study (1989). Additional support for the benefits of CLIL can be found in the fields of Educational and Cognitive Psychology. More specifically, Anderson (1990) stated that meaningful information leads to deeper processing and to better learning, and that CLIL is a teaching methodology which is characterised by this specific trait.

Despite its multiple benefits, CLIL receives many criticisms. A common concern in CLIL

implementation is the teachers' lack of knowledge in the subject they are expected to teach (Mattheoudakis et al. 2014). Another concern is the fact that the drawbacks of CLIL are overlooked in many studies (Banegas: 2011). Moreover, it is possible for CLIL to negatively affect the motivation of students who do not have a high level of proficiency in English and make them question their skills (Bruton: 2011). A final shortcoming of CLIL is the absence of a clear definition which would separate it from the other communicative language teaching approaches (Cenoz et al. 2013).

The implementation of CLIL in Japan, Indonesia and China creates a new challenge. The main criticism surrounding CLIL in Asian countries is that the students do not have a chance to be exposed to authentic linguistic input, in comparison with EFL students (Warrington: 2010). In addition, the exam-oriented education system in Japan (Saito: 1991) and Indonesia (Zulkifar: 2009) prevents the successful implication of CLIL, as the students wish for teaching methodologies which will assure them entrance into respected universities. Other implications include the fact that the content materials used in CLIL lessons are adaptations from authentic language sources and do not fit the linguistic levels of Asian students, the teachers often focus on content and overlook the importance of teaching the language. Furthermore, the teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of the content and language in the lesson. Their knowledge on CLIL is limited and they lack the necessary training and orientation (Ibid: 2008). This situation could lead to a demotivation of students and could raise their anxiety levels as they may feel that their proficiency is not high enough to cope with the demands of a CLIL lesson. A way to overcome these obstacles is for the teachers to decode the language used before continuing to the teaching of the content. That way, the teachers could make sure that their students understand the concepts they are being taught and that the process of learning is not obstructed by gaps in their knowledge of the language. There is a need for empirical and non-qualitative studies which show the correlation between the effectiveness of CLIL in Asian EFL contexts and their proficiency in the L2. The challenge is to adapt the methodology and the philosophy underpinning CLIL in viable programs designed for the needs of each Asian country.

2.2. CLIL in Southeast Asian countries

This study examines the implementation of CLIL in Japan, Indonesia and China. As a methodology, CLIL is gradually being introduced in some South-east Asian countries (Marcellino: 2008). In 2008, the British Council initiated a series of projects, as part of the Primary Innovations Regional Seminar held in Hanoi in 2007. These research projects examined the application of new teaching methodologies in EFL in primary schools in East Asian countries, along with the existing trends in each country (Marsh & Hood: 2008).

2.2.1 CLIL in Indonesia

Examining the case of Indonesia, it is necessary to state the fact that Indonesia is a multilingual and multicultural country, where over 700 languages are spoken (Hamied: 2012). The role of the Indonesian language is of great importance as it unifies the people who speak different local languages. As a national language the Indonesian language functions as a symbol of nationhood, a conveyor of national identity, an instrument for unifying tribes and communities that have different cultures and languages, and a tool for cross-cultural communication (Hamied, 2012: 65). The local languages spoken in Indonesia strengthen the ties between the community and the family. They represent the local culture and literature (Ibid: 2012). The low proficiency of Indonesian English Teachers (Hamied: 2001) and the fact that their number does not meet the needs of schools and students (Hamied: 2012) worry the Indonesian government. Another observation is that the phenomenon of teachers who are not proficient in English is more often observed in rural areas of Indonesia (Lengkanawati: 2005). Indonesian students do not show signs of developing competence in English and their ability to communicate in the L2 (Lengkanawati: 2005). EFL in Indonesia is influenced by the variety of local languages spoken and it is a common occurrence that the learners of English show the linguistic influence of their local languages and construct their own version of English (Hamied: 2012.)

2.2.2 CLIL in Japan

With regard to the EFL context in Japan, the country places a great importance on education (Parsons & Muth: 2012). One of the main characteristics of EFL is the importance of teaching grammar and reading, which hinders the overall performance of students in the English language (Parsons & Muth: 2012). As a consequence, students are hesitant to express their opinions, and the lessons tend to be teacher-centred (Parsons & Caldwell: 2016). The Japanese government, in an effort to encourage communicative language teaching methodologies in English as a Second Language, promotes initiatives such as the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET) (Ibid: 2015). The JET Programme is an initiative which invites young people from around the world to assist in teaching English as a foreign language at elementary schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools. In addition, in 2011, all Japanese public elementary schools introduced English as a compulsory subject for the fifth and sixth grade (Kirkpatrick: 2010). The implementation of CLIL can be an effective solution for overcoming the low interest of Japanese students, the limited input they receive in English and their low performance in the language (Parsons & Caldwell: 2016). Studies have shown encouraging signs regarding the motivation of students toward the English language, in CLIL teaching environments (Parsons & Caldwell: 2016; Koike: 2014). Koike (2014) conducted a case study where CLIL was applied in order to teach English for students who majored in Regional Development Studies. It was discovered that at the end of the

course they were less reluctant to speak openly in the classroom. Parsons & Caldwell (2016) investigated the implementation of CLIL at a Japanese University and discovered that the students felt more motivated to learn when they were working in groups with their peers. CLIL as a teaching methodology is often applied in mainstream schools and universities (Ohmori: 2014), but not in international or immersion schools in Japan. Two Japanese Universities were the pioneers who introduced CLIL in their curriculum: the Saitama Medical University and Sophia University (Ohmori: 2014.). The version of CLIL adopted in the Japanese Universities is a so-called "weak" version of CLIL (Ibid: 2014). In this version the educators are language teachers and CLIL is implemented in curricula where their subject is English education. A study by Ikeda (2013) demonstrated that the weak version of CLIL fitted the needs of Japanese secondary school students.

The benefits of implementing CLIL in the English education in Japan are the fact that it encourages bilingual education, develops the students' intercultural communicative skills, contributes to the broadening of their minds and it encourages them to look at things from different perspectives (Ohmori: 2014). A study by Aubrey (2014) has shown that communicative language teaching increases the motivation of students (Aubrey: 2014). Aubrey (2014) studied the relationship between the motivation of Japanese learners of English and a communicative English language course at a Japanese University. The findings indicated that at the end of the course their "motivated learning behaviour" had increased. The positive effects of CLIL on Japanese students were documented by Ikeda (2013), where the writing skills of secondary school students were highly improved after following a weak CLIL method in a course for learning English.

The main argument against the implementation of CLIL in Japanese schools and universities is that Content-based Language Instruction has better results with students of a high proficiency compared to students with a low proficiency in English (Okazaki: 1999). Another possible implication that could arise from integrating CLIL in Japanese classrooms is that due to the lack of efficient training for language teachers (Koike: 2014; Parsons & Muth: 2012), the educators will feel insecure in implementing this methodology in their curriculum (Parsons & Muth: 2012). When implementing CLIL in the Japanese context, another factor to be taken into consideration is the learning and cognitive profile of Japanese students (Koike: 2014; Burrows: 2008). Burrows (2008) in his paper entitled: Socio-cultural barriers facing TBL in Japan, discovered that students in Japan tend to not actively participate in classroom discussions, are more hesitant when answering questions and are more confident when they are interacting with their teacher instead of with their peers. He also evaluated Task-based learning in Japanese classrooms (2008) and concluded that the implementation of TBL is highly unrealistic and too impractical for Japanese

students who learn English as it demands from them to reinvent the top-down way that knowledge is imparted in schools. Other factors which discourage the teachers to implement Communicative language teaching methodologies are the limited amount of time they have in combination with the large number of students in each class (Nishino: 2008; Koike: 2014).

2.2.3 CLIL in China

Some of the similarities found in English as a foreign language teaching in (EFL) China and Japan, are that education in both countries are test-oriented, and grammar-based teaching methodology is followed (Hoare: 2010). Globalisation has affected EFL in China and has intensified the need of learners to develop their communication skills in academic and international exchanges (Zhu: 2003). English has become the lingua franca of the internet; its knowledge is a highly valued skill and it is the predominant language in academic research and in international business (Zhu: 2003; Gil & Adamson: 2011). This situation leads to a shift from traditional teacher-centred approaches to more student-centred methodologies (Rao: 2002).

2.3 CLIL and History of Art

The usefulness of implementing CLIL into teaching visual art is that it could help the students develop their visual literacy, their communication skills, observe and interpret critically the visual messages they receive in their everyday life.

Gangwer (11: 2019) defines critical visual thinking as

“the identification and evaluation of visual evidence, thinking in pictures, creating imagery in the mind’s eye, and the ability to formulate that imagery into a visual language to guide decision-making.”

The number of studies where CLIL is implemented in order to teach visual arts is quite small. Korosidou & Griva (2014) implemented CLIL in a Greek primary school in order to teach Byzantine Art and Culture. Their study indicated that teaching Art History in the classroom by using CLIL enhanced the communicative skills of students, along with their content knowledge. Strakova (Gonzalez: 2015) in her study implemented CLIL for Teaching the History of Art in an ELT context. She designed and implemented a CLIL lesson with the theme: Art in our life in a primary Slovak school and discovered that it enhanced the development of students’ imaginations and their creativity. Although there have not been many studies in teaching Art History, the teachers have access to a diversity of lesson plans and materials designed for CLIL lessons or resources which can be used in order to develop their own lesson plans. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery of London, the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum of New York are some

of the many museums that offer excellent learning and teaching resources to teachers who want to integrate the Arts into their curriculum. They offer free lesson plans, activities designed for students of different ages, carefully designed schools visits, interactive games and activities online. Many of the museums mentioned above offer educational programs, training programs and assistance to teachers wishing to incorporate the Arts into their curriculum but do not have the necessary knowledge and skills on the subject. To mention one example, The Guggenheim Museum's Learning Through Art (LTA) Program is a program where the museum sends experienced teaching artists into New York City public schools. There they collaborate with classroom teachers to develop and facilitate art projects integrated into the school curriculum ; a valuable experience for the teachers in schools and for the students. In regards to the teaching of arts in Asia through communicative language teaching methodologies like CLIL, TBL or CLT, the situation varies according to the Asian country in question. In the case of China, for example, the design of a CLIL lesson to teach art and design at a Southern Chinese university, while it resulted in encouraging results regarding the motivation of students, it ended up not being accepted (Hume: 2012). This shows that changes in education, as the implementation of communicative language teaching approaches, which have only recently been accepted, (Hoare: 2010) cannot be incidental but holistic (Hume: 2012).

2.4 Rationale for research topic

In order to promote the benefits of CLIL in the EFL contexts of China, Japan and Indonesia, there is a need for concise empirical research on the matter (Warrington: 2008). This research attempts to explore the perceptions of students on the implementation of CLIL, as they are the stakeholders who are affected the most by each change in the teaching methodology. A way to support the integration of CLIL in the curricula of Asian countries like China, Indonesia and Japan is to redefine the use and the objectives of EFL. Until now, the learners were preoccupied with achieving native-level proficiency. Native-level proficiency of students is the aim of the EFL education in Indonesia, Japan and China. Furthermore, the position of English in the South-east Asian countries tends to overpower the local Asian languages and undermines the multilingual skills of students (Warrington: 2008). By encouraging students to view English as an Asian Lingua Franca, the English language will be perceived as a medium for multilingualism (Kirkpatrick: 2012): a bridge between the L1 and other languages. The benefits of this approach are that the linguistic imperialism of English, which is evident in China and in Indonesia, will be controlled and the cultural characteristics of each language will be protected. The implementation of CLIL could enforce the teaching of English as a lingua franca, as one of its objectives is to develop the intercultural competence of students (Montalto et al.: 2016; Harrop et al.:2012).

By reconceptualising the EFL courses in Japan, Indonesia and China, the implementation of CLIL methodology would better fit the needs of students and it could help them to develop their proficiency in the English language. CLIL aims to develop the linguistic skills of students, as well as their contextual knowledge and it would be a useful methodology for the improvement of communicative competence and speaking skills of students. The literature review showed that students are divided on the usefulness and applicability of implementing CLIL. According to the views of students, CLIL did not satisfy their needs. This was because the teachers had a low proficiency in English and their knowledge on CLIL methodology was not sufficient. The teachers would often revert to their traditional ways of teaching and abandon applying CLIL in the classroom. By redefining the aims of EFL in China, Japan and Indonesia the focus would be given on developing the multilingual skills of students, as well as their communicative competence.

3.1 Methodology Overview

This chapter outlines the research design and the rationale behind it, and describes the methods of data collection and analysis utilized. This research explores the viewpoints of Asian postgraduate students on the matter of the implementation of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) in the context of their studies. Specifically, the research addresses the following questions:

RQ 1: What are the attitudes of Asian postgraduate students towards the implementation of CLIL in their teaching context?

RQ 2: Is the implementation of CLIL applicable in the Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian educational context?

3.1.1 Mixed Methods Research

A mixed methods research design was followed in this particular study, as an efficient method that combines the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research (Bryman: 2012). Mixed Methods research is defined as an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms of research. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches and the mixing of both approaches in the study (Creswell, 2011:230).

The strengths of quantitative methods are that they help the researcher to provide in depth information on a matter from a large number of participants, they are fitted to explore the causality of a phenomenon (Muijs: 2004), they are able to test hypotheses constructed before the data collection (Johnson & Christensen: 2008) and they allow the researcher to

make generalizations (Ibid: 2008). Furthermore, data collection and data analysis are less time-consuming in quantitative research than they are in qualitative (Ibid: 2008). On the other hand, the main advantages of using qualitative methods are that they can be used to investigate a phenomenon in depth, they can successfully describe complicated phenomena and that they enable the researcher to study the viewpoints of participants in depth (ibid).

The benefits of mixed methods research include the fact that it creates a research outcome stronger than either method individually, that it enables exploring more complex aspects and relations of the human and social world (Malina et al., 2011: 6), it provides an expanded understanding of research problems and more insight is gained by combining quantitative and qualitative methods than by using each form individually (Creswell, 2011: 203). In mixed methods research, the combination occurs on the research as a whole, including the ontological and epistemological assumptions it is based on, and not only on the research tools (Matovic: 2015). For Greene et al. (1989), the reasons for using mixed methods research include aiming for convergence through triangulation, adding breadth and scope to a subject, discovering paradox and new perspectives and exploring a phenomenon through different angles.

Mixed methods research raises a number of ethical dilemmas. Some possible ethical implications arise from “indirectly linking data in the public domain in order to locate a target sample for further study” (Hesse-Biber, 2010:57) and from aiming for research integrity. Another challenge of applying a mixed method approach in research, is that it is time-consuming and demanding, as the researcher needs to have appropriate knowledge in both approaches to be able to reap the benefits (Johnson & Christensen: 2008).

Three main mixed methods strategies can be identified: sequential mixed methods, concurrent mixed methods and transformative mixed methods (Creswell et al, 2011). In a concurrent mixed methods approach, data is collected consecutively while in a transformative approach research is based on a solid theoretical background. This research utilized the sequential mixed methods, as it enabled the researcher to “elaborate on the findings of one method with another method” (Creswell et al, 2011). The researcher chose to follow the sequential mixed method to first explore the conceptions of the participants on the implementation of CLIL via the questionnaires and then to explain and further investigate the data collected, with the help of semi-structured interviews.

The first phase of the research was the distribution of questionnaires (Survey link precedes References) that investigated the phenomenon in question to a larger extent, and the second phase was to conduct semi-structured one-to-one interviews where the

researcher was able to gain a more detailed information on the subject with the help of the participants. The sequential exploratory strategy was followed by the researcher as the “initial quantitative results inform the secondary qualitative data collection” (Creswell, 2011:14) and the two steps of the research did not mix. The weakness of this specific method was that it demanded a bigger time commitment (Ibid: 2009).

3.1.2 Data collection

The questionnaires were sent out to the participants in an electronic format via Facebook, email and WeChat. Some participants chose to print the questionnaires and to hand back completed, printed copies. Their anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed as pseudonyms were used (Thomas: 2013) instead of their actual names.

4.1 Results

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to discover the relationship the MSc students had with the English language and explore their views on the implementation of CLIL within the context of their countries. The data gathered from the questionnaires and the interviews, will be analysed and the researcher will try to interpret the views of participants on the matter.

4.1.1 Results from questionnaires

Firstly, the questionnaires allowed the researcher to gather information regarding the nature of the student-participants English education, their academic background and their motivation in learning English as a foreign language.

The questionnaires were distributed to 43 MSc students. The number of participants who returned them was 40. The proficiency of the participants was as shown in the following table.

Table 4.1

How would you describe your English proficiency?	
Native-like level	8 %
Advanced	52%
Fluent	24%
Intermediate	16%
Beginner	0

One of the first opening questions required participants to describe their competence in the English language. The results indicated that 52% of them identified their level as advanced, while 24% of them indicated that they thought of themselves as native-like speakers. Their answers were anticipated, as the majority of participants were attending either an undergraduate or a postgraduate program, held in English, and their proficiency was expected to be high. Regarding their educational experience with English, 60% admitted to already having a teaching experience, varying from internships to full-time jobs. Moreover, the results gathered from the questionnaires showed that 24 students hold a postgraduate degree or they are in the process of studying to get their MSc. Extrapolating from the characteristics of the MSc participants, one could infer that they were in a good position to grasp the needs of teachers and students of their own context, as they had experienced English education as students, teachers and—some of them now—as teacher-students attending an MSc program.

Furthermore, the participants provided additional insight to the EFL environment of their countries, which complemented the information gathered from the existing literature. Results demonstrated that around 27% of them were “fairly satisfied” with the education system in their country and only 8% were “not satisfied” at all. In addition, around 60% of student-participants said they were “really satisfied” with the English education in their country.

An interesting contradiction that emerged from the answers to questions 11 and 12 was that although the participants stated that they were satisfied with the education system of their home country, they admitted their lack of confidence towards the quality of English education. Specifically, the first question is shown in the following table:

Table 4.2

<i>How satisfied are you with the education system in your country? (Q11)</i>									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	9%	8%	8%	24%	20%	28%		3%	

It was interesting that 24% of the students did not characterise their education system either as bad or as good. It is also noteworthy that only 3% were highly satisfied with their country's education system. Nevertheless, the percentage of participants who were generally satisfied with the system was higher than the percentage of dissatisfied MSc students.

The second question was the following: How would you rate the quality of English language education in your country? (Q12). In that question, around 28% of the participants said that they were “fairly satisfied” with the English education. The reasons why

they thought that English education in their countries could be further improved were illuminated from their responses to question 25. The question the participants were asked was the following: Do you think that there could be some improvements at the English education in your country? If yes, suggest some ideas (Q25).

All the participants stated that improvements could be made in their English education system. They were asked to suggest some possible changes, which would benefit the learners of English and raise the quality of English education. Their answers indicated that they hoped for a switch from teacher-centred to learner-centred courses, as they believed that this change in the methodology of teaching English as a second language would better satisfy the needs of the learners. Specifically, some of their answers included suggestions to “improve the communication abilities of students through CLIL and student-centred activities”, for “less focus on grammar” both in Indonesian and in Japanese schools, the use of “online, authentic materials”, and a “change from test-orientation to practice-orientation”.

The questionnaires also attempted to find out the motivation of the participants who chose to learn English as a foreign language in China, Japan and Indonesia by using open-ended questions. The participants shared their personal motivation behind their choices and their opinions on the predominant factor that influences the choice of other students to learn English. Dornyei (1994) distinguishes two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. According to the self-determination theory (Dornyei: 2003) the extrinsic motivation refers to the motivation of an individual when he/she is expecting some extrinsic reward or to avoid a punishment. In intrinsic motivation, the rewards for the individual are internal, such as joy, pleasure and satisfaction of curiosity (Keblawi: 2018). When the participants were asked to state their reasons for choosing to learn English, almost all of them mentioned that the English language was a necessary requirement for them in order to find a job with a good salary. Their answers included “scholarship and job opportunity”, “it makes it easier to find a job”, “helps with my career development” and “useful tool for work”.

The second reason, which made them to want to learn English, was the fact that they were interested in the culture and the language itself. Some examples of their answers were “I’m interested in English language and culture”, “because I like English” and “personal interest, I love English”. There were also some statements where the student-participants attributed their choice to the fact that English helps them to assume a global citizenship identity. They mentioned the following reasons: “to work or travel abroad and broaden my horizons”, “to get access to a broader world”, “because with English it will be easier for me to interact with people around the world. There is no limitation in learning something new and making friends with people from different cultures, nations, and language”. From the answers of participants, it is acceptable to say that the MSc students expressed both an extrinsic and an intrinsic motivation towards the learning of English as a foreign

language. Their reasons for wanting to learn English were instrumental (Dornyei: 1994) and, at the same time, expressed their “positive disposition towards EFL, along with their desire to interact and become valued members of the EFL community” (Dornyei, 1994: 274). Furthermore, when participants were asked what kind of motivation the students in their country had for learning English, they mentioned the fact that English is a compulsory course in school, along with the personal interest in the language.

Regarding the suitability and applicability of the Content and Language Integrated Learning approach, the participants agreed that a CLIL lesson is an appropriate approach for their own learning and teaching contexts. More specifically, approximately 32% of the participants thought that CLIL is a suitable methodology for English education in their country, as demonstrated in the following figure.

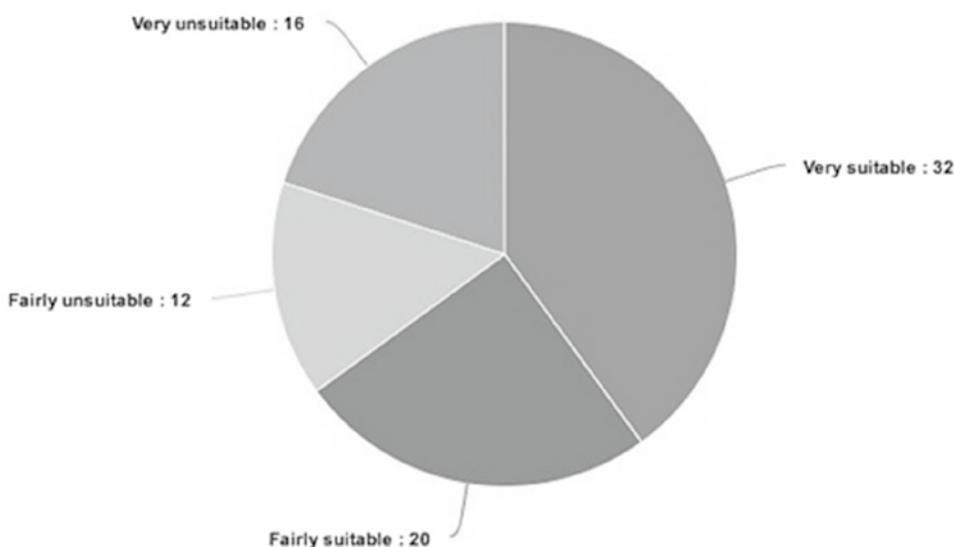


Figure 4.1

How suitable do you think CLIL is in your learning and teaching context?

Next, the participants were asked whether they thought that CLIL satisfies the needs of learners and teachers in their own context. The following chart indicates that although the participants believed that a CLIL approach satisfies the needs of students in their countries, they claimed that the teachers of English in their countries would oppose the implementation of CLIL.

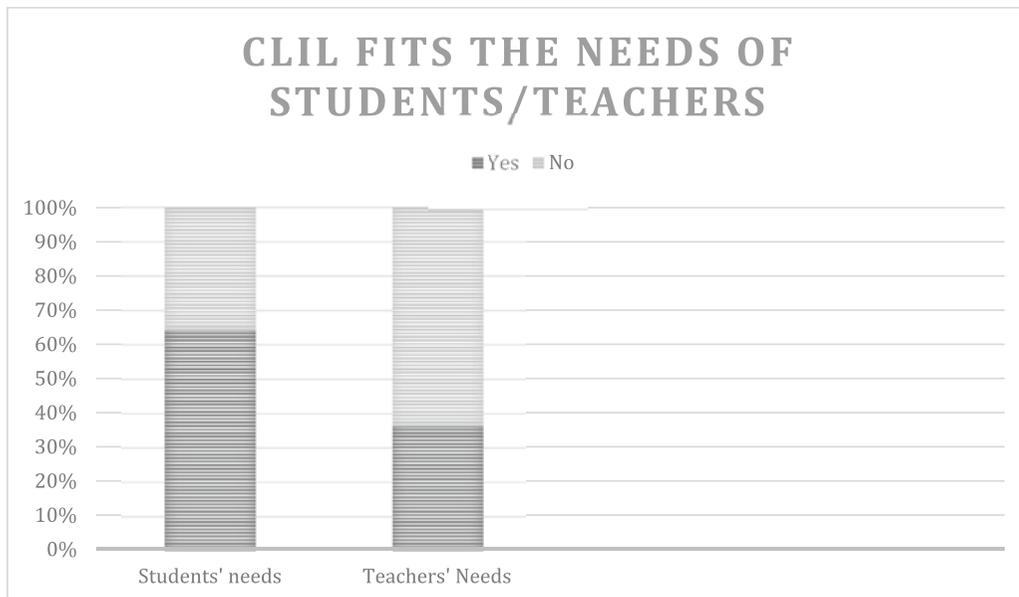


Figure 4.2

An example of a CLIL lesson was integrated at the end of the questionnaire in order to help participants with insufficient background knowledge of CLIL to answer the questions more accurately. The open-ended question addressed to them was:

- Do you think this lesson would be applicable in your country? If yes, why? (Q23)

From the 40 participants, 12 answered that they did not find a CLIL lesson or curriculum applicable in their own context. Specifically, some of their answers were:

- “Basically, no. Implementing CLIL in Japanese context would be ideal, but there are several factors we need to consider before the implementation.
 1. Teacher preparation and training.
 2. Curriculum and total exposure.

To implement CLIL in actual classroom, we need a lot of resource, such as well-trained teachers and program developer. I do not think teachers in Japan can train themselves while they have no holidays, Technically speaking, CLIL should be combined with Form Focused classes (Adjunct classes) to successfully implement in Japanese context. The reason for this is that we do not have enough teaching time (4-5 hours a week), and I don't expect the positive effect of content-based classroom in minimal input situation. Successful implementation of CLIL will require more than 10 classroom hours a week (7 hours for CLIL, 3 hours for Form Focused [as scaffolding for the CLIL lessons]). For these reasons, CLIL is not yet applicable in Japanese context, even if I admit it is one of the most effective approaches currently available.

- “I don't think it works. Because I can say that only 40% of all students in each school can speak or understand English well. But it still depends on the school.” (China)
- “It could be. The issue is that it is rare to find teachers who can speak English fluently and have the profession of being a teacher for other subjects—other than English. If they do, they will also still have the issue that most students—if not all—cannot speak or understand English, in a way that makes it difficult to understand the main subjects to teach. And when that happens, both goals (English and the subject contents) seem much more difficult to be gained.” (Indonesia)
- “No. I would love to but it is difficult to motivate all students in a classroom with 30-60 students because everyone has different interests. And language items are determined by curriculum, and course book materials have a low degree of authenticity.” (China)
- “Not really. English is a foreign language to Chinese Students. CLIL may increase their learning pressure”. (China)

The other 28 participants were more enthusiastic and responded that CLIL could successfully be implemented in their context under some conditions:

- “Definitely, yes. Simply because a language must be taught and learnt as a tool to construct meaning such as subject matter understanding.” (Indonesia)
- “Yes. Some training schools, as far as I know, have adopted this method. They hire native English speaking teachers to teach subjects in English.” (China)
- “I will try to do it, but not often, since personally I think it demands a higher proficiency which my students might need to improve. It takes a lot of time so it might not be suitable for high school students.” (Indonesia)
- “Hard to decide. Depends on the level of the students.” (Japan)

According to them, only if there is sufficient training provided for the teachers and if their level of proficiency is raised, could the methodology of CLIL be applied. Another factor, which would contribute to the implementation of CLIL in China, Japan and Indonesia, was the implementation of resources for CLIL lessons. Overall, the two major constraints of CLIL were the relatively small amount of time the teachers have for implementing CLIL in their teaching, along with the test-orientation environment in these three countries, which could impede this particular teaching approach.

The participants were also asked if they would use the example of CLIL lesson provided in their teaching. The result demonstrated that although the participants were positive towards CLIL—they characterised it as “motivating, fun, interesting, practical, suggesting

it has double benefits and teaches language through meaningful interactions and contexts –they were also hesitant towards its practicality in real-life situations. The reasons behind their hesitance were the rigidity and inflexibility of the education system, particularly in Chinese public schools, the low proficiency of students in English—with the exception of English major’s students—and the large number of students in each classroom. Japanese participants added that only the adjunct model of CLIL would be easily implemented in schools. In the adjunct model a content course and a language course are implemented separately but they are coordinated in the same time. Two different teachers are responsible, the first for teaching the content and the second for teaching the language (Satilmis: 2015).

4.2 Results from interviews

The participants who were interviewed were four MSc students: two Chinese, one Indonesian and one Japanese. They shared their personal motivation for learning English and a similar viewpoint on the applicability and efficiency of CLIL in Japan, Indonesia and China. The following table presents the names and the nationalities of the interviewees. Their names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

Table 4.3

Anastasia: Japanese MSc TESOL student	Nora: Chinese MSc TESOL student
Rachel: Chinese MSc TESOL student	Nadia: Indonesian MSc TESOL student

Some common patterns emerged from the participants’ answers. Firstly, in all cases the motivation of the interviewees for wanting to learn English was a combination of their personal interest in the language and the fact that English is a compulsory subject in Indonesia, Japan and China. The interviewees manifested their personal interest in English by saying that knowing English is, “very cool, it enables me to become an international citizen and connect with the world” or, that, “I love the language itself”. Another participant mentioned that she has developed such a close relationship with the English language and she perceives it as a “sort of friend”. Even one of the interviewees who was not entirely enamoured with English, admitted that her knowledge of English made her feel, “very proud of herself and more confident”.

Next, the interviewees were asked to share their opinion on the feasibility of CLIL’s implementation in their respective countries. All four of them agreed on the benefits of CLIL in EFL but raised some concerns regarding whether it is applicable in real life. Specifically, Rachel, the first Chinese participant said: “I think that implementing CLIL in Chinese public schools is unrealistic. CLIL and other communicative language teaching methodologies

require a high level of proficiency on the part of the teachers.”

Nora, the second Chinese participant added that it would be difficult to implement CLIL in high schools as content teachers have a low or non-existent knowledge of English and cannot provide successful CLIL lessons. The reservations of Nora and Rachel stem from the the top-down system in education and the inflexibility of teachers in designing their own curriculum,

Nadia added that other constraints of CLIL implementation in Indonesia include the lack of resources in public schools along with the need of teacher training programs. CLIL faces similar obstacles in Japan.

According to Anastasia, the teachers may select a textbook for their lesson from a list provided by the government. This phenomenon does not allow English teachers to deviate from the standard curriculum and to enrich their lessons. In addition, she said, “the low confidence of Japanese English teachers and the low level of proficiency of students contribute to the inefficiency of CLIL in Japanese high schools”.

Nevertheless, the interviewees stated that CLIL has many advantages as a teaching approach. Rachel thinks that it, “raises the motivation of students”, Nora that it, “provides sufficient input and practice for speaking, something that is lacking in the teaching of English in China” and Anastasia that it could help to, “raise the level of their proficiency in English”.

When the interviewees were asked if they would use CLIL in their teaching, they all agreed that it depended on the context, and on the level of their students. Rachel said, “CLIL is already implemented successfully in China in the form of CBI, but only in international departments, which offer core courses such as mathematics and science in English”. Therefore, she thinks that she would be able to use the methodology of CLIL if she was working in a private institution where they prepare students to study abroad in English-speaking countries. It would be especially useful in this particular type of course. Next, Nadia stated, “I would apply CLIL only if it fits the needs of my students and if they have a high level of proficiency, for example in teacher-training classes.” Nora said, “I would use CLIL in university classes, where I could be more flexible in designing my own curriculum and materials, in English majors”. As for the Japanese interviewee, Anastasia, she added, “CLIL would be preferable and more useful for undergraduate or postgraduate students of English and I would use it only if the University policy did not object”.

5. Discussion

The aim of this study was to find out the degree of applicability of CLIL in Japan, Indonesia and China, and to investigate the attitudes of participants towards its

implementation. The research showed that although the general attitudes of postgraduate students towards the implementation of CLIL in China, Indonesia and Japan may be positive, students remain sceptical and hesitant. The main reservations of participants from all three countries were mainly the following: lack of materials and resources, lack of teacher training programs, inflexible curriculums designed by the government and exam-oriented structures in second language education.

The results demonstrated that the motivation behind the choice of participants to learn English, originated from the fact that English is a compulsory course in all three countries but also because the MSc students were interested in the language itself, its culture and history and aspired to be English teachers, translators or interpreters. This particular result was expected, as the participants were undergraduate and postgraduate students attending University programs such as Translation and Interpretation, TESOL, English Education and Second Language Education, and were well informed on the structure of the education system in general and of English education at their home countries. Thus, the researcher was able to gain a more accurate picture of the situation.

An interesting observation is that the participants admitted that they were satisfied both with the quality of education offered in their countries and with the Second Language Education programs—where English is taught as a second language. Nevertheless, this contradicts another finding of this research, i.e. the fact that participants indicated that English education in their countries would benefit from some changes. The comment that kept coming up in their answers was their suggestion to develop the speaking, listening and communicative skills of students which are neglected due to the high importance the government places on the teaching of grammar and reading. Another interesting comment was the fact that in all three countries—according to the participants—the teaching of English was exam-oriented and failed to create competent English speakers. This finding correlate with the description of the Chinese education system as it is described by Rao (2013). In his study he suggested that the teachers are expected to follow the official curriculum, which does not emphasize the development of listening and speaking. Saito (1991) describes the characteristics of the Japanese education system and presents the examination-oriented culture which dominates in Japan. The competition in entrance examinations is intense and a period of stress for the students as well as the parents. Indonesia has as well a significant exam preparation culture, as it is portrayed by Zulkifar (2009).

In addition, when the participants were asked to suggest possible ways of improving the quality of English education in their countries, 20% of them replied that the use of Communicative Language Teaching methodologies such as CLIL, TBL or CLT would

definitely raise the students' proficiency. This statement was unexpected, but confirmed the main hypothesis of the researcher, which was that the implementation of CLIL would provide multiple benefits to English education in Japan, Indonesia and China. There are various studies which confirmed the previous statement, by Marcellino(2008) and Sultan et al. (2012) for Indonesia, by Chadran & Esaray (1997), Parson & Caldwell(2015) and Koike (2014) in Japan and by Knell et al. (2007) in China. The findings demonstrated that the MSc students supported the integration of CLIL in the curriculum of their countries since—according to them—its benefits outweigh its limitations. Saito (1991) describes the characteristics of the Japanese education system and presents the examination-oriented culture, which dominates in Japan. The period of entrance examinations is a time of stress and anxiety for the students as well as the parents. Indonesia has as well a significant exam preparation culture, as Zulkifar (2009) portrays it.

Even though participants acknowledged the benefits resulting from the implementation of CLIL in Japan, China and Indonesia, the percentage of MSc students who thought CLIL was suitable for their context was not high. This finding can be explained, since the aforementioned countries have an exam-oriented tradition in their education (Kirpatrick: 2011; Noguchi: 2015; Zulfikar: 2009). The test-oriented culture, which can be identified in Japan, Indonesia and China, does not coincide with the objectives and philosophy of communicative language-teaching approaches. The participants of this study seemed to hesitate concerning the application of CLIL in EFL, as they believed that there was a need for a holistic change in the concept of second language teaching in their countries of origin. The findings appeared to indicate that only if certain conditions are met, could the implementation of CLIL be realistic and effective. For example, if the traditional teaching approaches were combined with communicative language teaching methodologies, the teaching of English as a second language would fit the needs of students in Asian countries, as it was described by Rao (2002) and Wei (2013).The negative results, which could be created by implementing CLIL in China, Indonesia and Japan, would be reduced if teacher training for those who wish to use CLIL is introduced, and the lessons became less teacher-centred.

The advantages of CLIL, which were mentioned before, are supported by the studies of Liao (2000) and Anderson (1993). These studies demonstrated the effective results of CLIL and other communicative language teaching methodologies in the motivation of students, their communicative skills and their proficiency in English. More precisely, the fact that communicative language teaching approaches strengthened the communicative competence of Chinese students were also mentioned by Liao (2004) and Anderson (1993). The findings from the research demonstrated the fact that the countries targeted share certain common

characteristics in their current situation of EFL. Therefore, the students' low level of competence, the average number of 40 students in each classroom and the lack of freedom of teachers to deviate from the curriculum designed by the government are identifiable elements in all three countries.

Next, the participants believed that CLIL fits the needs of student's better than the needs of their teachers. This finding can be explained by examining the objectives of English education in each country, the aims of the courses and the kind of needs the students have. It appears that the students were concerned with developing their communicative skills and their proficiency in English, something that correlates with the findings from Anderson's study (1993) - where it was shown that communicative language teaching is an efficient method to develop the students' linguistic skills.

This study illuminated the differences and similarities in perceptions in the EFL context in Japan, China and Indonesia and more precisely the place CLIL holds in their education system. A major limitation of the research is that the number of Japanese participants was significantly lower than their Indonesian and Chinese counterparts. Therefore, the accuracy of the findings related to the Japanese context could be contested. The research could be strengthened if more MSc Japanese students participated and provided their opinions on the phenomenon. Moreover, it is not possible to generalise the findings due to the limited number of participants in the questionnaire and the interpretative character of the study. The researcher aimed to discover the viewpoints of MSc student's on CLIL implementation and whether they believed it would be a practical and effective approach in EFL. As the researcher wanted to explore this aspect, this certain weakness of the study was anticipated. Another method, which could contribute to the accuracy and validity of the results, was to interview English teachers from Indonesia, Japan and China and listen to their perspective on the matter. The interviews attempted to satisfy this criterion, as 3 in 4 participants had teaching experience, but since all of them were of young age their insight and experience was not extensive.

Another subject that emerged from the interview discussion between the researcher and Hope—the Indonesian MSc student—was the topic of English as a lingua franca and whether the promotion of this concept would help raise the proficiency of students in Indonesia and, furthermore, whether it would have positive long-term effects on the domain of English education in the country. Hope and Nora believed that the concept of English as a lingua franca would redefine English education in China and in Indonesia and would create a multilingual environment where all languages, even minority languages and dialects are respected (Fang: 2016). Snow added that the concept of ELF in Japan could not be applied

yet.

6. Conclusion

The study sought to explore the beliefs of Asian MSc students regarding the implementation of CLIL in Japan, Indonesia and China. With the help of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, it was discovered that although the students believed in the usefulness of CLIL for their context, they were sceptical about its practicality and applicability. Various constraints such as the lack of resources, the low proficiency of English teachers and the dominance of traditional teaching methodologies prevented the successful implementation of CLIL philosophy in the classroom.

There are ways to remedy this situation so that the students can benefit from the strengths of CLIL. It is necessary to familiarize the teachers and the students with the concept of CLIL. The teachers of English could attend training seminars or workshops to obtain the necessary skills to apply CLIL in their class. Another way to introduce CLIL at the EFL courses in Japan, Indonesia and China is by designing guidebooks or course books, which will suggest CLIL curriculums and would fit the specific needs of each context. A third way to make CLIL more attractive to students and teachers in Japan, Indonesia and China would be the adoption of a different attitude towards EFL, an attitude which would have as a theoretical basis the concept of English as a lingua Franca (ELF). By redefining the EFL objectives in these countries, the application of communicative language teaching methodologies such as CLIL would seem less strange to the students. This study has shown that EFL courses have the same objectives in Japan, Indonesia and China. These objectives derive from common concept of native-speakership in EFL and of the dominance of English over other languages. By promoting ELF as a new objective of EFL courses, a new era would be introduced.

There is a need for more empirical studies on this matter to gain a more objective view of the phenomenon and adopt an approach suitable for the needs of students and teachers in these specific contexts.

Survey Link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/15bkrY0psl84JP8LRgLfUtnJCoLKhyirj9nPS79HpMF0/viewanalytics>

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