Effects of the CLIL approach in Oral Production of English Students in the Second Year of the United General Baccalaureate at a high School in Cuenca, Ecuador

Efectos del enfoque CLIL en la Producción Oral de Estudiantes de inglés en el Segundo año de Bachillerato General Unificado en una Escuela Secundaria en Cuenca, Ecuador

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Jhonny Benalcázar- Bermeo[1]

Escuela de Educación Básica Héctor Sempértegui García, Cuenca, Ecuador

Diego Ortega-Auquilla[2]

Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE),

Azogues, Ecuador & Universidad de Cuenca, Cuenca, Ecuador

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[1]   *Graduate student. This paper is an original piece of scholarship carried out as a final requirement to earn a Master's Degree in Linguistics Applied to Teaching English as a Foreign Language offered by the University of Cuenca located in the city of Cuenca, Ecuador, 2017-2019 Jhonny Benalcázar- Bermeo[1] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1490-5188 Escuela de Educación Básica Héctor Sempértegui García, Cuenca, Ecuador (593) 995001575   jhonyfox5@hotmail.com*

[2]   *Professor and Researcher at UNAE. Professor Ortega holds a bachelor's degree in Education & English Language and Literature; master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, emphasis in TESOL; and is a doctoral candidate in Educational Sciences. He also supervises graduation projects of the master's program in Linguistics Applied to Teaching English as a Foreign Language at the University of Cuenca located in the city of Cuenca, Ecuador Diego Ortega-Auquilla[2] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6256-9150 Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE), Azogues, Ecuador & Universidad de Cuenca, Cuenca, Ecuador (593) 995076289   diego.ortega@unae.edu.ec*

ABSTRACT

The necessity to foster second language oral production has created the imperative need to analyze and explore new teaching methods and techniques in order to develop oral communication skills in the target language. This study investigated the effect of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in second language oral production of Ecuadorian second language learners of United General Baccalaureate (BGU). This study was carried out using one class of second of baccalaureate. A total of 22 study participants took part in this research. In order to gather data, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed, which allowed the researcher gain a better understanding of the problem under investigation. The study participants took part of a pre-test to determine their level of proficiency in their speaking skills. After three months of CLIL intervention they took a post-test and the results were compared to measure the effect of CLIL approach. In addition, every single CLIL lesson was documented, and a semi-structured survey was also applied to investigate the students' perceptions to the CLIL approach. The findings of this research reveals the effectiveness of CLIL in students' oral production compared with the traditional language learning instruction. At the same time the learners expressed positive opinions towards the new approach.

KEYWORDS: CLIL approach, oral production, second language, speaking skills

RESUMEN

La necesidad de promover la producción oral de una segunda lengua ha creado la necesidad imperativa de analizar y explorar nuevos métodos y técnicas de enseñanza con el fin de desarrollar las destrezas de la comunicación oral en la lengua meta. Este estudio investiga el efecto del Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE) en la producción oral de un segundo lenguaje en los estudiantes ecuatorianos de segundo año de Bachillerato General Unificado (BGU). Este estudio fue llevado a cabo empleando una clase de segundo de bachillerato. Un total de 22 estudiantes participaron en este estudio. Con el propósito de recopilar datos métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos fueron empleados lo cual permitió al investigador tener una mayor compresión del problema en investigación. Los participantes del estudio tomaron parte de una prueba previa para determinar su nivel de competencia en sus habilidades orales. Después de tres meses de aplicación del método AICLE los estudiantes tomaron parte de una prueba posterior y los resultados fueron comparados con el fin de medir el efecto del método AICLE. Además cada AICLE clase fue documentada y con el propósito de investigar las precepciones de los estudiantes hacia el método AICLE una encuesta semiestructurada fue aplicada. Los resultados de esta investigación revelan la efectividad de AICLE en la producción oral de los estudiantes comparado con la educación tradicional de un lenguaje. Al mismo tiempo los estudiantes expresaron opiniones positivas hacia el nuevo método.

PALABRAS CLAVES: AICLE enfoque, producción oral, segundo lenguaje, destrezas comunicativas

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's world most of the educational systems give a considerably importance to the teaching of a foreign language, it becomes an essential instrument in general education which allows people to get access to a globalized world. Within this context, one of the challenges for most second language teachers is to provide learners with the appropriate conditions that allow them to enhance their oral production. Li (2003) states that speaking is a skill that is hard to develop in most of the second language learners. In this sense, the author mentions that students

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are able to read literature works in the second language but they are not able to communicate orally efficiently. There are some elements that contribute to this issue for example: anxiety around speaking, social and cultural factors, the lack of an appropriate methodology among others. In this way, there is a necessity to create and explore new teaching methodologies that enhance learners' competence in the language of instruction.

Content language integrated Learning (CLIL) becomes an alternative to develop second language speaking skill, by means of this approach an additional language is used as an instrument to learn the content of an area of learning and the language of instruction (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh. 2010). There have been several research studies about the effectiveness of CLIL programs as an innovative teaching methodology in the last years (Dalton, 2008; Zafiri, 2016; Merino and Lasagabaster, 2017; Nikula, 2010; Gallardo & Gómez, 2013). In general, all these studies reveal positive effects of CLIL on student's oral performance in the foreign language. For instance, Dalton (2008) reports that if learners are exposed to more hours of CLIL input, they will be better communicators in terms of quantity, creativity as well as risk-taking.

In the same line, a study carried out by Zafiri (2016) demonstrates how CLIL promotes speaking skills effectively than the traditional methodology. This study was performed using two groups of fifteen learners for two months. One was a Non-CLIL group (controlled group), and the second group worked with CLIL approach (experimental group). In order to gather data concerning oral production, quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. In order to examine learners' oral production, researchers pay attention to pronunciation, intonation, grammar, fluency, cohesion and coherence. The findings showed that Non-CLIL learners had 0% variation in their grades. On the contrary,

learners who participated in the CLIL program had a better performance in their grades. CLIL students improved in the development of the speaking skill compared with Non-CLIL ones. In the same way, the data gathered by the learners' questionnaire revealed a positive attitude toward CLIL approach.

Another study which supports the benefits of CLIL was carry out by Merino and Lasagabaster (2017), and its aim was to determine the performance of learners in general language skills performance, who were immersed in a certain number of CLIL sessions. The findings reflect that, the amount of CLIL hours in a group of learners influence significantly in their second language acquisition.

Lastly, a study developed by Gallardo and Gómez (2013) tested the effectiveness of additional CLIL exposure on the oral production of secondary school learners of English as a Foreign Language. CLIL learners, who had received a 30% increase in exposure by means of using English as a language of instruction, were compared to mainstream English students in a story-telling task. Results reveled that CLIL learners had a better performance regarding fluency, lexis, and grammar. Besides, CLIL students had a huge range of additional vocabulary, it was tested by the total number of words they were able to use at the moment of produced fluent narrations. This study revealed the advantages of additional CLIL exposure on oral English production.

CLIL approach has been incorporated into the curriculum of different educational institutions around the world. Although in the Ecuadorian educational system this approach is fairly new it is imperative to know in depth each one of the components of a CLIL lesson. Lesca (2012) points out that at the moment of incorporating the CLIL approach in the teaching learning process, it becomes essential to incorporate activities based on its four main components. In this way, the 4Cs (content, culture, communication,

and cognition) need to be understood by both teachers and learners before it is implemented in the classroom. Each one of the Cs are explaining as follows:

Regarding The Content component, it becomes the first element of the CLIL approach as well as the first stage of the planning process. Coyle (2005) explains that it is important to understand planning by taking into account two different perspectives: the teaching objectives and the learning outcomes. Teaching aims refer to what the teacher tries or plans to do. On the contrary, the learning outcomes emphasize on what the learners would be able to do at the end of a specific lesson. It is imperative to be clear and understand these two aspects of the content since they allow both teachers and learners to know what they are going to learn in a specific way.

The next component of CLIL refers to Communication which emphasizes the idea that learning a language is supported by communication. Consequently, within the CLIL approach, student -student, student-group, and group-group communication should be implemented in the classroom. Research has shown that traditional teaching is based on a unilateral transmission of knowledge from teachers to passive learners; in this type of teaching, students learn most of the lesson content just by listening. On the other hand, within a CLIL environment, teachers need to speak just the necessary since students are not sufficiently acquainted with the new language. For this reason, CLIL encourages collaborative work, this allows students to interact using the new language constantly and help students to develop their speaking skills (Attard, Walter, Theodorou & Chrysanthou, 2015).

CLIL promotes Cognition skills, it is the third component of CLIL. Cognition involves higher-order thinking skills, which means that cognition within CLIL does not consist of transferring information from teachers to students nor memorizing information. On the contrary, CLIL cognition entails

higher order thinking and leads learners to develop their own ways of understanding language and content (Coyle, 2005). Attard, Walter, Theodorou, and Chrysanthou (2015) are the authors of The CLIL Guidebook and they pointed out that before the CLIL method was introduced, teachers traditionally were helping students learn to think by facing them to some typical questions such as the following: 'when?', 'where?', 'which?', 'how many?' and 'who?'. These types of questions do not require significant creativity, but emphasize specific answers allowing the students only learn to remember and understand information; therefore, the students develop Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS). The CLIL approach, on the other hand, goes further than just concrete and specific answers and it involves more analytical and complex answers. Students who are in a CLIL lesson are encouraged to think in questions such as 'why?', 'how?' and 'what evidence is there?', these types of questions motivate learners to investigate and examine the new information, these kind of questions are known as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) and they promote oral communication in a meaningful way.

Finally, the Culture component completes the four main elements of CLIL. By means of this component students are encourage to think of themselves as a part of a society. According to Attard, Walter, Theodorou & Chrysanthou (2015), CLIL teachers help learners to associate what they have learned to the 'the real world'. In the same way, students assume the new knowledge not just like a school subject but something they can share or associate with other cultures. To sum up, the cultural component helps students first to better understand themselves and their culture. Secondly, it helps to broaden students understanding about other cultures. It, of course, makes the process of communication more effective.

CLIL approach seems to encourage oral interaction and fluency in a meaningful and signifi-

cant context producing better results in terms of communicative competence than the traditional foreign language teaching. In light of the aforementioned information, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of CLIL approach within the high school classroom context and to evaluate its impact on English learners' oral production.

LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM UNDER INVESTIGATION

The current study focuses specifically on the impact of the CLIL approach in second language oral production in the English classroom. According to Ortega & Minchala (2018) in our educational context, oral production becomes one of the most difficult skills to develop among L2 learners. The study reveals serious problems with the productive skills: speaking and writing.

According to Bygate (1998), a good oral production skill requires a complex mental activity which involves several sub- skills. Additionally, the speaking skill can be influenced by many factors, such as: the target audience, feelings of anxiety, and a lack of an appropriate methodology. With regard to the last factor, traditional methodology generally focuses on skills and areas of knowledge in isolation, where generally "teacher-dominated interaction" is present (Broughton, 1994). According to this author, in the traditional model the learners take a passive role and the teacher is considered the main actor in the teaching-learning process.

Within Ecuadorian educational context, there is an evident traditional teaching model as well as an inconsistent communicative instruction related to teaching English as a foreign language, this issue has been observed mainly in public high schools (Calle et al., 2012). Research has shown that traditional teaching is based on a unilateral transmission of knowledge from teachers to passive learners; in this type of teaching, students learn most of the lesson content just by listening.

On the other hand, according to the new national EFL curriculum (2016) Ecuador's English language policy states that teaching of English is mandatory for all educational levels from primary to high school. Likewise, the current curriculum is framed within the international standards of the Common European Framework for language Reference (CEFR). Thus, the Ecuadorian High School Exit Profile aims that all secondary graduates should be at B1 level, which implies to have a sufficient range of language to describe unpredictable situations, the ability to express oneself in a limited way in familiar situations and to deal in a general way with non-routine information.

Unfortunately, in most of the cases, high-school graduates do not reach a minimum B1 language proficiency level according to international standards (CEFR), and the development of the students' speaking skill has become one of the most difficult tasks in second language acquisition nationwide.

Additionally, on the basis of my professional and personal experience as an English teacher, high-school graduates face several difficulties to express themselves about topics such as family, hobbies, and interests. Moreover, most learners at this level have several lexical limitations.

On the other hand, according to Education First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) an international organization, Ecuador ranks sixty fifth of a total of eighty-eight countries and regions around the world, this represents a low- performance level in English (Education First EPI, 2018). Another research study developed by the British Council (2015) indicated that Ecuadorian learners had an intermediate level for reading and listening and a fair level for speaking and writing. One more study which supports the previous information was carried out by Ortega

& Minchala (2018) its aim was to analyze the current situation of the teaching and learning of English according to the English Ecuadorian curriculum in the United General Baccalaureate (BGU). The general findings reflect a low level of English proficiency among the students and that the current methodology is not in accordance with the current English curriculum.

The necessity to improve the teaching and learning of English in our educational context has created the need to explore new methodologies to enhance learners' oral production skill. To face such challenge, the new English Curriculum has incorporated the CLIL approach as one of its core principals. The EFL curriculum considers CLIL as a means to access and learn English in an authentic, meaningful context. Swain (1985) states that both, the contribution and the "production" are two essential aspects for an effective language acquisition. In this way, the author suggests that the quality of learning a language is not as optimal if a student is not able to actively use the language for real-life situations inside and outside the classroom. Clearly, the CLIL approach supports the author's words since CLIL seeks not only the transmission of content but it allows learners to apply that information in a real situation. Nikula (2010) points out that as a result of the integration of topics and subjects, the students tend to enhance their speaking skills due to the large variety of vocabulary they are being exposed to in class, as well as the huge range of information they have to manage. Due to this fact, language becomes purposeful and produce genuine and spontaneous oral production.

According to Brown and Yule (1983), encourage students to speak in a foreign language or second language becomes a challenge. This affirmation involves different aspects, one of them is the lack of activities that promotes and stimulates oral production. However, CLIL approach seems to encourage oral interaction and fluency in a meaningful and significant context. Dalton

(2008) emphasizes the need to conduct research studies and make a contrast between the traditional educational methodology and CLIL instruction. Unfortunately, in our educational context few studies have been carried out related to the impact of CLIL method in second language oral production. Consequently, there is a need to conduct and evaluate the impact of CLIL approach in the development of high school English students' oral production.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the process and steps that were taken to complete the present experimental research study. This study aimed to investigate the impact of CLIL approach in second language oral production in second year of the Unified General Baccalaureate (BGU). In order to gather data a mix method research study was applied since both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. In order to validate data, methodological triangulation was used. According to Erzberger & Kelle (2003) this term makes reference to the use of variety of methods to collect and analyze data.

SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

This study took place in a public educational institution in Cuenca, Ecuador. It was established in 2012. Currently, this High School has two sessions (morning – afternoon). The field research of this study was conducted in the afternoon sessions. At the present time, this institution offers the "Bachillerato General Unificado" (BGU). According to the English Ecuadorian curriculum for (BGU) the students are exposed to five hours per week of general English. In accordance with the Educational public system, each hour represents 40- minute class periods. Although one of the essential core principals of the English Ecuadorian curriculum is the CLIL approach, the students are not being exposed to an authentic CLIL approach. On the contrary, there is a great-

er focus on the knowledge of content than language use.

This study was carried out using one class of second (BGU). The group (Class "A") was taught through CLIL approach. At the time of the study, the average age of the participants was 16 and 17 years old. A total of 22 students took part in this study. This is a mixed gender group. All the students are from Cuenca city and their mother tongue is Spanish. Likewise, the participants have a similar socio-economic status as well as the same educational and cultural background.

MATERIALS AND DATA COLLECTION

The field research lasted approximately three months. In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study, the following quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed; a pre-test and post-test and two semi-structured surveys.

The participants' oral production was evaluated by means of the same pre-test and a post-test, these tests aimed to examine their 'oral performance at the beginning and at the end of the intervention and the results were compared in light of the implementation of CLIL lessons.

This instrument was based on Cambridge B1 preliminary speaking test that is designed according to the CEFR. The speaking test format lasted around eight minutes for each pair of students. The test contained tasks such as: asking and answering questions, talking about your likes and dislikes, and a picture description. These tests were recorded and conducted by the researcher. Likewise, the test results were compared with the purpose of evaluate the effect of the CLIL approach on the participants' second language oral production.

To analyze students' oral production in depth both the pre-test and the post-test were elaborated taking into account basic criteria: pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, interaction and compre-

hension. These criteria was marked from one to ten points. The scoring sheet indicates a rating scale where 9 to 10 represents "excellent", 7 - 8 "very good", 5 - 6 "good", 3 - 4 "fair", 1 - 2 "poor" the rubric employed was adapted from Villalba (2012) and it examines in detail each parameter: comprehension (ability to understand questions and respond appropriately), interaction (ability to listen to and interact with a partner), accuracy (grammar, syntax, and general structures), fluency (vocabulary, speed, naturalness, lack of hesitation), and pronunciation (stress, rhythm, intonation patters).

During the eight weeks of this study, the students were exposed to CLIL lesson plans based on the four components of the approach. In order to provide learners with effective CLIL classroom instruction, one lesson plan was designed for two sessions. Each lesson plan was based on a model suggested by Coyle (2005) according to this author, CLIL lesson plans will be successful if all their four components are combined. As it was mentioned before. These four principles are essential to CLIL approach. They were used as the framework for creating and delivering successful lessons.

Lastly, two semi-structured surveys were administered to the students, one at the beginning of the study and another at the end of it. Both surveys contained the same questions. The surveys were addressed to obtain students' general perceptions about traditional methods of teaching, their attitude toward the new approach implemented into classroom instruction, and the interest about the second language acquisition. In order to have a clear and understandable survey it was written in Spanish which is the students' mother tongue. A Likert scale was used to scaling responses in the surveys or simple "yes or no". Regarding the unstructured part of the survey, it includes questions which required a deeper analysis by the study participants. The survey consisted of two parts. In the first part,

there were twelve questions regarding learners' general perceptions of teaching English as a foreign language. The second part consist of four open items concerned content subjects being taught in English.

DATA ANALYSIS

The results were analyzed using the statistical program SPSS 22. In order to solve the research question a descriptive and an inferential statistic were applied. In the descriptive analysis, it was used Means ($\square$) and Standard deviations (SD) to express each sub skill evaluated. To compare the initial situation to the final situation, it was proved that the differences does not have normal distribution (see Attachment 1). Therefore, Wilcoxon, a non-parametric test, was used to find the probability (Significance or sig.) of the hypothesis of the differences between the pre-test and the post-test (Field, 2013). In order to know the impact of the applied program in the students, a descriptive statistic called Cohen's d effect size was used. The values can be expressed in different levels, when it is around 0.01 it means very small, 0.20 means Small, 0.50 means Medium, 0.80 means Large, 1.20 means Very large, and 2.0 means Huge (Sawilowsky, 2009). Lastly, Cronbach's Alpha, a coefficient of reliability, was conducted in order to measure the reliability of a scale of 9 items about the student's opinions of the learning process (Cho, 2016).

RESULTS

Regarding the overall performance of the students, after the CLIL intervention there was an improvement in participants' oral production. According to the table below, this enhancement can be observed in all the five categories of the test.
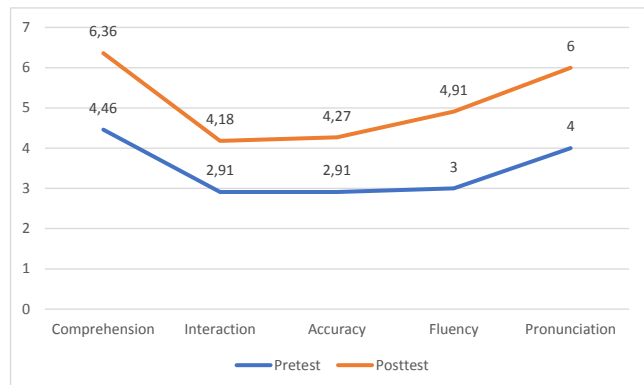

Figure 1: table of frequencies

In order to analyze the study findings gathered through the applied pre-test and post-test, it is necessary to make a comparison between them.

PRE-TEST

The Table 2, shows the results of the pre-test before the intervention, all of the sub-skills were evaluated over 10 points. In this way, the level of comprehension is 4.46 points (SD = 1.84), which according to the scoring sheet is equivalent to a fair and good level. It becomes the highest value within the pre-test. On the other hand, both Interaction (SD = 1.72) and Accuracy (SD = 1.19) obtained 2.91 points, and they were the lowest values of the pre-test they correspond to a fair level. Fluency reached 3.00 points (SD = 1.72 points) it represents a fair level. While, the sub-skill Pronunciation obtained 4.00 points (SD = 1.51 points). Finally, the sum of all the sub skills gave a total of 17.27 points (SD = 7.05 points).

Table 2: Mean ($\square$) and Standard deviation (SD) of the pre-test.

	($\overline{X}$)	SD
Comprehension	4.46	1.84
Interaction	2.91	1.72
Accuracy	2.91	1.19
Fluency	3.00	1.72
Pronunciation	4.00	1.51
Total	17.27	7.05

POST-TEST

The below table shows the results of the post-test over 10 points in each sub-skill. The Comprehension sub-skill obtained 6.36 points (SD = 1.18), which according to the scoring sheet represent a good level. This sub skill obtained the highest value within the post-test. On the other hand, Interaction obtained 4.18 points (SD = 1.37), which is equivalent to a fair level. Accuracy reached 4.27 points (SD = 1.28) equivalent to fair level, it is important to mention that this is considered as the lowest value of the post-test. Fluency obtained a value of 4.91 points (SD = 1.48) which represents a good level. The sub kill Pronunciation obtained 6.00 points (SD = 1.38)

Differences between pre and post-test

Table 4 shows the differences between the pre-test and the post-test. As we can observe in the

which means a good level. The total sum was 24.91 points (SD = 4.08) which is equivalent to a good general performance.

Table 3 Mean ($\overline{X}$) and Standard deviation (SD) of the post-test.

	($\overline{X}$)	SD
Comprehension	6.36	1.18
Interaction	4.18	1.37
Accuracy	4.27	1.28
Fluency	4.91	1.48
Pronunciation	6.00	1.38
Total	24.91	4.08

table below, the learners had a better performance in the final evaluation compared with the initial evaluation.

Table 4 Mean ($\overline{X}$) and Standard deviation (SD) of the differences between the pretest and posttest.

	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference		Sig.
	($\overline{X}$)	SD	($\overline{X}$)	SD	($\overline{X}$)	SD	
Comprehension	4.46	1.84	6.36	1.18	1.91	1.44	0.000*
Interaction	2.91	1.72	4.18	1.37	1.27	1.32	0.001*
Accuracy	2.91	1.19	4.27	1.28	1.36	1.56	0.002*
Fluency	3.00	1.72	4.91	1.48	1.91	1.31	0.000*
Pronunciation	4.00	1.51	6.00	1.38	2.00	1.75	0.000*
Total	17.27	7.05	24.91	4.08	7.64	5.81	0.000*

*There is a significant difference between pretest and posttest because the significance is less than 0.05 (Sig.<0.05).

It is worth noticing that there are significant changes in the students' speaking tests before and after the CLIL intervention. The results showed that at the end of the intervention there was a significant progress in each sub-skill. The students improved in the accuracy and fluency sub skills. According to the teacher, the students felt more motivated because of the implementation of the new CLIL strategies. Within CLIL

lessons, the learners were asked to complete the tasks focusing in both fluency and accuracy. On the contrary, in the traditional EFL instruction the students used the target language just in a communicative manner leaving aside language mistakes. It is worth mentioning that at the beginning of the intervention students were resistant to use the target language. However, throughout the course they became familiar with the new approach and started to use the target language effectively.

Regarding interaction, it shows a difference of

1.27 points (SD=1.32 points), it means a significance increase (z=-3.300; 0.001) with a huge effect size according to the Cohen's d test. According to the teacher, the collaborative nature of CLIL activities promoted interaction. In the majority of the CLIL tasks, students had the opportunity to use the language successfully.

As it was observed in the above table, pronunciation sub-skill reveals an increase of 2 points (SD= 1.75 points), which means a significant difference (z=-3.581; P=0.000) with a medium effect size (d=0.52 points). Pronunciation is an important part of speaking a foreign language, and as a result of the CLIL intervention students had to manage a huge range of vocabulary regarding different subjects. CLIL incorporate subject-specific-vocabulary in lessons. It gave teacher the opportunity to check students' pronunciation by means of teacher or peer to peer feedback which foster oral pronunciation. In the same way, comprehension has a considerable increase with a large effect size according to the Cohen's d test (d=1.31). Because of the integration of the four CLIL components: communication, content, cognition and culture students tend to develop higher order thinking skills, which gave them a better understanding of the second language. Finally, the sum of each sub-skill has a significant total difference of 7.64 points (z=-3.703; P=0.000), it implies a very large effect size (d=1.31 points).

Regarding the results of the survey, the students revealed a positive attitude towards the CLIL approach since the learners were interested and motivated with the different activities and tasks. Additionally, the students recognize the benefits of learning curricular areas by means of a foreign language. In addition students acknowledged the effectiveness of the new approach regarding oral production because they felt that CLIL context offers the opportunity to use the target language in a meaningful manner which is not the case of the traditional EFL lessons. In conclusion, the general findings of the surveys demonstrate a great enthusiasm and interest towards CLIL-oriented lessons.

DISSCUSSION

This part of the study discusses the findings related to the effect of the CLIL approach in second language oral production second language learners of United General Baccalaureate (BGU).

After analyzing data, the results of the pre-test showed an improvement regarding students' oral production in all these categories: Comprehension, Interaction, Accuracy, Fluency, and Pronunciation. Thus, the CLIL approach foster students' general oral production.

These results are consistent with the findings of Naves (2010) who revealed that within the CLIL approach exists the required conditions to develop the target language in a natural way; this characteristic focus on both content and language simultaneously.

At the end of the intervention it could be noted that students got better scores in their oral production due to an authentic CLIL exposure. During the planning stage the learners were taught through lesson plans based on the four components of the new model (communication, content, culture and cognition) which was in line with Coyle's views (2005) who states that CLIL lesson plans will be successful if all their four components are combined.

The findings of this study are also in line with Attard, Walter, Theodorou & Chrysanthou (2015) who mention that CLIL promotes collaborative work and allow the practice of the language through interaction. As it was mentioned before, one of the components of CLIL is communication, which emphasizes the idea that learning a language is supported by interaction. The traditional teaching context is based on a unilateral transmission of knowledge from teachers to passive learners. On the contrary, within CLIL stu-

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dents and teachers interact most of the time this helps to develop speaking skills.

According to the findings of this study, a language classroom instruction based on CLIL is a positive approach that promotes oral production significantly. This affirmation is supported by Nikula (2010) who states that as a result of the integration of topics and subjects the language learners tend to enhance their speaking skills due to the large variety of vocabulary they are being exposed to in class, as well as the huge range of information they have to manage.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study aimed to investigate the impact of CLIL approach on second language oral production of Ecuadorian EFL learners of United General Baccalaureate (BGU). The general findings of this study demonstrates that CLIL becomes a positive alternative in the development of English learners' oral production, as the CLIL approach seems to encourage oral interaction in a meaningful and significant context.

With respect to the effect of CLIL on learners' oral production, after CLIL intervention significant differences were found. The results of the post-test indicated a much better performance in all the tasks of the speaking test. Additionally, the study participants demonstrate a significant improvement in all the categories of the test which included: comprehension, interaction, accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation.

Finally, the information collected by the surveys revealed a great enthusiasm and interest for learning English through CLIL. Almost all of the study participants agreed that the CLIL approach can help them to develop second language oral production compared with traditional language teaching methodology that is commonly centered on a unilateral transmission of knowledge from teachers to passive learners.

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