

IMPROVING READING SKILL THROUGH CONTENT LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL) APPROACH TO THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMP NEGERI SELANGIT

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Accepted ; September 21, 2025

Abstract; This research investigates the effectiveness of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach in enhancing the reading skills of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri Selangit. Addressing the need for innovative instructional methods, the study utilized a pre-experimental design involving a single-group pre-test and post-test framework. A sample of 27 students was selected through cluster random sampling to participate in the intervention focusing on descriptive texts. The results demonstrated a substantial academic gain, with the average score rising from a pre-test mean of 49.44 to a post-test mean of 69.44. Statistical validation via a paired t-test yielded a t-obtained value of 7.22, significantly surpassing the t-table critical value of 1.705. These findings confirm that the CLIL approach—which merges subject content with language acquisition is highly effective in improving student outcomes. Consequently, CLIL is recommended as a robust pedagogical strategy for educators seeking to boost reading proficiency and contextual engagement in secondary education.

Keywords: CLIL, Reading Skill, Descriptive Text, English Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is essential for individuals to gain new knowledge. It not only enables students to gather information but also enhances their vocabulary, which is crucial for effective communication. This makes reading even more important, especially considering that a large number of educational materials, books and academic resources are published in English. Through engaging in reading activities, students have the opportunity to

enhance their language proficiency, broaden their knowledge, and refine their reading abilities (Ayu, Diem, & Vianty, 2017).

Proficiency in reading serves as a fundamental skill for students, enabling them to grasp various subjects taught in school, including languages, sciences, and social studies. Reading is an active and constructive process, in which the reader connects new information. As quoted in Apsari (2016) reading is the most important skill for second language learners in an academic context.

Based on the results of interview on January 23rd, 2025 between researcher and teacher of English at SMP Negeri Selangit. The researcher got information that reading was one of English language skill in the classroom, there are some obstacles faced by students in their reading skill: 1) obstacles from regional languages so that students are not yet fluent; 2) students' pronunciation is not yet fluent due to the influence of their mother tongue; 3) and lack of vocabulary makes students have difficulty in reading. Based on the problems above, an approach is needed in the reading learning process, one of which is Content Integrated Language Learning (CLIL).

Coyle, Hood, and Marsh, (2010) developed the 4C CLIL model which includes Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture. They explain that "CLIL learning enriches students' reading skills through teaching content that involves high-level cognitive skills." In this case, the researcher uses soft CLIL to teach students because teachers teach English using various materials and content from subjects such as biology, physics, and chemistry.

By providing challenging texts related to academic topics, CLIL facilitates a deeper understanding of reading content and improves students' reading ability in the target language. The use of CLIL as a tool in learning subject content includes activities, which give relevant roles of both language and subject they are developed and integrated slowly but steadily. Meyer (2010:12) calls it "an approach that is mutually beneficial for both content and language subjects".

Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducted the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach to improve students reading skill and their abilities well. Lo et al., (2018) concluded that CLIL can improve student literacy.

Morton (2020) explains that there is a positive relationship between content, language, and literacy. The CLIL approach can encourage students to be more active in the teaching and learning process and make it easier for them to share ideas with classmates. With this approach, it is hoped that students will feel more motivated and involved in learning, because they can connect the lesson material with the language skills they are learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design

In this research, the researcher used a pre-experimental with one group pre-test and post-test design. The following was the design:

Table 1.1

The One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design

Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
<i>O₁</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>O₂</i>

This research employed a quantitative research method, as described by Creswell (2009), involving a structured process of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting. It used a pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test approach to examine the effectiveness of Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in improving students' reading skills. The independent variable in this research was the CLIL approach, while the dependent variable was the students' reading skill. The research was conducted at SMP Negeri Selangit, South Sumatra, even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The population consisted of 81 seventh-grade students divided into three classes (VII1, VII2, VII3). Using cluster random sampling, class VII1 with 27 students was selected as the sample.

Data collecting

The data collection technique used in this research was a reading test consisting of 30 multiple-choice questions. These questions were designed based on indicators related to understanding descriptive texts, including identifying main ideas, finding specific information, interpreting word meaning, recognizing pronoun reference, and

determining the purpose of the text. Both the pre-test and post-test used the same set of questions to measure the effectiveness of the treatment through the CLIL approach.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research was conducted in the seventh grade of SMP Negeri Selangit in the academic year 2024/2025. It involved 27 students as the sample. The objective was to determine the effectiveness of the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach in improving students' reading skills. The research process began with a try-out of the instrument in class VII2, followed by a pre-test in class VII1, four treatment sessions used CLIL approach both the pre-test and post-test consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions about descriptive texts. In the pre-test was conducted to assess the students initial reading skill before the application of the CLIL approach. The results are presented in the table:

Table 1. 2

Recapitulation of Data Pre-test

No	Ctegory	Information
1	The Highest Score	80
2	Lowest Score	30
3	Average Score	49.44
Numbers of Students		27

In the pre-test, the highest score was 80 and the lowest was 30, with an average of 49.44. Based on the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (LOAC), only 8 students (29.7%) passed (score ≥ 60), while 19 students (70.3%) failed.

After the treatment, the post-test was administered to determine whether there was a significant improvmemnt in students reading skill. The result was shown in the table:

Table 1. 3

Recapitulation of Data Post-test

No	Ctegory	Information
1	The Highest Score	90

2	Lowest Score	50
3	Average Score	69.44
Numbers of Students		27

In contrast, the post-test results showed improvement: the highest score increased to 90, the lowest to 50, and the average score rose to 69.44. In the post-test, 23 students (85.1%) passed, and only 4 students (14.9%) failed, indicating a significant improvement in reading skill.

The researcher categorized the data description of the students score in the pre test and the post-test that can be seen in the following table below.

Table 1.3 Data Description of the Students Score

Test	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-test	30	80	49.44	12.19
Post-test	50	90	69.44	10.30

Validity and Reliability Test

One important factor in assess test quality is validity and reliability. Validity indicates the extent to which an instrument is able to measure what it is supposed to measure, which is tested through item analysis using the product-moment correlation technique between the score of each item and the total score (Sugiyono, 2013). The test developed in this study refers to the curriculum and syllabus at Selangit State Junior High School. Meanwhile, reliability indicates the consistency of an instrument's measurement results; a reliable instrument will produce the same data when used repeatedly on the same object. The reliability test was conducted using the KR-21 formula on the results of a trial in class VIII1, which consisted of 27 students.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings, the implementation of the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach significantly improved students' reading skills. The average

score increased from 49.44 in the pre-test to 69.44 in the post-test. Before the treatment, only 29.7% of students passed the test, while after the treatment, 85.1% of students met the minimum score (LOAC = 60). This shows a clear improvement in students' reading performance.

The result of the paired t-test ($t\text{-obtained} = 7.22 > t\text{-table} = 1.705$) confirms that the improvement is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, indicating that CLIL is effective in teaching reading. These results support Farouk (2024), who stated that CLIL enhances language and content mastery, and Montoya & Carolina (2018), who found that CLIL improves students' communicative and cognitive abilities. Thus, CLIL can be an effective method to improve reading skills among seventh-grade students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach significantly improved the reading skills of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri Selangit. This is evidenced by the increase in students' average scores from the pre-test (49.44) to the post-test (69.44), along with the rise in the number of students who achieved the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria—from 8 students in the pre-test to 23 in the post-test. Furthermore, the paired t-test analysis confirmed the statistical significance of this improvement, with the $t\text{-obtained}$ (7.22) exceeding the $t\text{-critical}$ value (1.705), indicating the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis.

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