

A Study on the Practice Approach of the CLIL Model Applied in Senior High School Reading for Writing Instruction

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Abstract: In the context of the new curriculum standard, senior high school English reading for writing instructions have been given new requirements. The CLIL concept aims to enable students to acquire language knowledge and subject knowledge simultaneously and to enhance their bilingual thinking skills and cross-cultural communication skills, which can provide new ideas for improving the efficiency of senior high school English reading for writing instruction and realizing the goal of all-round education. Therefore, this article takes the reading for writing instruction of Unit 2 Travelling Around of PEP Edition of Senior High School English Subject as an example to explore the practice approach of CLIL theory. The 4Cs model of CLIL is used to optimize the teaching effectiveness of English reading for writing instructions in senior high school and to realize the synchronous development of both subject content and language.

Keywords: content-and-language-integrated teaching; the 4Cs model of CLIL; senior high school English reading for writing instruction

1. Introduction

In the context of the new curriculum standard, the teaching of English in senior high school emphasizes the integrated development of students' language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability, i.e. the core literacy of the English subject (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2018). Besides, students are required to learn to use English knowledge and skills and develop intercultural communication skills in order to lay a good foundation for learning other subjects, spreading good Chinese culture, future study and employment. However, the English education sector in China has also noticed that traditional English reading for writing instruction focuses excessively on the drilling of boring language skills and teaches English and other subject knowledge separately, which causes adverse consequences: neglected cognitive development, unilateral input of subject and language knowledge, low interest in English reading and writing, poor learning effect, and ineffective outcomes of content and language. Besides, the dual-focused teaching objectives of CLIL, to achieve a synergistic effect of subject content and language, coincide with teaching objectives of senior high school English subject, which may provide new ideas for English teaching.

2. The Teaching Theory of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is a pedagogy emerged in Europe in the 1990s. The concept of CLIL was first introduced in the European Union's white paper *Teaching and Learning* in 1994 and has been well received by European countries as a new and effective form of language learning (Yang, 2016). A number of scholars have elaborated on the concept of CLIL in different ways. For example, David Marsh (2010) points out that the CLIL is a dual-focus model through which knowledge of another non-language subject and language are taught simultaneously, and the two are mutually reinforced. According to Hou Jing (2020), CLIL is a dual-focus approach which encompasses both subject content and language, and can change in a variety of ways as the context changes. Other scholars consider CLIL as the use of a foreign language to teach other subjects. It is easy to conclude that the CLIL model is a "dual-centred" approach to language learning which emphasizes both language and subject content. Rather than using a foreign language to teach a subject, it is a way of integrating language

and subject content like $1+1 \geq 2$, so that the overall learning effect is greater than the sum of the foreign language or subject content studied alone.

Coyle, Hood & Marsh (2010) propose 4Cs framework as components of CLIL, i.e. content, communication, cognition and culture. (See Table 1 for details) The 4Cs are highly compatible with the four core literacy of the English subject advocated by the new curriculum standard, i.e. language proficiency, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability.

Table 1 Schematic diagram of the 4Cs framework of CLIL components

4Cs	Contents
Content	This refers to the subject knowledge and skills that students learn.
Communication	It refers to language expressions that support the learning of subject knowledge.
Culture	This refers to the exposure of learners to a variety of perspectives and cultural ideologies through learning, forming their own world, life and values perspectives.
Cognition	It includes low and medium level cognition: memory, comprehension, and interpretation, and high level cognition: thinking skills like analysis, evaluation, creativity, and application (Bloom, 2001; see Figure 1).

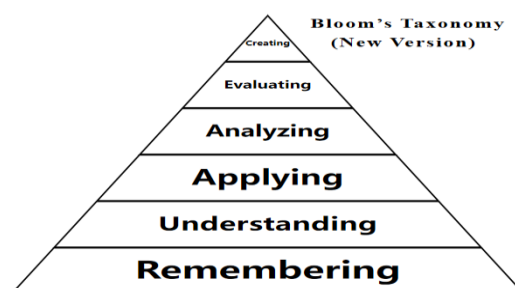


Figure 1: Schematic diagram of Bloom's stage theory of cognitive development

According to Coyle (2010), the CLIL concept is an innovative blend of foreign language education concepts and subject education concepts. In addition, Gu Zhihua (2017) demonstrated that the CLIL model can improve the quality of reading in Chinese and English and improve the English reading performance of junior students by conducting CLIL reading instruction for junior students in order to explore the impact on students' English reading ability. Cao Ran (2018) emphasized that at the senior secondary level, the CLIL model not only improved the quality of English teaching and learning, but also developed professional competence talents. Wang Chunlin (2020) also proved the effectiveness of the CLIL model in improving the reading skills of senior high school students through an empirical study. It is evident that the CLIL model plays an important role in English language teaching.

The CLIL theory aims to promote the integration of subject content and language in order to provide students with in-depth knowledge of a wide range of subjects while learning a foreign language, which can effectively expand their knowledge and help them develop their communicative skills and thinking skills. In addition, students use language to learn a variety of subjects so that they can gain various knowledge, stimulate their thinking about man and nature, man and society.

3. Teaching Design of Senior High School English Lesson Based on the 4Cs Framework of CLIL

Based on the new curriculum standard, how to effectively use the 4Cs framework of CLIL to provide new ideas and new approaches for senior high school English reading for writing instruction is the focus of this paper. In order to meet the requirements of the new standard and build an efficient learning circumstance for English reading for writing instruction, this paper attempts to apply the CLIL model to senior high school English teaching. Therefore, this paper takes a reading for writing lesson "A Travel Plan to Xi'an" in Unit2 Travelling Around of PEP Edition of senior high school English Subject as an example to explore the practical approaches of the CLIL model applied in senior high school reading for writing instruction.

3.1. Design Concept

The content of this lesson is about culture and history, which highly fits the requirements of the CLIL theory. In this lesson, communicative teaching method, independent learning method and cooperative

learning method will be applied. According to the teaching objectives and the 4Cs framework of CLIL, the teacher should design personalized and meaningful learning activities for students from four perspectives: content, communication, cognition and culture, create authentic contexts in order to help students to build “scaffold” to learn new knowledge. The teacher should guide students to actively participate in classroom learning activities, like thinking and discussion, investigation and search, communication and cooperation. These will help to complete the content-language integrated teaching tasks and achieve the “double objective” of learning English language and subject content.

3.2. Analysis of Teaching Materials and Students

The topic of the article is “Writing a travel plan for a friend”. This lesson introduces a fascinating place in China, Xi’an, from the perspective of Richard, a foreign student. The Terracotta Army here are the splendid treasures of Chinese culture, known as “one of the seven wonders of the world” and loved and respected by people all over the world. Through this reading for writing lesson, students will be able to enhance their confidence in Chinese culture and national pride, as well as explore some valuable tourism resources and their cultural connotations at home and abroad.

Most students are interested in the topic of culture and history. They have accumulated a certain amount of vocabulary and basic English reading and writing skills after their previous English studies. In addition, students have already studied the history of the Terracotta Army in Xi’an in their history lessons. Through this reading for writing lesson, students will further consolidate and apply the skills and strategies they have learned and mastered some English expressions about travel plans, famous places of interest in Xi’an, and the writing structure of emails about travel plans; at the same time, they will deepen their rational recognition of Chinese history and culture, and improve their intercultural communication skills and English literacy.

3.3. Design of Teaching Objectives of the 4Cs Framework (see Table 2)

Table 2 Design of teaching objectives of the 4Cs model

4Cs	Teaching Objectives
Contents	At the end of the course, 90% of the students will be able to: 1. master some basic reading and writing strategies, in particular, the structure of emails about travel plans. 2. learn about some historic knowledge about some typical places of interest in Xi’an, such as the Terracotta Warriors.
Cognition	At the end of the course, over half of the students will be able to: deepen their rational understanding of the contemporary value of China’s outstanding places of interest, and learn to explore the valuable cultural tourism resources of China and their hometowns and their cultural connotations.
Communication	At the end of the course, the majority of students will be able to: 1. acquire more English expressions about travel plans and typical places of interest in Xi’an. 2. communicate fluently and accurately across cultures in group discussion activities about travel plans and cultural monuments. 3. write their own travel plans with the English expressions they have learned in class to illustrate their views and make written communication.
Culture	At the end of the course, the majority of students were able to: 1. appreciate the historical and cultural charm and humanistic connotations of outstanding Chinese places of interest, and to enhance self-confidence and national pride in outstanding Chinese culture. 2. stimulate a sense of mission and responsibility to promote and carry forward the excellent history and culture of their hometown.

3.4. Teaching Design of Senior High School English Lesson Based on the 4Cs Framework of CLIL

Stage 1: Lead-in: create a thematic context, inspire learning motivation.

This section uses pictures to create a thematic context, a class visit to the Xi’an History Museum to introduce the topic of travel. Questions (e.g. What’s your impression of Xi’an?) are used to stimulate students to communicate and brainstorm. At the same time, introduce practical English expressions such as “ancient, architecture, amazing, cultural relic, etc.” to help students communicate with simple English expressions. Then, show the students the Terracotta Warriors booklet and ask them to browse, reflect and

discuss their own knowledge of the Terracotta Warriors, using English expressions that they can understand. The students are given the opportunity to express their ideas of the Terracotta Warriors in English while being inspired to brainstorm.

Table 3 List of the 4Cs objectives for the Lead-in stage

4Cs	Teaching Objectives	Star Level
Contents	At the end of the course, 90% of the students will be able to: 1.master some basic reading and writing strategies, in particular, the structure of emails about travel plans. 2.learn about some historic knowledge about some typical places of interest in Xi'an, such as the Terracotta Warriors.	★★★
Cognition	At the end of the course, over half of the students will be able to: deepen their rational understanding of the contemporary value of China's outstanding places of interest, and learn to explore and reflect on the valuable cultural tourism resources of China and their hometowns and their cultural connotations.	★★
Communication	At the end of the course, the majority of students will be able to: 1. acquire more English expressions about travel plans and typical places of interest in Xi'an. 2. communicate fluently and accurately across cultures in group discussion activities about travel plans and cultural monuments. 3. write their own travel plans with the expressions they have learned in class to express their views through writing	★★
Culture	At the end of the course, the majority of students were able to: 1.appreciate the historical and cultural charm and humanistic connotations of outstanding Chinese places of interest, and to enhance self-confidence and pride in outstanding Chinese culture. 2.stimulate a sense of mission and responsibility to promote and carry forward the excellent history and culture of their hometown.	★

[Design Intention]:

With the 4Cs model of CLIL theory as the main line, the lesson is carried out through meaningful context with pictures and illustrated booklet introducing the Terracotta Army in Xi'an, presenting the subject subject content in an intuitive, vivid and interesting way, stimulating students' interest in learning, activating their original cognition and gaining an initial objective understanding of travel and the Terracotta Warriors of Xi'an. In the process of teacher-student and student-student interaction, the students are prepared for the vocabulary expression in advance for their communication.

Stage 2: Read for the structure and contents: build the learning "scaffold", lay a good CLIL foundation.

This stage focuses on "scaffold" and activating students' initial perception of the textual framework structure of the travel plan email and the main content of the text material. Through headings and illustrations, students are led to make bold predictions to introduce the topic of travel planning. Through a quick skim, students are guided to come up with the text framework structure of the email on travel plans: Greeting, Main body, Signature; by guiding students to scan the whole text, they extract the main ideas of the paragraphs of the text and, in a class discussion, summarize the main content of each paragraph of the text: main purpose for the trip, other In addition, students can also get a preliminary understanding of the cultural and historical connotations and charm of famous places through reading, so as to pave the way for further in-depth reading, reflecting the CLIL concept of teaching content and language integration. This reflects the CLIL concept of content and language integration.

Table 4 List of the 4Cs objectives for the Read for the structure and contents stage

4Cs	Teaching Objectives	Star Level
Contents	Through skimming and scanning activities, students are guided through the textual framework structure of the travel planning email and the main content of the text material.	★★★
Cognition	Through captions and illustrations, students are induced to make bold predictions about the learning topics of their travel plans.	★★
Communication	The class discussion enabled students to engage in simple oral communication based on Richard's travel plans in a collaborative discussion.	★★
Culture	By reading the main idea of the article, students will be able to get a first impression of the human and historical connotations and cultural appeal of the famous places.	★

[Design Intention]:

This stage focuses on skimming and scanning activities, as well as building a "scaffold" for students

to gain an initial understanding of some of the humanities and history of the Terracotta Warriors, to grasp the textual framework of the travel plan email and the main content of the text material, and to gain an initial sense of the historic and cultural charm of the places of interest, which meet the standard of the CLIL teaching concept.

Stage 3: Read for language: design questions, inspire thinking.

In this stage, by guiding students to read in detail, students were asked to note and summarize the “5W”, “When, Where, Why, What, How”, in Richard’s travel plan. Then, in group of 5, the class brainstorm and discuss more useful English expressions for the “5Ws” in a travel plan (see Figure 2).

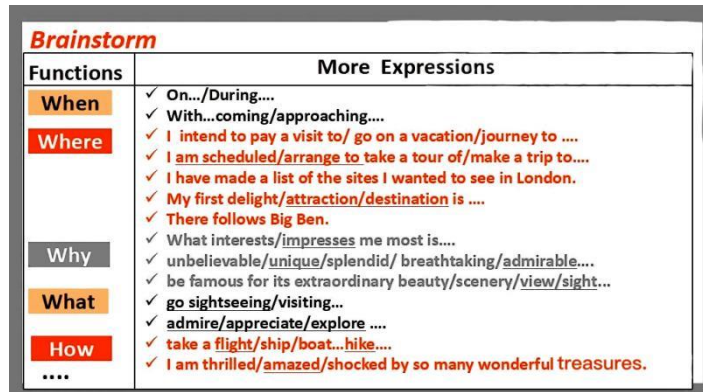


Figure 2 Useful English expressions for the “5W” in a travel plan

By asking questions such as “What do you know about the value of some cultural ethics, like Terracotta Army?”, students are gradually guided from low-level thinking(comprehension and memorization,etc.) to high-level thinking(analysis and evaluation,etc.). The students are guided to develop their thinking from comprehension and memorization to analysis and evaluation, from thinking about the historical knowledge of some famous places to thinking about the humanistic connotation and contemporary values of famous places. Finally, students are guided to summarize the structure and language features of a travel plan email (see Figure 3).

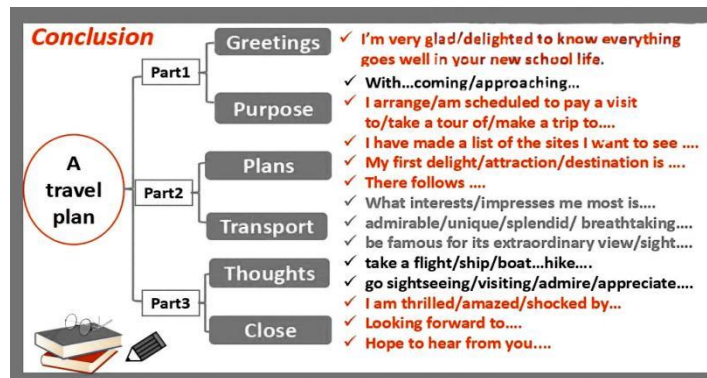


Figure 3 Structure and expressions of the travel plan email

Table 5 List of the 4Cs learning objectives for the Read for language stage

4Cs	Teaching Objectives	Star Level
Contents	Through careful reading, students are guided to master the “5W” elements of emails about travel plans--“When, Where,Why, What, How” and some useful English expressions.	★★★
Cognition	With the help of questions, students are gradually inspired to develop their cognitive thinking step by step, from thinking about some basic historical knowledge of some famous places and monuments to gradually deepening their thinking about the humanistic connotations and contemporary values of famous places and monuments.	★★★
Communication	Through brainstorming and discussion activities, with a view to students acquiring some unique and exciting English vocabulary and expressions about emails about travel plans.	★★
Culture	Based on the intensive reading activities and guided questions, students will be able to appreciate the humanistic and historical connotations and contemporary values of famous places and sites.	★

[Design Intention]:

This stage plays an important role in carrying on from the previous one to the next. Through intensive reading activities, students are helped to grasp the structure and linguistic expression of emails about travel plans; through question and discussion design, students are inspired to develop their cognitive thinking in depth and consider the humanistic connotations and contemporary values of famous places and sites. Based on the 4Cs framework of CLIL theory, the activities in this stage are designed to integrate the four aspects of subject content, cognition, communication and culture, guiding students to get some input in various aspects such as subject content and language, thinking and cognition, cultural qualities and emotional values, which prepares the 4Cs for further writing activities.

Stage 4: Writing: sublimate emotions, guide output.

Based on the above stages, this stage requires students to combine what they have learned with their life experience to write an email back to Richard, assuming they are Xiao Li. The requirements are as follows: ①talks about their winter holiday travel plans to Beijing; ②ensures the essay covers the format requirements and content points of the travel plan email they have learned; ③be logical and coherent, 80-100 words, with 15 minutes. Afterwards, based on the evaluative checklist (see Figure 4), peer assessment will be conducted and the best work will be selected for display. As for homework, students need to polish their emails. In addition, they should do a group work to search some information online about the history of some places of interest in their hometown, Ganzhou, and design an English poster introducing some places of interest in Ganzhou with their personal life experience.

Table 6 List of 4Cs objectives for Writing and homework stage

4Cs	Teaching Objectives	Star Level
Communication	Combining what they have learned about emails about travel plans with prompts for relevant English vocabulary and expressions, students write their own emails about travel plans to Richard to simulate cross-cultural communication.	★★★
Culture	By assigning students to work in groups to design an English poster introducing some famous places in Ganzhou, students are guided to explore the humanistic and historical connotations of some famous places in their hometown and inspire their self-confidence and sense of responsibility in promoting and carrying forward the excellent culture of their hometown.	★★★
Cognition	Through reading for writing instruction activities and homework assignments, students are able to transfer their knowledge to real-life situations and to reflect on and explore the cultural and historical connotations and contemporary values of the places of interest in their hometowns.	★★
Content	In conjunction with what they have learned, students know how to write emails about travel plans in their own lives.	★

[Design Intention]:

This stage is designed according to the 4Cs model. By carrying out class writing activities and exploring the cultural and tourism resources of their hometowns to design posters in small groups, students will not only expand their knowledge and thinking about the excellent Chinese cultural resources and the cultural and tourism resources of their hometowns, but also relate to the realities of life and associate them with a sense of mission and responsibility to know how to publicize and promote the excellent history and culture of their hometowns.

To sum up, the author has flexibly put the 4Cs model of CLIL theory into the whole reading course, and set the 4Cs teaching objectives for the whole course and the small 4Cs teaching objectives for each stage, from the shallow to the deep, in an interlocking manner, and combined with the lesson examples to demonstrate the concrete practical path of applying the 4Cs model of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Instruction) theory to the teaching of reading for writing instruction in senior high school.

4. Pedagogical Implication

Compared with the traditional teaching of single boring English language knowledge and language skills training, the 4Cs model of CLIL highlights the student-centered teaching concept in the learning process and also organically combines the dual objectives of subject content and language learning.

Besides, it makes subject knowledge provide a rich and effective context for language learning so that students can acquire subject knowledge and linguistic expressions through wonderful CLIL classroom activities or tasks. Meanwhile, the meaningful CLIL classroom activities and tasks will create realistic contexts for students to output their subject knowledge and oral communication in English. Hence, it transforms the “mechanical learning of language” into “meaningful learning with language”, which is a win-win measure for both content and language to help students to develop their subject knowledge and language skills together.

The 4Cs model of CLIL provides important pedagogical insights for senior high school English reading for writing instruction. The CLIL model can be effectively applied to senior high school English reading for writing instruction through rational selection of teaching content, optimization of teaching organization and teaching methods, and enhancement of teachers’ CLIL teaching skills training.

4.1. Select Teaching Content Rationally, Enrich Subject Content and Language Input

As one of the 4Cs models, English reading for writing instruction under the guidance of CLIL theory pays particular attention to the selection of teaching content. The selection of content is guided by the following requirements.

Firstly, it is important to consider whether the content meets students’ learning needs, whether it is at their cognitive acceptance level or within their “Zone of Proximal Development”. If the difficulty level is above or below the students’ cognitive acceptance level, it will reduce the students’ interest in learning and thus fail to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

Secondly, it is important to consider whether the content is authentic and genuine. This is because it affects not only the creation of an authentic learning context, but also the authenticity of the target language that students are inputting.

Finally, the teaching content should be interesting and effective. If the subject content-based teaching content is lively and interesting, close to students’ real life and learning, it will greatly stimulate students’ interest and enthusiasm, thus improving students’ efficiency in subject content and language learning; High-quality content ensures the quality of students’ content and language input.

4.2. Adhere to the 4Cs Principle, Optimize the Teaching Organization Form and Teaching Methods

Changing the traditional didactic teaching style which focuses solely on the drill of language knowledge and language skills, the teacher should insist on the 4Cs principles to carefully design the lesson according to students’ cognitive levels and learning interests, cleverly combining subject content with English teaching and carrying out task chains and activity circles in English reading for writing classroom teaching. Teaching methods can range from group discussions to independent learning, such as searching online for background knowledge and language vocabulary and expressions related to the course topic before class, and self-composition and reflection on the content and language knowledge after class. The CLIL classroom can also be supplemented by a wide range of extra-curricular activities (debates, speech competitions, role-playing, book reports, etc.). For example, the reading instruction of Unit 5 *Poem* (poetry and drama) in Compulsory Book 3 of PEP Edition, where students are guided through the content and language of the reading text by building “scaffold”, and then carry out a variety of interesting output training, such as selecting a classic Shakespearean fragment that is within the students’ learning ability and guiding them to present in the form of interesting drama performance.

4.3. Strengthen the Training of Teachers’ CLIL Teaching Skills, Nurture a Team of Teachers with both Language and Subject Knowledge

CLIL teaching requires the support of a team of teachers with interdisciplinary expertise which equipped with strong language skills and extensive subject knowledge. It is, therefore, important to strengthen teachers’ training in CLIL teaching theories, teaching skills and methods, and knowledge of various subjects, so that they can grasp the characteristics of different subject knowledge, flexibly combine subject knowledge with English teaching, and carry out CLIL English reading for writing instruction in a targeted manner. Teachers who obtain the qualification of interdisciplinary expertise should be rewarded appropriately. In addition, it is important to strengthen the exchange and mutual appreciation between teachers of different disciplines, to break down the gateway views of different disciplines, and to nurture high-quality talents with comprehensive development in the new era.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the application of the 4Cs model of CLIL theory to specific senior high school English reading for writing instruction practices requires not only the rational selection of teaching content, the optimization of teaching methods, and the elaborate design of a rich variety of CLIL in-class and out-of-class teaching activities oriented to the 4Cs model, but also relies on a quality teacher team with both language and subject knowledge. Besides, it is necessary to strengthen teachers' CLIL teaching theories, teaching skills and methods. The CLIL teaching theory is based on the "dual goal" of subject content and language learning, creating a rich learning context based on a diversity of subject knowledge. The CLIL theory is based on the "dual goal" of subject content and language learning. A rich learning context can be created based on diverse subject knowledge; students' interest in English and subject knowledge learning can be greatly inspired; Students' input of language and subject knowledge can be effectively enriched. By designing a variety of "scaffolding" learning activities and tasks, teacher can stimulate students to create new ideas and knowledge through interesting and effective content and language output activities, thus continuously promoting the development of students' language, cognition, subject knowledge, as well as their English core literacy.

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