Content and Language Integrated Learning Approach in Designing an English Course Book for Police Investigators at the People's Police University in Vietnam

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Abstract

In the 1990s, locally designed and produced materials used for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at the People's Police University in Vietnam (VPPU) proved ineffective due to flaws in L2-L1 translation. Since the creation of the original materials, English teachers at the VPPU have made consistent efforts to fix the problems, ranging from orthodox to empirical and experimental. Studies in recent years indicate that needs analysis seems to be a useful approach that can be transferred between language-led ESP and the more balanced Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). This paper reviews the evolution of CLIL to define the curriculum and to establish the scope of designing materials. It attempts to answer several significant questions about the context of education, such as what CLIL based materials have been published and compiled internationally, regionally and nationally, and the effectiveness of teaching with those materials in Vietnam. A case study of pilot teaching of CLIL-based materials conducted in the People's Police Academy in Vietnam (VPPA) - an educational institution of the shared context as the VPPU. The aim of this paper is to make a proposal for the application of appropriate CLIL models in developing specific course books for police students in the VPPU.

Key words *ESP, CLIL, CLIL-based materials, People's Police University in Vietnam*

1. Introduction

There is an overdue need for the introduction of updated materials for ESP teaching in the People's Police University (henceforth VPPU). For this purpose to be realized, a first step is to conduct a needs assessment. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) consider needs analysis as one of the key stages in ESP curriculum design. According to the researchers, subsequent stages include syllabus design, selection and production of materials, teaching and learning, and evaluation. Moreover, Ruiz-Garrido and Fortanet-Gómez (2009) believe that "needs analysis can be applied to CLIL, as have been carried out before mainly to ESP, for syllabus design and materials development" (p.179).

The VPPU English lecturers and experts all have come to a consensus on two main needs of VPPU students: linguistic competence and police professional knowledge. Nevertheless, they seem to disagree about the solutions to meeting these needs. Thuy (2009) paved the first stones of designing some ESP sample units for students at the People's Police University. Meanwhile, Thu (2010) referred to *Quest,* an interactive Internet resource, in teaching a particular skill of ESP reading. Although the staff have tackled some questions, the intrinsic part of effective materials remains untouched. The idea of deploying CLIL as a potential tool in shaping ESP curricula and materials at VPPU is therefore a significant area that is worth exploring in depth.

Supported by the US Embassy, the piloting of CLIL was initiated in Vietnam in 2011. It was however done in a restricted scope. As Thuy Nhan (2009) reported, "[a]ccordingly, from school year 2011-2012, natural science subjects, including Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Computer Science, w[ould] be taught totally in English in piloted gifted schools" (p.147). This limited quantity was principally due to the obstacles in implementing the project on a national scale.

In March 2015, CLIL was introduced to VPPU. Although it was at its preliminary stage, the investigation of CLIL implementation at VPPU could be of further use for future research into CLIL in the English as a foreign language context. Therefore, this paper aims to respond to the following research questions:

a) *What were the percentages of the learners' satisfactions for the CLIL implementation?*
b) *How did the learners perform in the post-implementation test?*
c) *What were the problems faced by the learners?*

2. Literature review

Foreign language learners in general, and police students in VPPU in particular, are required to be competent both in linguistic and professional skills so that they can effectively co-operate with their global counterparts. However, the joint task of language teachers and content teachers has always been a difficult endeavor. This challenge is due to insufficient efforts from both groups to help learners acquire the language necessary for communicating subject-matter content, as well as the groups' failure "to see that subject-matter content is a linguistic construal." (Fernández, 2009, p.11)

CLIL-based materials could be the answer that we are seeking. Originally described in the 1990s, CLIL involves educational methods where "subjects are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content, and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language" (Darn, 2006, p.2). In the CLIL approach, students can take advantage of being exposed to the target language and content lesson

simultaneously through five dimensions: culture, environment, language, content and learning. CLIL can also be defined as any educational activity in which "a foreign language is used as a tool in the learning of a non-language subject in which both language and the subject have a joint role" (Marsh, 2002, p.58). According to Coyle (2007), the dual focus on both the content and language aspects has been proved to help learners acquire new knowledge and skills as well as progressing in a language in a way which is relevant to their needs and experience.

In its *Action Plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity* (2003), the European Union emphasizes that

> *CLIL, in which pupils learn a subject through the medium of a foreign language, […] can provide effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for use later. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of learners, nurturing self-confidence in young learners and those who have not responded well to formal language instruction in general education.* (p.8)

Within the framework of Content-Based Instruction (CBI), CLIL developed alongside other popular approaches, such as Content-Based Learning (CBL), ESP, Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), Integration of Content and Language (ICL), Language Across the Curriculum and even Task-Based Learning (TBL). The differences between CLIL and these other approaches are "basically ontological and, consequentially, epistemological" (González, 2013, p.26). However, despite underlying differences, these approaches get bundled together because they share some assumptions, namely: teaching/learning a foreign language is an educational practice; content is inseparable from linguistic expression; it is necessary to coordinate the learning of language and subject-matter; language is the major medium of instruction and learning; subject-matter content contextualizes language learning.

Although many CBI approaches combine content and learning objectives, CLIL is likely to be the most effective for VPPU because of its strong research base. For instance, "the important advantage offered by CLIL is its potential for achieving bilingualism and improving intercultural understanding" and "CLIL is worth implementing into the school curricula" (Klimova, 2012, p.573). As the benefits of CLIL from both a motivational and a language competence perspective have been confirmed (Lasagabaster, 2009), I strongly believe that teaching CLIL-based materials for police students in the VPPU is a sustainable approach. *English for Law Enforcement (McMillan)*, which has been introduced into the VPPU's curriculum since 2012, is preferred at the beginning, thanks to its authenticity. However, students benefit scantily from the

course book since it has been developed out of the EU and American legal framework as well as upon the assumption of TESOL methodology applied in the continent. CLIL, therefore, is regarded as "a generic umbrella with models that require methodological adaptations and language support depending on the language proficiency of the involved students" (Nashaat, Berzosa & Crean, 2013, p.254).

Upon seeking the simulation patterns that can be realized for educational institutions, Pérez-Vidal (2005) lays out three CLIL models (A, B, C), distinguished by their level of focus on content and language, of which Model C is most desired as it equally focuses on language and content as each is a vehicle conducive to the other.

3. Background to pilot implementation of CLIL in Vietnam

3.1 VPPU

In an attempt to meet the requirements of updated and effective ESP course books, VPPU has taken into consideration some compiled materials for the police from other countries such as Indonesia and Georgia, attained by our colleagues under the English Language Program sponsored by Regional English Language Office, U.S. Embassy. These text books can hardly be used in the localized context of the VPPU, and the university still needs its own CLIL-based course books as Darn (2006) claims that "[i]nstitutions using a CLIL approach are likely to enhance their profile by accessing international certification and preparing students for internationalization" (p.3).

The model of 'Language teaching through content teaching' suggested by Fernández (2009, p.15) as a revision and modification of Mohan's (1986) description of the combinations of language and content, can be viewed as another reference in designing the materials at VPPU. This could, as stated by Coyle (2009), surpass other models thanks to the following CLIL advantages:

  - o Raising linguistic competence and confidence
  - o Raising expectations
  - o Developing a wider range of skills
  - o Raising awareness: cultures and the global citizenship agenda

And in some particular situations, it "attempts to overcome the restraints of traditional school curricula, and in future it could bring about a shift to curricular integration" (Novotná & Hofmannová, 2000, p.226). This could be exemplified by a project which aimed at designing CLIL-based materials for the People's Police University in Vietnam (VPPU).

3.2 Experimental teaching session at the People's Police Academy (VPPA): A case study

An experimental teaching project was launched at the People's Police Academy in Vietnam (VPPA) in March 2015. Regarded as the cradle of police officer training in Vietnam, VPPA campus is based in Hanoi, the North of Vietnam, with which VPPU in the South, maintains a hand-in-glove co-operative relationship.

4. Methodology

4.1 Trainers and trainees

The educational project was sponsored by the U.S. Embassy, and coordinated by Lottie L. Baker, an English language specialist from the Regional English Language Office. Twenty trainers were selected from experienced language teachers, fifteen of whom from the Faculty of Foreign Languages, VPPA and five of whom from VPPU Department of Foreign Languages. Sixty commissioned officers from Traffic Policemen Department and Administrative Policemen Department of Hanoi, were assigned to two corresponding classes of trainees.

The trainers were trained beforehand on the curriculum, material compilations, and feedback collection, by which helped create the materials. At the beginning of each class meeting, they had to assure that necessary preparation has been completed and possible scenarios anticipated for unexpected questions from trainees. Then the meetings were conducted in form of co-teaching lectures and interactive activities, which provides comfort and diversity to the classrooms. After each class, lecturers collected feedback from students about the perceived successes and drawbacks of the sessions and discussed each other's perspectives and suggestions. These daily efforts were encouraged and supervised by the Program Coordinator, whose ultimate aim was a refined compilation of materials for policemen in Vietnam.

4.2 Materials

The materials were eclectically assembled from latest web postings and articles which are relevant to the program themes, as well as task-based conversations built up to familiarize trainers to daily situations. Materials developed for police academies in Georgia and Indonesia were consulted as references and models. The materials, which have undergone meticulous editing carried by proficient English speakers, including the Embassy-sponsored English language specialist and her colleagues, tends to be a reliable resource to be taught in the future with appropriate modifications.

The reliability of the materials, on the other hand, lies in the trainers' reflection on the experience of piloting the materials, as well as in the trainees' comments, which were gathered after each class meeting and at the end of the training course. For a sample of the materials, see Appendix.

4.3 Data collection

During the training period, the trainers took notes of outstanding participants as progress assessments. And at the end of the third week, the participants were asked to sit a test containing questions on vocabulary and reading comprehension as well as an oral task. The results of the test would be used to measure the outcomes of the project. After the test had been marked, informal interviews were set up to discuss problems (if any) that the trainers may have faced during the training.

5. Findings

5.1 Learners' satisfactions

To respond to RQ 1, figures and statistics from students' feedback are employed to clarify the effectiveness of materials and teaching activities. It can be ascertained that the initiative of CLIL-based material was highly appreciated by the trainees. Fifty-five out of sixty participants provided feedback on the materials and the teaching. The majority of learners welcomed the designed content, which were vividly manifested by abundant and diversified teaching activities. (cf. Table 1).

Table 1 Trainees' satisfaction on the basic elements of the project (in percentage)

	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Materials	15	60	25
Teaching activities	10	40	50
Teachers	5	35	60

5.2 Learners' performance

For RQ 2, overall, the trainees' performance failed to meet the trainers' expectations. The percentage of students who scored high in their final test is comparatively low in *Reading Comprehension* and *Oral performance*. This might correlate to their poor command of police register that they have acquired. The breakdown of Table 2 also suggests that the in-service officers are not very competent in both linguistic and professional skills and that a large number of them may not survive a conversation with a foreign perpetrator, or a visitor that seeks help from local policemen.

Table 2 Trainees' scores of final test (in percentage)

	Low	Average	High
Vocabulary	35	50	15
Reading comprehension	30	40	30
Oral performance	25	45	30

This low-quality performance could be the direct consequence of short time span of the course, which was mentioned by many of the trainees on the surveys. It could also result from impairments of the outdated materials they had been familiar with, as well as their lack of exposure to native speakers in their working environment. In general, the textbook is the single most predominant curriculum delivery vehicle in schools (Jobrack, 2011). The textbook's role, however, extends beyond the dissemination of information "in mediating the politics of what is taught, and even what methods are used to teach students." (Robinson, Fischer, Wiley & Hilton, 2014, p.341).

5.3 Problems that the trainers faced

Apart from the aforementioned causes, subjective factors that can downgrade the effectiveness of the project should also be taken into consideration. Informal interviews with the trainers were carried out in order to confirm the supposed deficiency in CLIL knowledge of training staff.

As the interviews suggested, despite the growing interest in CLIL, only a modest amount of research relevant to the learning of police profession through English as a medium can be found in the literature. It would not be overstated that the majority of trainers of the project are novice in this field. They do not have the faintest notion of CLIL approach and CLIL based materials. In other words, they should therefore need further CLIL training courses to have a good command of the target language and resort to the learners' mother tongue only for strategic purposes. And they should also be aware that, as Novotná, Hadj-Moussová, and Hofmannová (2009) claim, "CLIL calls for an interactive teaching style. Verbal input should be accompanied with the use of visual and multimedia aids" (p.3). CLIL teaching skills could be attained by attending training courses or referring to "4C's Curriculum Guidance, 3A's Lesson Planning Tool and Matrix Audit Tool for Tasks & Materials" recommended by Coyle (2005).

In addition, teachers' shortage of CLIL knowledge has sometimes threatened the success of the project by undermining the balance between language and content, which is the core essence of CLIL. Being tied to traditional approaches, instructors appeared to forget their task in this field, that is, to flexibly adapt their instructional support in order to enable incidental acquisition in the learners. They should have been able to

"involve learners as much as possible, build their interdependence in both content and language and encourage cooperative learning as peer support is equally important in CLIL." (Novotná, Hadj-Moussová, & Hofmannová, 2009, p.5).

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The fruitfulness of projects funded by the U.S. Embassy in Indonesia, Georgia and recently in Vietnam, implies that, in the long run, the exploitation of CLIL as an innovative and efficient form of instruction in classrooms for policemen and law enforcers should remain a target in the VPPU's foreign language projects. However, rather than hastily establishing too ambitious goals of developing materials for all the ten police majors in the institution, it is now wiser to gradually prepare materials for units one at a time. It is recommended to start with Forensics, Anti-Drugs or Prisoner Warden, as they share similar characteristics with their counterparts in ASEAN countries as well as in America.

Another suggestion to consider is that encouraging the English instructors and the content instructors at VPPU to coordinate closely in designing the materials — this will ensure that the English taught is tied to the real needs of the police officers' jobs and content knowledge in other courses. Thus, as Kelly (2014) claims, furnishing all the necessary conditions from management factors, such as administration's support, a whole-school policy, to teacher factor and resource factor, is necessary for CLIL materials to be practiced nationwide. This will, in turn, realize the possibility of developing CLIL-based police training materials in other ASEAN countries.

The possibility of project expansion could be incorporated into the agenda of Asia Regional Law Enforcement Management Program (ARLEMP), which is held annually in various countries to clarify mutually accepted aims and measures at both governmental and individual level. Furthering this paper's commentary, forums concerning perception of the CLIL approach can be conducted for voices from CLIL practitioners in police training educational institutions across the ASEAN region to be heard. This has become an urgent call for concerned educators in the region as Banegas (2014) suspects that "publishers, especially in this era of the global coursebook, may not be interested to localise their international course books to match the national curricula in every setting [due to] … huge investment and little profits" (p.125).

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Appendix: **Sample of CLIL-based materials**

PREFACE

With the spread of globalization in ASEAN, the number of foreigners coming to Vietnam to visit and to work is growing daily. As a result, traffic police officers in Vietnam work directly with foreign motorists and pedestrians every day. These foreigners come from all different countries, but many of them use English as a *lingua franca* to communicate, which requires these officers to be trained adequately in language and skills for the situations.

With the aim of helping traffic students use English in their future jobs and within 75 periods allotted, this course book is designed with the following language activities: *Preview*, *Vocabulary*, *Grammar*, *Listening*, *Reading*, *Speaking* and *Writing*. The exercises are designed based on simulated situations, which provide students opportunities to employ linguistic and professional knowledge in the reality.

The course book comprises 7 units:

Unit 1: Assisting foreigners with directions and tourist spots
Unit 2: Traffic and vehicles
Unit 3: Traffic regulations
Unit 4: Vehicle registration procedures
Unit 5: Vehicle checks
Unit 6: Stopping foreigners for violations
Unit 7: Handling traffic accidents involving foreigners

In spite of great efforts, errors are inevitable. We highly appreciate your feedbacks and comments to update the course book for the sake of our students.

UNIT	LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS	VOCABULARY	GRAMMAR
Unit 1: Assisting foreigners with directions and tourist spots	Comprehend questions from lost tourists and foreigners Give directions Make recommendations for tourists	Terms related to traffic landmarks Prepositions of place Directional terms	Imperative / Commands
Unit 2: Traffic and vehicles	Describe types of vehicle Describe registration plates	Colours Makes of vehicle Radio telephony alphabet	*There + 'BE'*
Unit 3: Traffic regulations	Read information of driving licenses. Recognize traffic signs	Traffic signs	*Have to / don't have to You are allowed*
Unit 4: Vehicle registration procedures	Request documents from foreigners related to registering or transferring vehicles Explain general processes for registering or transferring vehicles	Identification documents and forms	Requests for information Conditional clauses with *if / then*
Unit 5: Vehicle check	Describe parts of a car Describe types of problems	Parts of a car Penalties	*Must / mustn't* Passive
Unit 6: Stopping foreigners for violations	Make polite requests for documents and information Explain rules and consequences for violating rules Comprehend written information on driving documents	Collocations related to traffic violations Terms used in identification documents	Requests with *can*
Unit 7: Handling traffic accidents involving foreigners	Describe types of collisions Describe common causes of traffic accidents Understand and retell witness reports of accidents	Types of collisions Terms related to describe accidents	Past progressive

① ASSISTING FOREIGNERS WITH DIRECTIONS AND TOURIST SPOTS

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

comprehend questions from lost tourists and foreigners.

give directions using landmarks, roads, and prepositions of place.

make recommendations for tourists.

Purpose: Activate background knowledge about roles of traffic police in giving directions.

ACTIVITY 1

Discuss with a partner about the following questions.

1. What do you see in this photograph? Make a list.
2. Has a foreigner ever asked you for directions? What happened?
3. What kinds of questions do foreigners or tourists usually ask police officers?
4. What English words or phrases do the traffic officers need to use in these situations? Make a list.

VOCABULARY
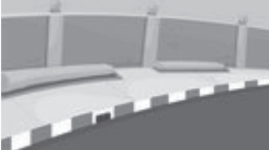
Purpose: Learn words and phrases associated with giving directions.

U.S.	U.K.
sidewalk	*pavement*
crosswalk	*zebra crossing*
overpass	*crossover*

ACTIVITY 2

Look at the following images. Write the English term for the image and Vietnamese translation.

zebra crossing	*intersection*
roundabout	*crossover*
traffic lights	*pavement*

		English term	Vietnamese term
1		*traffic lights*	*đèn tín hiệu giao thông*
2		_____	_____
3		_____	_____
4		_____	_____
5		_____	_____
6		_____	_____

ACTIVITY 3

Purpose: Listen for gist

[1.1] a. Listen to the following dialogue between a police officer and a foreign tourist.
Answer the questions.
1. What does the tourist want to know?
2. Was the police officer able to help her?
3. What do you think the tourist will do next?

Purpose: Listen for details   **b. Listen again to complete the blanks.**

GIVING DIRECTIONS

Tourist *Excuse me. I think I am* ⁽¹⁾ *_____. Can you help me?*

  Police *Sure. Where are you trying to go?*

Tourist *I can't find my way back to my hotel.*

  Police *Where are you staying? What's the* ⁽²⁾*_____ of the hotel?*

Tourist *It's the Sofitel Metropole Hotel, near the French Quarter* ⁽³⁾*_____.*

                Okay, it's not far from here. Continue straight on Le Thanh Tong

  Police *Street* ⁽⁴⁾ *_____ you get to the roundabout. You will*
          see Hanoi Opera House. It is a big yellow building. You can't miss it.

          Okay, I think I know where that is.

          At the roundabout, make a ⁽⁵⁾ *_____ onto Trang Tien Street for about 200*

Tourist *meters. You'll make the first right onto Ngo*

  Police *Quyen Street. Your hotel is at the intersection of Ngo Quyen*
         and Trang Tien.

         Okay, so I'll go ⁽⁶⁾ *_____ till the Opera House, and make a*

Tourist *left onto Trang Tien Street until I see the intersection with Ngo Quyen.*
         ⁽⁷⁾ *_____ like you've got it!*

  Police *Okay. Thanks so much!*

Tourist *Sure, no problem. Anything else I can help you with?*

  Police *Umm, well, this afternoon I have some* ⁽⁸⁾ *_____ time before*

Tourist *dinner. Do you have any recommendations for something to do near*
     my hotel? I can't go very far because I am meeting friends for dinner.

         Well, let's see. Your hotel is ⁽⁹⁾ *_____ to many tourist spots.*

  Police *You can walk down to Hoan Kiem Lake. The Revolutionary Museum*
     isn't far either, but it is closed right now for lunch.

Tourist *Oh, okay.*

  Police *There're also plenty of* ⁽¹⁰⁾ *_____ and restaurants nearby.*

Tourist *Thanks a lot. That's really helpful!*

  Police *Have a good afternoon!*

c. Answer the questions with a partner about the dialogue.

1. What did the tourist say to get the officer's attention?

   _____

2. What is the tourist's problem?

   _____

3. Is the tourist close to or far from her hotel?

   _____

4. What landmark did the officer say for the tourist to look for on her way?

   _____

5. Decide the meaning of this expression: *"You can't miss it!"*
   a. You can't see the building.
   b. You can see the building because it's very easy to find.

6. How else does the officer help the tourist?

   _____

7. The officer mentioned 3 things to do in the afternoon. What are they?

   _____

8. Why can't the tourist go very far from the hotel in the afternoon?

   _____

GRAMMAR   *Imperative / Command*

① **Use:** The imperative or command form of a sentence states rules and tells people what to do.
   - *Stop right there!*
   - *Finish the report before you leave.*

② **Form:** The base verb form.
   - *Turn left at the traffic light.*

③ For negative sentences, **do not** or **don't** is added before the verb.
  Example:
    - ***Don't*** *turn right at the traffic light.*
④ Sometimes, imperative sentences can sound forceful or rude. Use [***please***] to soften the command.
  Example:
    - ***Please*** *call when you arrive safely.*

PRACTICE

Purpose: Practice common questions and answers.

Match each question with the answer. Write the letter of the "tourist" phrase next to the correct **phrase** for the "police officer".

TOURIST

(A) Excuse me, can you tell me where the post office is?

(B) Which way is Hoan Kiem Lake?

(C) Where can I find a taxi to the airport?

(D) I need to buy some souvenirs. Do you know of a good shopping area?

(E) Excuse me, can you speak English?

(F) I'm lost and can't find my hotel.

(G) Excuse me, how can I cross the street with all this traffic?

(H) Do you know if there is an ATM machine nearby?

(I) About how long do you think it takes to go to the airport from here?

POLICE OFFICER

_ ***B***_ *0. The lake is two streets to the left.*

____ *1. It should be about 45 minutes, but it will be longer in rush hour traffic.*

____ *2. There are many taxis near the hotel across the street.*

____ *3. Sure, the post office is straight ahead on the left.*

____ *4. Try the next street over. There are many banks there.*

____ *5. You can walk down about 200 meters and go over the pedestrian overpass.*

____ *6. What is the name of your hotel?*

____ *7. Yes, I can speak English! How can I help you?*

____ *8. Go across the overpass and turn left. You'll find a market there with lots of vendors.*