

Navigating Multilevel Challenges in CLIL Implementation at a Japanese University

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ABSTRACT

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has emerged as a dynamic approach to enhancing English proficiency in non-native speaking environments. This study examines the implementation of CLIL in a Japanese university setting, where English is not the primary focus but the medium of instruction, with the overall aim of improving language ability through meaningful use. This paper identifies and analyzes key challenges faced by educators, including the difficulty of scaffolding content effectively to cater to multiple proficiency levels, thereby ensuring that advanced students remain engaged without overwhelming beginners. It also delves into designing activities that resonate with a diverse student body, developing accurate assessment tools, eliciting meaningful feedback, and fostering sustained engagement in the English-mediated classroom. Through qualitative analysis of teacher and student feedback, alongside classroom observations, the study proposes strategic approaches to balance content complexity with language acquisition, enhance student interaction, and optimize learning outcomes in CLIL settings. By addressing these multifaceted challenges, the research aims to contribute to the evolving discourse on CLIL pedagogy and its application in higher education in Japan, offering insights into creating more inclusive, effective, and stimulating learning environments.

Keywords: Communicative language teaching, Content-Based instruction, English language instruction