

Empowering Non-English Teachers Through Clil-Based Training: A Community Service Model In Indonesian Elementary School

Tri Achmad Efendi, Wisnu Kristanto, Apsari Fajar Prihantini, Sulistiyani

Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan Ilmu Pendidikan Bina Insan Mandiri, Jl. Raya Menganti Kramat No.133
Surabaya, Indonesia

*Penulis korespondensi, email: triachmad@stkipbim.ac.id

doi: 10.17977/um050v9i12026p6-13

Article history

Diajukan: 18 Oktober 2025

Direvisi: 14 November 2025

Diterima: 19 November 2025

Diterbitkan: 30 November 2025

Keywords

Content language integrated learning

Elementary school

English language teaching

Abstract

English has been a crucial skill in the 21st century. Therefore, most of the schools in Indonesia teach English since in the elementary school. However, many of Indonesian elementary schools do not have English teachers, meaning that students are taught by non-English teachers. That fact also happens at MI Mutaalimin. Most of the teachers graduated from PGSD/PGMI, that makes them as generalist teachers who teach all subjects. They lack of training in teaching English. Therefore, this community service was conducted to help teachers teach English effectively through content language integrated learning (CLIL). This community service was aimed to help non-English teachers teach English effectively through CLIL. The program involved three steps: planning, implementation, and evaluation phase. In the first phase, the questionnaire was distributed to identify problem. Next, the implementation phase involved material delivery session, demonstration, practice and discussion. In the last phase, evaluation, the questionnaire was distributed to gain insight of the implementation of this proposed approach in English language teaching at the school under the study. The results showed that teachers gained new insights how to teach English through subject integration. Also, the training promoted the participants' confidence and readiness to implement CLIL-based lesson enabling them to deliver English lesson more effectively even though they have limited language proficiency.

1. Introduction

The importance of English has been acknowledged Indonesian government since 1994 by including English as a local content in the curriculum. English is seen as one of the primary skills that should be taught to students due to its benefits for students in their prospective career in the future (Aziza, 2020; Nishanthi, 2018). Due to the fact that, many schools offer English as their core programs to attract parents and students enrolling to their schools.

Moreover, learning foreign language in the early age has some benefits to introducing English to young learners. Young learners have ability to pick up new language easily and quickly (Sun, 2023), it makes them to acquire foreign language faster. In addition, students who perform English better tend to be better too in other subjects because they can access various resources and information in English (Hessel & Strand, 2023). Also, teaching English in elementary school can prepare them for living and working in a diverse society as learning language means learning culture as well.

However, teaching and learning English in Indonesia seems facing a lot of ups and downs (Hijriati, 2023; Kurniati et al., 2021; Wahyuningsih, 2022). First, the curriculum doesn't help much navigating where the English language teaching is brought up until slightly hope with Merdeka Curriculum. In this current curriculum there is a clear guidance through phases A-D which could be guidance what to achieve during this phase. Even so, English is still included as muatan lokal or local content in the curriculum. As a result, teachers do not have syllabus to guide them. Second, Indonesian elementary school faces issue regarding the availability of English teachers. Many of the schools fail to provide qualified English teachers (Efendi et al., 2024; Zein et al., 2020), many of them are taught English without having any English background, mostly they are from PGSD/PGMI (Elementary School Teacher Training).

PGSD are generalist teachers, meaning that they are trained to teach core subjects in elementary such as Bahasa Indonesia, Mathematics, and Science. They are hardly ever trained to teach English. even though they have ever learned English but mostly their proficiency is not enough to teach English. This fact indeed poses challenges and issues in the English teaching and learning. Many of them struggle in delivering effective English

instruction. It happened too at MI Roudlotul Mu'allimin. Teachers here have to teach English even though they do not have enough English proficiency and pedagogical knowledge in teaching English.

Therefore, this community service aimed to provide these teachers gain insight how to teach English through CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning). This approach was chosen due to its principles that suits the conditions of the school where none of the teachers had English education background. Teaching English through their Expertise could be a solution to maximize the teaching and learning since the teachers do not have English background.

There are some studies that have proven CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) as an innovative and recommended teaching method that brings benefits. First, it enables students to achieve both academic and language goals by using a foreign language to teach non-language subjects (Cruz, 2021; Fernández-Sanjurjo et al., 2019). CLIL goes beyond traditional language teaching, serving as a dual-focused pedagogical approach where language functions both as an instructional and communicative tool. Therefore, it helps students get a better insight the real use of language learning (Chrysoula & Kalliopi, 2019). However, that research mainly focus on secondary or bilingual context. There are limited studies have explored how CLIL can be adapted as a training framework for non-English teachers with low English proficiency. In Indonesian context, empirical studies highlighting teacher empowerment through CLIL-based remain source, especially in elementary level.

CLIL theory clearly explains its dual-focused pedagogical framework; teaching language through content rather than about language. This point of view particularly works for non-English teachers, as English is meant for a medium of learning rather than an isolated subject. Nonetheless, the potential of CLIL to bridge the gap between language and content knowledge for generalist teachers has been limited examined.

Due to that reason, this paper aims to describe the implementation and outcomes of a CLIL-based teacher training program for non-English teachers at MI Roudlotul Mu'allimin. The training not only introduces CLIL as a pedagogical approach but also potential to light up teachers' pedagogical awareness in integrating English into their classroom practice.

2. Method

This community service was done through service learning (SL) in a form of teacher training designed to introduce and develop teachers' competency in teaching English through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). There were three steps were done; planning and preparation, implementation, and evaluation phase. Each step is described thoroughly to ensure transparency, replicability, and clarity on how the training was conducted.

2.1. Planning and Preparation

In the first step, the planning and preparation were done to know the issues and conditions at the school through distribution of questionnaire. Once the problems were identified, then implementation was proceeded. There were four key activities done; (a) needs analysis through questionnaire, (b) contextual analysis and training design, (c) coordinatoioon with school, and (d) preparing the training team.

2.1.1. Need Analysis

The first action was to get information about the participants through a structured questionnaire to get information on teachers' educational background, previous training experiences related to English, their confidence level in teaching English, current classroom strategies used, and challenges encountered when teaching English. The questionnaire consisted closed-ended items (Likert scale and multiple-choice questions) to describe quantitative data and open-ended questions for qualitative insights. The questionnaire was distributed one week before the program through Google form.

2.1.2. contextual Analysis and Training Design

After getting the results of the need analysis, it was disscessed by the team. Then, the team made a one-day CLIL-based training program stressing on: theory introduction, modelling of CLIL teaching, guided material development, peer-teaching practice, and reflective discussion. After that, the materials such as slides, examples of CLIL worksheets, lesson were prepared to align with the teachers' subjects.

2.1.3. Coordination with the School

Team made coordination with the school principal to schedule the program. The school prepared facilities such as projector, classroom, photocopying to help teams deliver the training.

2.1.4. Preparing the Training Team

The training was conducted by three people: one lead training who deliver the training and do the demonstrations, two facilitators who assist during group work and provide feedback, one evaluator who manage pre-post questionnaires and document reflections.

2.2. Implementation

The training session was carried out at MI Roudlotul Mu'allimin and there were 16 participants involved. All of them were generalist teachers (PGSD/PGMI graduates). The session took place in one day, from 08.00 to 11.00 a.m. In this phase, there were some activities done such as material delivery session, participants practice, demonstration and discussion.

2.2.1. Material Delivery Session (45 minutes)

During the delivery session, the participants were introduced to four key elements of CLIL (the definition and principles of CLIL (4Cs framework: Content, Communication, Cognition, Culture), differences between traditional English vs. CLIL, benefits of CLIL for young learners and teachers with limited English proficiency, and examples of CLIL activities for primary contexts. The trainer took examples from Science and Math topics that relevant to elementary students.

2.2.2. Demonstration of CLIL (30 minutes)

In this session the trainer showed a live demonstration on how to teach English through CLIL using the topic "Parts of a plant". This demonstration included how to identify content objectives such as naming plant parts and describing its functions, identify language objectives such as vocabulary items, simple present tense structure, design simple task like labelling, matching and short descriptions, and integrate visual scaffolding strategies for low proficiency learners. This session functioned as model for what teachers would produce in the next session in groups.

2.2.3. Collaborative Material Development (45 minutes)

After the trainer gave the model, the participants were formed into pairs based on their subject expertise. They were assigned to choose a topic from their subject area, determine the content and language objectives, and create a CLIL-based worksheet or handout.

2.2.4. Microteaching (40 minutes)

Each group demonstrated their CLIL worksheet and simulated a short teaching session for 3-5 minutes. After all performed, the trainer and peers provided structured feedback on clarity of instruction, accuracy and simplicity of English used, appropriateness of the tasks, and alignment between content and language goals.

2.2.5. Reflection and Group Discussion (20 minutes)

The training was closed with an open discussion, allowing teachers to share (a) their perceptions of CLIL, (b) challenges they anticipate when implementing CLIL, (c) sessions or aspects of the sessions they found most helpful, (d) suggestions for future support.

2.3. Evaluation

The final step was an evaluation process through both a post-training questionnaire and an open discussion session. The discussion was meant to gather participants' reflections on the training session, their perceptions of the CLIL approach, and their readiness to apply it in their classrooms. This time provided qualitative insights that complemented the descriptive analysis of the questionnaire results.

3. Results and Discussion

The community service aimed to train teachers how to teach English effectively even though they were not English teachers through CLIL approach. The activities were divided into three phases; distributing questionnaire, training session, and evaluation.

3.1. Pre-training

The following are presented the results of questionnaire to get insights the conditions and issues at the school. There will be five main discussions.

3.1.1. Profile of Participants

As it can be revealed in the following chart that none of the participating teachers held a degree in English education. There were sixteen participants in this community service and all of them graduated from PGSD or

PGMI programs, which typically prepare generalist teachers for elementary education. This confirmed the initial assumption that participants lacked formal training in English language teaching.

3.1.2. Previous Training Experience

Further, they reported that never joined or received formal training in English Language Teaching. This stresses a significant gap in both pedagogical knowledge and language proficiency, which impacts their ability to teach English confidently and effectively. Percentage of respondents who have received formal training in teaching english can be seen in Figure 1.

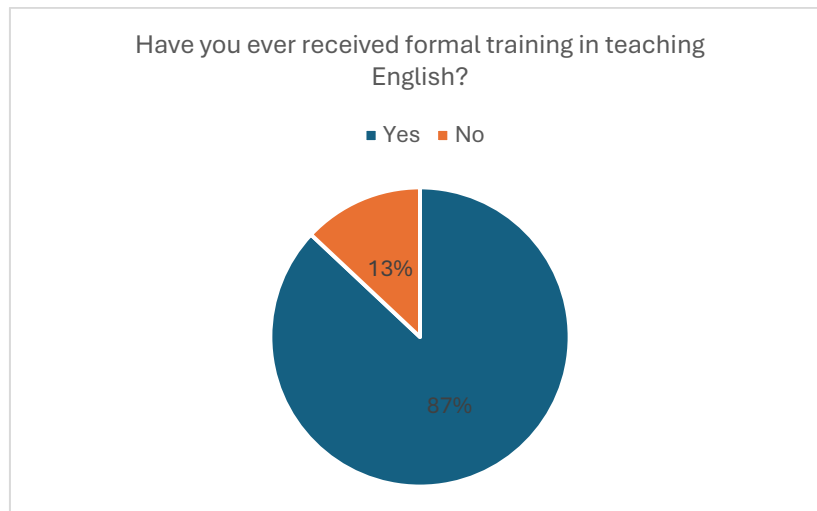


Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents Who Have Received Formal Training in Teaching English

3.1.3. Confidence in Teaching English

The questionnaire also reported that more than a half of the participants are not confident using English in the classroom. This lack of confidence stems from both limited vocabulary and inadequate training in ELT methodologies. Respondents' confidence levels in teaching english can be seen in Figure 2.

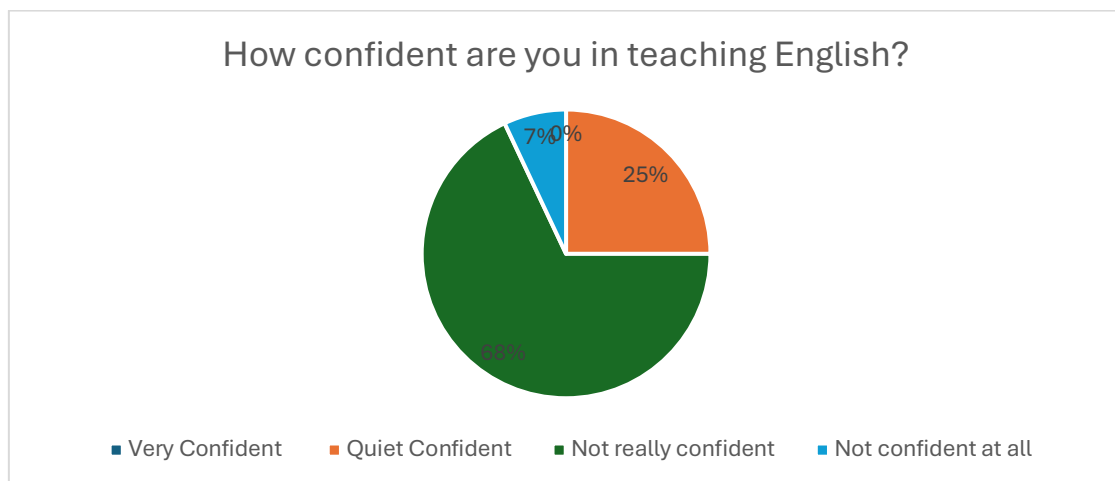


Figure 2. Respondents' Confidence Levels in Teaching English

3.1.4. Common English Teaching Practices

When asked about teaching strategies they used in the classroom, most participants said that they used songs, translation and vocabulary memorization. These common methods were familiar and doable to them but often lacked communicative or contextual depth. Activities commonly used by teachers in english language teaching can be seen in Figure 3.

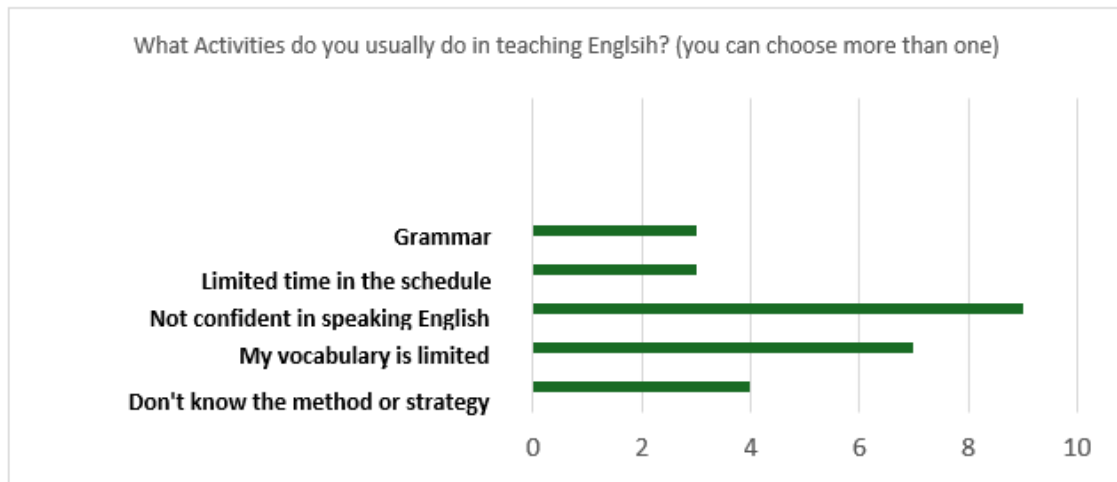


Figure 3. Activities Commonly Used by Teachers in English Language Teaching

3.1.5. Challenged Identified

One of the most challenging issues in teaching English is they lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and pedagogical knowledge of English teaching. Teachers' biggest challenges in teaching english can be seen in Figure 4.

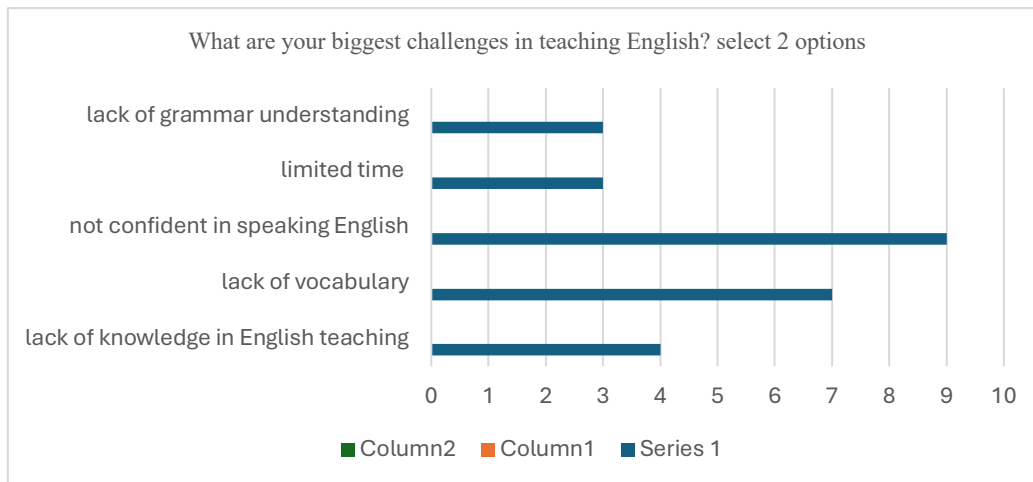


Figure 4. Teachers' Biggest Challenges in Teaching English

These challenges affirmed the relevance of introducing a CLIL-based approach as it allows teachers to teach English through content, they are already familiar with (e.g., math, science, or social studies), easing the burden of teaching English as a standalone subject.

3.2. In Training Session

To address the challenges faced by non-English teachers in teaching English at MI Roudlotul Mu'allimin, a structured training session was designed and implemented using the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach. The training aimed to introduce practical strategies for integrating English into content areas already familiar to the teachers. Given that the participants came from generalist education backgrounds with little to no formal English training, the session focused on hands-on, context-based learning. The training was organized into a sequence of interactive and reflective activities designed to build awareness, model effective practices, and provide opportunities for application and feedback. The following section outlines each of these activities in detail.

3.2.1. Material Delivery Session

In this initial stage of the training, the presenter firstly introduced the core principles and rationale of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach. The session aimed to build participants' foundational understanding of CLIL by explaining its dual focus: integrating language learning with content instruction. Second, the presenter highlighted how CLIL differs from traditional English teaching by positioning English as a medium of instruction rather than just a subject. To make it clearer, real-world examples were

provided to demonstrate how CLIL can be applied in primary school settings, especially by teachers who are not formally trained in English education. Last, the session also addressed the benefits of CLIL for young learners, such as enhanced vocabulary acquisition, increased exposure to English, and the development of 21st-century skills.

3.2.2. Demonstration

Following the theoretical input, the presenter conducted a live demonstration to model how to design a CLIL-based lesson. The demonstration included selecting a familiar subject (e.g., Science or Math), identifying appropriate English vocabulary, and constructing meaningful activities that incorporated both content and language objectives. For instance, this time the participants were given example lesson about parts of a plant, the presenter showed how to integrate simple present tense structures and scientific terms in English. This modelling helped teachers visualize how they could adapt their current teaching materials to include English elements. The demonstration also emphasized techniques to scaffold students' understanding and support language development within content instruction.

3.2.3. Collaborative Material Development

After observing the demonstration, participants were paired into small groups and tasked with designing their own CLIL-based worksheets. They were encouraged to base their materials on subjects they currently teach, such as Social Studies, Science, or Mathematics, and to incorporate relevant English vocabulary and sentence structures. This hands-on activity allowed participants to actively apply the CLIL principles they had just learned. The training facilitators circulated among the groups, providing guidance, answering questions, and giving suggestions to ensure the materials aligned with CLIL strategies. This collaborative task fostered peer learning and boosted the participants' confidence in experimenting with English in their teaching context.

3.2.4. Participants Teaching Practice

Once the materials were completed, each group was invited to present their work to the class. The presentation allowed participants to explain the rationale behind their lesson design, how they integrated English into their subject matter, and how they intended to implement the material in their own classrooms. After each presentation, constructive feedback was provided by the facilitator and peers. The feedback focused on the effectiveness of the language integration, clarity of instructions, and potential classroom application. This session served as an opportunity to share ideas, learn from others, and refine the materials based on suggestions.

3.3. Reflection

The training concluded with an open-ended discussion and reflection session. Participants were encouraged to share their personal impressions of the CLIL approach, challenges they anticipated, and how the training had shifted their perspective on teaching English. This session also functioned as a formative evaluation, providing insights into the participants' level of understanding, perceived relevance of the approach, and readiness to implement CLIL in their classrooms. The discussion highlighted that many teachers felt more empowered and open to using English in their teaching, even with limited proficiency, as long as it was tied to their subject expertise.

There was no formal quantitative test in the post-training stage. However, the effectiveness of the training was measured qualitatively through open-ended responses and reflective discussion. The participants wrote a reflections and verbal comments which then coded thematically. The following are excerpts from the participants:

"Very interesting training. Providing new knowledge so that you are no longer afraid to speak English." (participant 1)

"Alhamdulillah very useful, hopefully there will be further training." (Participant 2)

"This training was very interesting and opened up new insights about the CLIL learning model." (participant 3)

3.4. Discussion

The findings of this community service program indicate that the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach can serve as a practical and empowering strategy for non-English teachers in elementary schools. Prior to the training, participants exhibited limited confidence in using English, minimal vocabulary mastery, and a lack of formal pedagogical training in English language teaching. These challenges are consistent with the findings of Efendi et al. (2024) and Zein et al. (2020), who reported that the majority of elementary

English classes in Indonesia are taught by generalist teachers without English education backgrounds. This fact should be an alarm for the stakeholder to provide more trainings.

As the participants were teachers, it was not difficult for them with handling primary students, they had difficulty in teaching English, more importantly in knowledge. To address these issues a clear conceptual framework for CLIL, practical demonstrations, and collaborative material development opportunities were provided. Teachers reported gaining a better understanding of how English could be embedded into their expertise such as Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies without requiring them to function as language specialists. This aligns with Artemciuc (2025) and Hussain (2022) statement that CLIL enables teachers to foster their subject expertise and language acquisition. It also supports the view of Coyle et al. (2010) that CLIL can motivate both teachers and learners by presenting language learning in meaningful and content-rich contexts.

One notable impact of the program was the shift in teachers' perceptions of their own capability. The combination of theoretical input, modelling, and hands-on practice not only increased teachers' awareness of CLIL as an instructional approach but also boosted their confidence to experiment with English in their classrooms. This is in line with the findings of Banegas et al. (2020), who argued that teacher training in CLIL needs to be highly participatory and contextually relevant in order to be effective. The participants had opened their mind that English is only an aid to deliver the message, they need a content to use the language and it can be from their expertise; students can talk about science, maths, social and etc.

However, while the training enhanced teachers' readiness, it did not directly address the underlying issue of English language proficiency. CLIL can mitigate the challenges faced by non-specialist teachers, but it still requires basic communicative competence in English to be implemented successfully. Without continued language support, teachers may revert to limited English use over time. This limitation echoes the caution noted by (Custodio-Espinar, 2019; Morton, 2018), who highlighted that teacher language proficiency remains a critical factor in CLIL success. As it could be seen when the participants performed in teaching practice section, their English was not fluent (even still far from fluent) but they tried so hard to deliver the materials. In that case, language proficiency training should be considered to support them.

Another consideration is the sustainability of the program. The current training was conducted as a short-term intervention, and while it was effective in raising awareness and introducing strategies, longer-term follow-up, mentoring, and peer collaboration networks are essential to ensure sustained implementation. Embedding CLIL-focused professional development into regular in-service teacher training could help maintain momentum and allow teachers to refine their practice over time.

Overall, this program demonstrates that CLIL is not only a viable but also a promising approach for contexts where English specialists are scarce. By building on teachers' existing expertise and situating language learning within familiar content areas, CLIL can reduce instructional barriers, make English learning more accessible, and enrich the classroom experience for young learners. Future initiatives should explore integrating language proficiency development for teachers alongside CLIL pedagogy to maximize its effectiveness.

4. Conclusion

This community service program successfully introduced the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach as a practical strategy for non-English teachers to integrate English into their classroom instruction. The training addressed the lack of pedagogical knowledge and low confidence reported by participants, providing them with theoretical understanding, practical demonstrations, and opportunities for collaborative material development. As a result, teachers were able to design and present CLIL-based teaching materials tailored to their subject expertise, demonstrating an increased readiness to use English as a medium of instruction.

The program's main strength lies in its contextual relevance—leveraging teachers' existing content knowledge while embedding English in meaningful, subject-based learning. This allowed participants to see English not as an isolated subject but as a communicative tool to enrich their lessons. However, the short-term nature of the program and the absence of direct English language proficiency training remain notable limitations. Without sustained professional support, there is a risk that teachers may revert to minimal English use in the classroom.

Future efforts should combine CLIL methodology training with ongoing language development for teachers, supported by peer mentoring and school-based professional learning communities. Scaling similar initiatives to other schools facing the same challenges could contribute significantly to improving English instruction in contexts where qualified English teachers are scarce. Ultimately, empowering non-English teachers with both pedagogical tools and language skills is a critical step toward ensuring that all students have meaningful and consistent access to quality English learning opportunities.

Author Contributions

All authors have equal contributions to the paper. All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

No funding support was received.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our gratitude to MI Roudlotul Mu'allimin that has given us opportunity to share our knowledge.

References

- Artemciuc, D. (2025). *Innovative approaches to CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) for enhanced teaching outcomes*.
- Aziza, N. (2020). *The Importance of English Language*. www.researchparks.org
- Banegas, D. L., Poole, P. M., & Corrales, K. A. (2020). Content and language integrated learning in Latin America 2008-2018: Ten years of research and practice. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 10(2), 283–305.
- Chrysoula, T., & Kalliopi, T. (2019). The Implementation of CLIL Method in the Greek Educational System: The Case of its Impact on the Linguistic Competence of 5th and 6th Graders. *International Journal of Language & Linguistics*, 6(3). <https://doi.org/10.30845/ijll.v6n3p11>
- Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *Content and language integrated learning* (Vol. 221). Cambridge university press Cambridge.
- Cruz, M. (2021). CLIL Approach and the Fostering of "Creactical Skills" towards a Global Sustainable Awareness. *Mextesol Journal*, 45(2), n2.
- Custodio-Espinar, M. (2019). Influencing factors on in-service teachers' competence in planning CLIL. *Latin American Journal of Content & Language Integrated Learning*, 12(2).
- Efendi, T. A., Nurhidayah, S., & Prihantini, A. F. (2024). A Portrait Of English Language Teaching In Elementary School By Non-English Major Teachers. *Jurnal Basataka (JBT)*, 7(1), 312–320.
- Fernández-Sanjurjo, J., Fernández-Costales, A., & Arias Blanco, J. M. (2019). Analysing students' content-learning in science in CLIL vs. non-CLIL programmes: Empirical evidence from Spain. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 22(6), 661–674.
- Hessel, A. K., & Strand, S. (2023). Proficiency in English is a better predictor of educational achievement than English as an Additional Language (EAL). *Educational Review*, 75(4), 763–786. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2021.1949266>
- Hijriati, S. (2023). Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) at Elementary School. *MASALIQ*, 3(4), 688–705. <https://doi.org/10.58578/masaliq.v3i4.1511>
- Hussain, S. S. (2022). Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in ELT as a Link between Language Learning and Content Development. *Arab World English Journal*, 13(2), 386–400.
- Kurniati, E., Zaim, M., & Jufri, J. 1. (2021). *Policy and Implementation of English Learning for Elementary Schools in Indonesia*.
- Morton, T. (2018). Reconceptualizing and describing teachers' knowledge of language for content and language integrated learning (CLIL). *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 21(3), 275–286.
- Nishanthi, R. (2018). The Importance of Learning English in Today World. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 3(1), 871–874. <https://doi.org/10.31142/ijtsrd19061>
- Sun, Y. (2023). The Impact of Second-Language Acquisition on Cognitive Development. In *Proceedings of the 2022 2nd International Conference on Modern Educational Technology and Social Sciences (ICMETSS 2022)* (pp. 809–816). Atlantis Press SARL. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-45-9_98
- Wahyuningsih, E. (2022). Teyl In Indonesian Elementary Schools: Why, Who, What, and How? *ELT Echo : The Journal of English Language Teaching in Foreign Language Context*, 7(2), 185. <https://doi.org/10.24235/eltecho.v7i2.11789>
- Zein, S., Sukyadi, D., Hamied, F. A., & Lengkanawati, N. S. (2020). English language education in Indonesia: A review of research (2011-2019). In *Language Teaching*, 53(4), 491–523. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444820000208>