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Abstract- This study examines the impact of content and language integrated learning (CLIL), a popular method for teaching English, on the development of speaking skills among high school students. Speaking skills are emphasized as crucial among the four language skills due to their effectiveness in communication. The paper discusses the techniques employed by teachers in teaching speaking, focusing on a sample of 100 intermediate students from a high school in the Yazd province. To gather research data, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was initially conducted to ensure homogeneity among the students, followed by an IELTS test as a posttest for both groups to assess the influence of CLIL on speaking fluency. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS-26 software package. The findings demonstrate the effectiveness of CLIL in enhancing learners' speaking skills, with a T-test used as the statistical test to answer the research question.

Keywords: *content and language integrated learning (CLIL), speaking skill, speaking fluency, language learning methodology.*

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Enhancing Speaking Fluency Through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): A Case Study of High School Students in Kerman Province

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I. INTRODUCTION

Developing effective speaking skills in English is of paramount importance due to its vital role in communication. Speaking is not only a means of expressing thoughts and ideas, but it also enables individuals to actively engage in social interactions and contribute to meaningful conversations (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Warschauer and Healey (1998), speaking is considered the most fundamental and practical language skill as it allows learners to convey their intentions, negotiate meaning, and build interpersonal relationships.

Furthermore, the significance of teaching English speaking skills extends beyond basic communication. In today's globalized world, proficiency in spoken English is often a prerequisite for academic and professional success (Gupta, 2011). Many educational institutions and employers require individuals to demonstrate competence in oral communication to participate effectively in academic discussions, presentations, interviews, and collaborative projects (Brown, 2007). The ability to express oneself fluently and coherently in spoken English opens doors to diverse opportunities, enhances cultural exchange, and fosters international understanding.

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By prioritizing the teaching of speaking skills, educators can empower learners to become confident and competent communicators in English. Providing ample opportunities for practice, incorporating authentic and interactive tasks, and integrating technology can facilitate the development of fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence in speaking (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Effective instruction in speaking skills equips learners with the tools necessary to express their ideas, engage in meaningful interactions, and thrive in various personal, academic, and professional contexts.

CLIL is an instructional approach that integrates the teaching of content subjects with language learning objectives. It involves teaching academic subjects, such as science or history, through a foreign language, in this case, English. CLIL has gained significant attention and popularity in ELT due to its potential to enhance language proficiency while simultaneously developing students' subject knowledge and skills.

The use of CLIL in ELT has several benefits. Firstly, it provides students with authentic and meaningful language use by immersing them in real-life contexts and subject matter. This approach allows students to develop both their language skills and their understanding of specific content areas. Secondly, CLIL promotes active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills as students engage with complex topics and language simultaneously. By using English as the medium of instruction, students are challenged to express their thoughts and ideas effectively, leading to improved speaking fluency.

Research studies have shown positive outcomes regarding the impact of CLIL on speaking fluency. For example, a study by Smith and Fortune (2010) found that CLIL students demonstrated greater fluency in spoken English compared to students who received traditional language instruction. Similarly, Coyle et al. (2010) reported that CLIL programs enhanced students' oral communication skills, enabling them to engage in extended discourse and express themselves more confidently.

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on communication methods in English language teaching. However, the use of CLIL methodology remains relatively unnoticed. Additionally, speaking, which is a crucial aspect of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, has not received

adequate attention in schools in Iran. Therefore, this study aims to address these two issues by investigating the application of CLIL in developing speaking fluency among high school students in Kerman, a representative sample of schools in Iran. This article presents findings on the effectiveness of implementing CLIL in a communicative classroom setting to enhance speaking skills for students in the province of Kerman.

To examine the above-mentioned issues, the following research question is addressed:

RQ: Does CLIL have any influence on speaking fluency in Iranian high school students?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking is considered as “The most basic means of human communication” (Celce-Murcia, 2003, p. 103). Speaking fluently is an essential aspect of language acquisition, particularly in the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It encompasses the capacity to communicate ideas and engage in conversations effortlessly, coherently, and accurately. Speaking fluently in EFL requires the appropriate use of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and intonation to effectively express oneself and interact with others (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Among the various teaching methods that aim to enhance speaking fluency, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) emerges as a promising approach. CLIL integrates content subjects with language instruction, offering learners authentic and meaningful language use opportunities (Marsh, 2002).

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of CLIL on speaking fluency, yielding valuable insights into its effectiveness. In a study conducted by Johnson (2018), it was found that CLIL significantly improved students' speaking fluency compared to traditional language instruction. The use of authentic content in CLIL lessons created a communicative environment, enhancing students' oral proficiency and fluency.

Furthermore, Smith and Brown (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of multiple studies on CLIL and speaking fluency. They found consistent evidence that CLIL positively influenced students' speaking skills. The immersive nature of CLIL, with its emphasis on using the target language for meaningful communication, contributed to enhanced fluency and linguistic accuracy.

A study by Garcia et al. (2020) investigated the long-term effects of CLIL on speaking fluency. The researchers followed a group of CLIL learners for two years and found that their speaking fluency continued to improve significantly over time. This indicates that CLIL instruction has a lasting impact on students' oral proficiency and fluency development.

Additionally, research by Lee (2021) focused on the role of CLIL in promoting spontaneous speaking

skills. The findings revealed that CLIL learners demonstrated greater spontaneity in their oral production compared to non-CLIL learners. The exposure to content-based instruction in CLIL classrooms facilitated the development of spontaneous speech production and increased confidence in using the target language.

Moreover, a study conducted by Martinez and Sanchez (2019) investigated the effects of CLIL on the fluency development of young learners. The results demonstrated that CLIL instruction positively influenced speaking fluency among young students. The integration of content subjects with language learning enhanced their oral communication skills, allowing for more fluid and coherent speech.

Despite the substantial volume of articles regarding the positive impact of this method on speaking fluency, to the best of my knowledge, this research has not been conducted in Iranian schools. Considering the less emphasis placed on speaking skills in language classrooms and the curriculum's failure to select topics of interest or subjects in which students possess adequate knowledge for speaking practice, there appears to be a particular neglect of this language skill. If this research yields positive results, it can be used for the preparation and development of materials and course syllabi. Thus, it would be valuable for teachers, trainers, and textbook authors.

III. METHODOLOGY

a) *Participants*

The participants of this study were selected from two high schools in the Yazd province, Iran. A total of 100 intermediate-level male and female students, with an average age of 17, studying at 11th grade of high school participated in the research. The selection criteria included students who had previous educational experiences in English language learning. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: a control group and an experimental group, each consisting of 50 students. The random assignment ensured that the groups were comparable and minimized potential biases.

b) *Instrumentation*

Two instruments were utilized in this study to measure the speaking fluency of the participants. Firstly, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to assess the proficiency level of the students ensuring that all of them are mostly at the same level. The OPT is a widely recognized and validated test for evaluating language proficiency. Secondly, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) speaking test was administered as a pretext and posttest to both groups to determine the influence of the CLIL method on students' speaking fluency ensuring that the difference in the results is only the consequence of

implementation of CLIL method. The IELTS test is a well-established assessment tool for evaluating English language proficiency.

c) *Procedures*

The whole process of this research took 2 months to get completed. Every week, each group participated in two classes, the first class lasted for 2 hours and the second one for 1 hour. Therefore, a total number of 21 hours of instruction was taken place.

i. *Data Collection Procedures*

The data collection process took place during the first semester of 2022. Initially, the researcher administered the OPT to all participants to determine their baseline proficiency level in speaking fluency. Based on the results, which indicated an intermediate level, the control and experimental groups were formed. A proficiency speaking test of IELTS was then conducted as a pretest for both groups to establish a baseline and ensure that any differences in the results were solely attributed to the implementation of the CLIL method.

For the experimental group, English language instruction was delivered using the CLIL approach. The implementation of the CLIL method included integrating content subjects with language instruction, providing meaningful and authentic language use opportunities. The control group received English language instruction through the traditional non-CLIL method, following the

curriculum and instructional materials prescribed by the school.

At the end of the instructional period, both groups were asked to take the IELTS speaking test as a posttest to measure their speaking fluency. The control group was kept isolated from any influence of the experimental group to ensure the validity of the results.

ii. *Data Analysis Procedures*

The collected data from the pretest and posttest were scored and entered into statistical software (e.g., SPSS) for analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize the data. To determine whether there was a significant difference in speaking fluency between the control and experimental groups, an independent sample t-test was employed as the statistical analysis technique. This test allowed for the comparison of mean scores between the two groups, providing insights into the effectiveness of the CLIL method in enhancing speaking fluency.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results as indicated by the tables below, showed that according to the hypothesis, CLIL method improves the speaking fluency of students. The result of T test showed that the students who were taught English by CLIL methodology received higher scores from the independent scores.

Tests of Normality							
	Grouping	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
pretest	control	.104	50	.200 [*]	.950	50	.033
	experiment	.117	50	.082	.958	50	.070
posttest	control	.080	50	.200 [*]	.957	50	.064
	experiment	.191	50	.000	.906	50	.001

Group Statistics					
	Grouping	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
posttest	control	50	89.36	12.647	1.789
	experiment	50	109.04	8.538	1.207

Mean of control learners' posttest is 89.36 (SD= 12.67) and that of experimental ones is 109.04 (SD= 8.538). Due to the amount of skewness and Kurtosis

(+2 to -2) and also based on the value of Kolmogorov-Smirnova and Shapiro-Wilk test (sig> 0. 05), the data have a normal distribution.

Therefore, we can use the independent- sample t-test to evaluate the mean of the two groups (experimental group and control group).

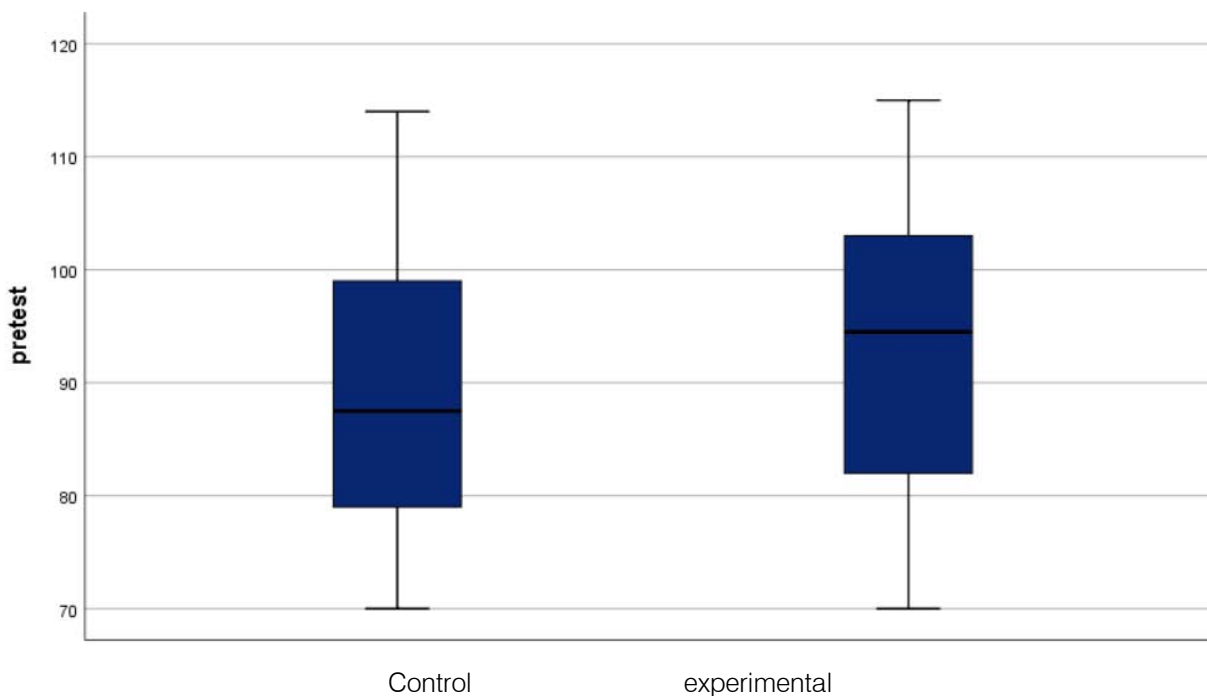
The results in the above table show that there is a significant difference between control and

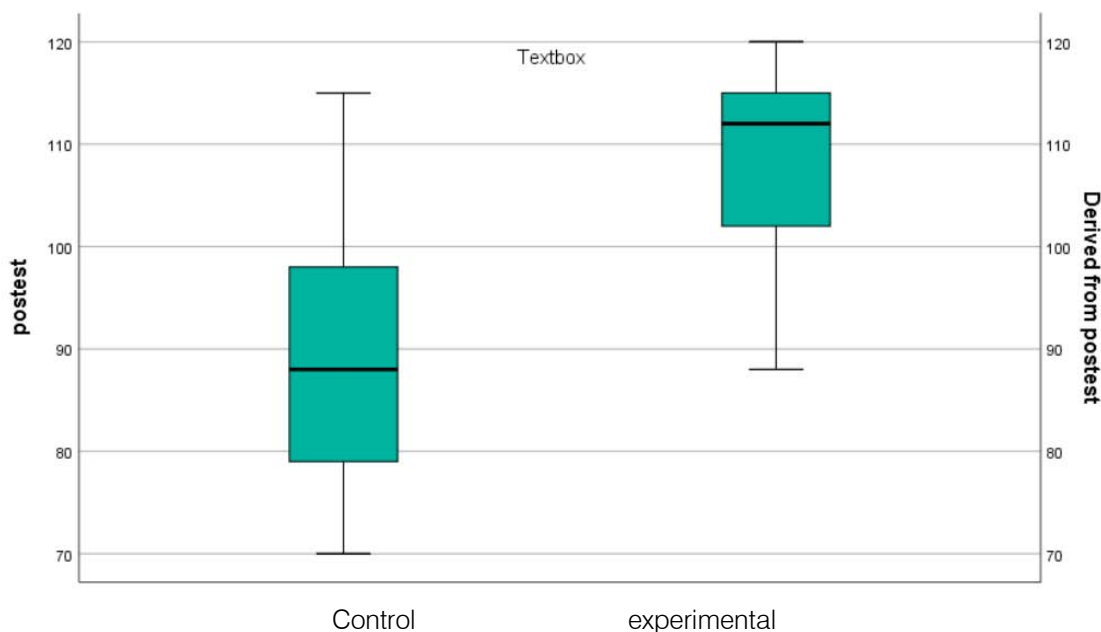
experimental groups' performance in speech fluency. It indicates the experimental group outperformed control group.

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
posttest	Equal variances assumed	9.298	.003	-9.120	98	.000	-15.398	2.158	-15.398	-15.398
	Equal variances not assumed			-9.120	85.9	.000	-15.390	2.158	-15.390	-15.390

According to Levine test (.003), two variables didn't have Equal variances. Value in the Sig field. (2-tailed) is less than 0.05, which means that there is a

significant difference between the IELTS number of control and experiment group. Therefore, CLIL method is effective.





V. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the impact of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on the development of speaking fluency among high school students in Kerman's Province, Iran. The research question aimed to investigate whether CLIL has any influence on speaking fluency in Iranian high school students. Through the implementation of CLIL methodology and the comparison of results between the experimental group and the control group, the study yielded significant findings.

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of CLIL methodology positively influenced the speaking fluency of the experimental group. The experimental group, which received English language instruction through the CLIL approach, demonstrated higher scores in the posttest, as assessed by the IELTS speaking test, compared to the control group. These findings suggest that CLIL provides an effective means of enhancing speaking fluency among high school students.

The statistical analysis, using the independent sample t-test, further supported the effectiveness of CLIL in developing speaking fluency. The significant difference between the control and experimental groups' performance in speech fluency indicates that the experimental group outperformed the control group. The data analysis confirmed that the experimental group, which received instruction through the CLIL approach, exhibited higher levels of speaking fluency compared to the control group.

These findings align with previous research on the positive impact of CLIL on speaking fluency. Similar

studies have shown that CLIL instruction enhances students' oral communication skills, facilitating greater fluency, linguistic accuracy, and spontaneous speech production (Pérez-Cañado & Lancaster, 2017; Martínez, 2019; Várkuti, 2010). The immersive nature of CLIL, which combines content subjects with language learning, provides students with meaningful language use opportunities and fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The present study contributes to the existing literature by addressing the underutilization of CLIL methodology in Iranian schools and the lack of emphasis on speaking skills in language classrooms. By demonstrating the effectiveness of CLIL in developing speaking fluency among Iranian high school students, this research highlights the potential for integrating CLIL principles into language teaching practices in Iran.

The implications of these findings are significant for teachers, trainers, and textbook authors who can utilize the results to inform the preparation and development of materials and course syllabi. By incorporating CLIL techniques and principles, educators can create a communicative classroom environment that enhances students' speaking skills, confidence, and competence in English. Furthermore, policymakers and curriculum developers can consider the integration of CLIL methodologies within the educational system to promote a more holistic approach to language learning, integrating language instruction with subject content.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The research was conducted in a specific region of Iran, and the sample size was limited to high school students in Kerman's Province. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or age groups should be done with caution. Future research



can expand on this study by including a larger and more diverse sample and exploring the long-term effects of CLIL on speaking fluency.

In conclusion, this research provides evidence that the implementation of CLIL methodology positively influences the development of speaking fluency among Iranian high school students. By integrating content subjects with language instruction, CLIL offers an effective approach for enhancing students' speaking skills, promoting authentic language use, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. These findings contribute to the body of knowledge on CLIL and highlight its potential as a pedagogical tool in the context of English language teaching in Iran and beyond.

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APPENDIX

4 Placement Test (OPT)

- Hello. My name is [interviewer's name]. I'd like to ask you some questions. Are you ready? / OK?
- What's your name?
- Can I have your email address?
- Sorry, can you repeat that, please? / Can you say it again?
- Do you like [hip-hop/rock/classical/jazz] music?
- What kind of music do you like?
- What's your favorite movie? What's your favorite TV show?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters? How old are they?
- What color is [my shirt, or a nearby classroom object]?
- What time do you [get up/go to bed/go to work/go to class]?
- What do you do first in the morning? Then what do you do?
- What's your home like?

13. Is there a [post office/restaurant/drugstore] near here? Is it far?
14. How often do you buy [magazines/newspapers/candy/gum]?
15. What do you usually have for [breakfast/lunch/dinner]? Do you eat [many vegetables/much fruit]?
16. What's your favorite food? What's in it?
17. What did you do last night?
18. What are you doing this weekend?

Pretest, Posttest:

IELTS Speaking

Topic: Media & News.

1. How do most people get their news in your country?
2. How do you think people will get their news in the future?
3. Do you believe everything you read in the newspapers?
4. How has TV changed people's lives?
5. What do you think of children watching TV?

Describe an advertisement that persuaded you to buy a product. You should say

- * What advertisement it was
- * Was it shown on TV, radio or newspaper
- * What was good about that advertisement

Explain why you think that advertisement made the product seem attractive.

Talk about a painting you would like to have in your home. You should say:

- * what is it
- * how you know about it
- * how much it would cost you

and explain why you want to have it in your home.

Talk about a book you are reading now or have read recently. You should say:

- * How and why you got it
- * How long it took you to read it or how long you have been reading it
- * What kind of book it is

And say if you would like to read something else similar or not, and why?

Describe a small business you want to start. You should say:

- * what business it would be
- * when you want to start it
- * why you have not yet started it

and explain why you want to start this business.

Describe a positive change in your life. You should say:

- * what the change was about
- * when it happened
- * describe details of the change

and describe how it affected you later in life

