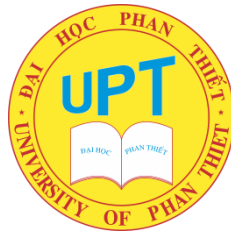


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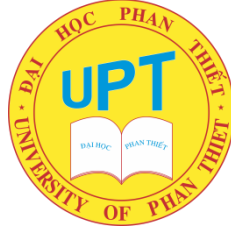
**NGÔ THÚY NGA**

**The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS  
Speaking Test Performance  
at Hai Dang Language Centre**

**MASTER'S GRADUATION PROJECT  
MAJORED IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**Bình Thuận Province – 2024**

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**CODE: 8220201**

**MASTER'S GRADUATION PROJECT**

**INSTRUCTOR'S NAME(s): TRẦN THỊ QUỲNH LÊ. Ph.D.**

**Bình Thuận Province – 2024**

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## ABSTRACT

This explanatory sequential mixed-methods study aims to investigate the impact of CLIL on the IELTS speaking test performance of EFL adolescents attending Hai Dang Language Centre. The study also explores the perceptions of both students regarding the integration of CLIL in enhancing IELTS speaking test outcomes. In the quantitative phase of the study, 111 EFL adolescent students from four intermediate-level classes took speaking pre-post-test assessments to define their speaking proficiency. Next, two pairs of classes are assigned to two groups: a control group receiving traditional language instruction and an experimental group exposed to CLIL-based instruction. The assessment criteria encompass fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation as well as their ability to deal with complicated tasks. Additionally, quantitative data was collected through a Likert questionnaire to investigate the students' viewpoints on CLIL. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, T-tests, and thematic analysis. Following that is the observation checklist to evaluate their progress in the class during a 12-week intervention. In the qualitative phase of the study, the follow-up focus group interview with students indicated there was a positive impact of CLIL on EFL adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre. The findings indicated that CLIL-based instruction contributed to better speaking performance and ability to address the complicated abstract questions of the IELTS speaking test. The findings also underscored the positive learning experience and the potential benefits of integrating knowledge content and language learning to boost the learners' confidence, motivation and their engagement into the lessons.

### Keywords:

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), EFL adolescents, IELTS speaking test, language proficiency.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- BICS: Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
- CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
- CEFR: Council European Framework
- CG: Control Group
- CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning
- EG: Experimental Group
- EFL: English as a Foreign Language
- IELTS: International English Language Testing System
- M: Mean
- MOET: The Ministry of Education and Training
- N: Number
- SD: Standard Deviation
- SPSS: Statistic Package for the Social Sciences

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# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The first chapter introduces the rationale including the theoretical and contextual background to the study. The problem statement, the aims of the study, the hypothesis and research questions, the significance of the study, definitions of key terms, and the organization of the study will also be presented in the following parts.

## 1.1 Background to the Study

The pursuit of English language proficiency among non-English-speaking nations has become increasingly vital in a globalized world, where English serves as a lingua franca for international communication. In the Vietnamese context, so far English has received special attention at every level including K-12 education, vocational education, higher education, and continuing education. The most concrete evidence is Decision 1400/QĐ-TTg on the Approval of the National Foreign Languages Project for the 2008-2020 period (Vietnam Government, 2008), whose curriculum asserts that the students start studying English from Grade 3 onwards (MOET, 2008) and the introduction of the 6-level Framework, which is compatible with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), is used to define learners' language competency across different education levels (MOET, 2014). Additionally, it is expected that students aim for Level 1 (A1 CEFR) after completing elementary school, Lower Secondary education reaches Level 2 (A2 CEFR), and High school students end up with Level 3 (B1 CEFR). After that, within the following Project titled "Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Education System, Period 2017-2025" (Vietnam Government, 2017), it is expected to "promote the integration of teaching FLs and teaching other subjects, (such as Maths and sciences and specialised majors), using English as a medium of instruction. Currently, EFL Vietnamese adolescents are standing at the crossroads of linguistic development, and their ability to articulate thoughts and ideas in English is pivotal for future academic and professional success. They are expected to be global citizens integrating into the international community and acquire intellectual knowledge of science and cutting-edge technology in the work in order to serve their nation.



Despite putting a great deal of time and effort into improving their English proficiency, EFL teenagers often face challenges in achieving high levels of competence, particularly in speaking skills. Following Circular No. 28/2021/TT-BGDDT on Promulgation Of The Practical English Program For Continuing Education, the Practical English Program for Continuing Education is built on the foundation of Vietnam's 6-level Framework for Foreign Language Competency. Language knowledge is a means of forming and developing communicative competence through speaking, listening, reading, and writing (MOET, 2021). Besides that, the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) has emerged as an essential tool in assessing the English language proficiency of non-native speakers, with the Academic IELTS test specifically tailored to evaluate language skills within academic contexts. IELTS scores can be translated into CEFR (Cambridge English Assessment, 2019). In fact, a large number of top universities in Vietnam and international institutions choose to set different scores on tests of languages for academic purposes like the Academic IELTS test as entry requirements (Green, 2014; Trang Ha, 2023).

The IELTS speaking test, as an internationally recognized assessment of spoken English proficiency, is used for academic purposes. However, EFL learners, especially adolescents, often struggle with maintaining fluency, coherence, and pronunciation in the speaking component of the IELTS test.

CLIL has gained recognition as a pedagogical approach that merges subject-content instruction with language learning. In the context of EFL learners, the IELTS speaking test poses challenges, particularly for adolescents. The potential of CLIL to enhance language skills and academic performance has been explored, but its influence on specific language assessments like the IELTS speaking test remains underexamined.

In CLIL lessons, content is selected and the precise language is learned to facilitate students' understanding and making presentations in that content. Due to this, students are able to acquire technical vocabulary and grammatical structures that are not typically covered in a general English lesson at that level. (Hammer, 2015)

Hai Dang Language Centre, situated at Phan Thiet City, has recognized the significance of adopting innovative methodologies to meet the evolving needs of EFL learners. This study seeks to investigate the impact of CLIL on the IELTS speaking test performance of EFL adolescents attending the Hai Dang Language Centre.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) represents an innovative pedagogical approach that seeks to enhance language acquisition through the integration of language learning with subject matter content. Originating in Europe, CLIL has been widely adopted in educational systems worldwide due to its potential to improve language proficiency and content knowledge simultaneously (Marsh, 2002).

The IELTS Speaking test, a fundamental assessment for non-native English speakers in accessing international educational and professional opportunities, demands a high level of proficiency in fluency, pronunciation, coherence, lexical resources, and grammatical accuracy (Cambridge English Language Assessment et al., 2021).

To date, numerous studies have explored the effectiveness of CLIL in general language acquisition (e.g., Coyle, 2007; Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Pérez Cañado, 2012). In the Vietnamese context, the research studies focus on tertiary education (e.g., Nguyen, 2020; Phan, 2021; Nguyen, 2021). Limited research regarding its specific impact on high-stakes language assessments like the IELTS Speaking Test has been conducted, particularly in private language center settings. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate how CLIL, with its focus on content-integrated language instruction, influences the specific skill set required for success in this assessment.

This research seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of CLIL on the IELTS Speaking Test performance of EFL adolescents at Hai Dang Language Centre. The study aims to provide empirical evidence of whether CLIL, as

implemented in this private language center, contributes significantly to students' speaking proficiency and their ability to excel in the IELTS Speaking Test.

### **1.3 The Current Study**

#### ***1.3.1 Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of CLIL on EFL adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre. First, the study aims to investigate the positive effect of CLIL on adolescent EFL learners' performance in the IELTS speaking test. Finally, the study explores how EFL adolescents describe their overall learning experience and perceive the benefits of CLIL in terms of their enhancement in IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre..

#### ***1.3.2 Research Hypotheses***

In order to carry out these aims, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant positive effect of CLIL on adolescent EFL learners' performance in the IELTS speaking test.

**Hypothesis 2:** The CLIL methodology significantly improve the learning experience of EFL adolescents, leading to measurable benefits in their performance on the IELTS Speaking test.

These research hypotheses aim to determine the potential effects of CLIL instruction on the IELTS Speaking test performance of EFL adolescents at Hai Dang Language Centre.

#### ***1.3.2 Research Questions***

Specifically, the paper attempts to answer the following questions:

- What is the positive effect of CLIL on adolescent EFL learners' IELTS speaking test performance?

The first research question investigates the impact of CLIL on the overall performance of adolescent EFL learners at Hai Dang Language Centre. The CLIL immerses students in a language-rich environment and engages them interactively. The findings are expected to provide insights into the

effectiveness of CLIL in improving students' oral proficiency and their ability to perform well in standardized language assessments such as the IELTS speaking test.

- How do EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement at Hai Dang Language Centre?

By examining students' perspectives on their CLIL learning experience and its impact on their speaking test performance, the second research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of CLIL in promoting language proficiency and fostering positive learning outcomes. The insights collected from students' description provide valuable feedback for teachers and administrators at Hai Dang Language Centre.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study exploring the impact of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on adolescent students' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang language centre holds significant practical implications for both educators and language learners. The practical significance of this research can be seen through various dimensions:

First of all, CLIL is an innovative approach that merges language instruction with subject content, promoting language learning through meaningful and contextually relevant activities. By investigating its impact on IELTS speaking test performance, this study contributes to the broader advancement of CLIL pedagogy, especially in EFL contexts. It provides insights into the adaptability of CLIL in test-focused language centers and its potential to enhance learners' linguistic and communicative skills.

Second, understanding how CLIL affects EFL adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance holds the promise of improved language proficiency outcomes. If CLIL proves to be effective in enhancing speaking abilities, not only may learners perform better on the IELTS speaking test but they also develop higher overall

English language skills. This could have lasting effects on learners' academic and professional trajectories, as language proficiency is often a key determinant of success in higher education and global job markets.

Third, Academic IELTS is a widely recognized language proficiency test that plays a crucial role in educational and migration pathways for international students. The study's findings can offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of CLIL in preparing EFL adolescents for the IELTS speaking test. This can influence test preparation strategies at language centers like Hai Dang, potentially leading to more tailored and impactful teaching methods.

Next, adolescents have unique cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics that influence their language learning process. Investigating the impact of CLIL on this specific age group provides valuable insights into effective instructional strategies for adolescent language learners. This research can uncover whether the integrated approach of CLIL resonates with the developmental needs of adolescents, which can be used to inform instructional design in various educational settings.

Then, the study contributes to the academic literature by examining the impact of CLIL on a specific language skill within a particular context. The findings can enrich the discourse on language education, providing a nuanced understanding of the potential benefits of CLIL for speaking test performance.

Additionally, the study's focus on a specific language center, Hai Dang, provides localized insights that can guide educational practices within similar contexts. The findings may influence curriculum design, teacher training, and educational policies in EFL language centers aiming to incorporate CLIL approaches. Policymakers and educators can leverage these findings to create more effective language learning environments.

Last but not least, the study's results may open avenues for educational innovation and reform. If CLIL is found to have a positive impact on IELTS speaking test performance, it can encourage other language centers and institutions to adopt similar approaches. This could trigger a broader shift towards more integrated,

contextually relevant, and communicative language teaching methods in EFL education.

In conclusion, the study on the impact of CLIL on EFL adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre holds significant implications for educational practice, language acquisition theories, and the enhancement of language proficiency among adolescents. Its findings can influence pedagogical strategies, curriculum development, and educational policies both within the local context and the broader EFL education landscape.

## **1.5 Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

### ***1.5.1 Scope***

The study focuses on investigating the impact of CLIL on the IELTS speaking test performance of EFL adolescents at Hai Dang Language Centre. The research specifically examines the effects of CLIL methodology on EFL adolescents' performance preparing for the IELTS test.

### ***1.5.2 Delimitations***

To ensure the research study remains focused and feasible, the following limitations were considered:

**Geographic Scope.** The study was conducted exclusively at Hai Dang Language Centre, and the findings may not be generalizable to other language centers or educational institutions.

**Age Group.** The study only involves EFL adolescents aged 15 to 18 due to the specific focus on this age range and the language center's demographic. While efforts were made to ensure the sample represents diverse EFL adolescents, the findings might not fully represent the entire population.

**Speaking Skills.** The research concentrated solely on the speaking skills of participants and did not assess the impact of CLIL on other language skills (listening, reading, and writing) or broader language proficiency.

**Subject Areas.** The scope of CLIL integration may vary across subject areas. This study did not delve into the specific subject domains but rather evaluated the overall impact of CLIL on speaking test performance.

**Time Constraints.** The study was conducted within 3 months, potentially constraining the depth of data collection and analysis. Therefore, comprehensive longitudinal data collection might not be feasible within the study's timeframe.

**Measurement Tools.** The study's reliance on measures, such as pre-and post-tests, Likert scale items, and the focus interview could introduce social desirability bias or limitations in accurately assessing speaking skills.

**External Factors.** External factors such as individual learning styles, prior educational backgrounds, and extracurricular activities might influence speaking test performance but are not comprehensively addressed within this study.

**Long-Term Effects.** The study focused on the short-term impact within the context of the IELTS Speaking test and might not delve into the long-term effects of CLIL on overall language development.

**Ethical Considerations.** Ethical concerns related to informed consent, participant confidentiality, and data protection may impact the study's execution.

## 1.6 Definition of Terms

For better clarification and understanding, the following is the definition of special terms used in this study:

- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS): BICS refers to the skills required for social, conversational situations. (Cummins, 2001; as cited in Bently, 2010)
- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP): CALP refers to a level required for academic schooling, which is often more cognitively demanding. (Cummins, 2001; as cited in Bently, 2010)
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): a standard used to define the accomplishments of foreign language learners in Europe and other nations. (Galloway, 2020)
- English as a foreign language (EFL): the learning and teaching of English to individuals in nations where English is not the means of communication. (Galloway, 2020)

- English medium instruction (EMI): teaching academic subjects in English in settings where English is not used as the main language of communication. (Galloway, 2020)
- Lingua franca: Lingua franca refers to “any of various languages used as common and commercial tongue among peoples of diverse speech” (Merriam-Webster, n.d., Definition 2).

### **1.7 Structure of the Thesis**

The organization of the study follows a logical progression. This thesis comprises 5 chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Literature review, (3) Research Methodology, (4) Findings, and (5) Discussions, Conclusion Pedagogical Implications.

- Chapter 1, the Introduction, provides the problem statement, the aims of the study, the hypothesis and research questions, the significance of the study, definitions of key terms, and the organization of the study.
- Chapter 2, Literature Review, explores the theories related to the study including the background study of speaking skills, speaking skills assessment, CLIL in Language Acquisition, and factors affecting adolescents’ IELTS speaking performance using CLIL.
- Chapter 3, Research Methodology, outlines the research design, research design, research participants, materials, research instruments, collection procedures, data collection, and data analysis, analytical framework.
- Chapter 4, Findings, presents and discusses the results from pre-and post-tests, the questionnaire, and the focus group interview.



## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter illustrates the theoretical framework of the study in addition to related empirical studies. This chapter consists of four sections: Section (1) is dedicated to reviewing the fundamental concept of speaking, its components, and features in the Vietnamese context. Section (2) sheds light on speaking skills assessment criteria. Section (3) deals with CLIL in Language Acquisition, its definition, benefits, CLIL and oral tests, and CLIL for adolescent learners. Section (4) explores factors affecting adolescents' IELTS speaking performance using CLIL. This chapter ends up with a research gap through previous studies and conceptual frameworks.

### 2.1 Background Study of Speaking Skills

In language education, the direction and modality of the four language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—are frequently discussed (Bailey & Nunan, 2004). Speaking or writing produced by the students is regarded as producing language, whereas reading or listening to the students is referred to as receptive language (Savignon, 1991). Speaking, as a fundamental aspect of language acquisition and use, involves the interactive and spontaneous production of language, facilitating human communication and expression (Richards, 2008).

#### 2.1.1 Definition of Speaking

Speaking skills, which are frequently seen as a subset of communication competence, are crucial in determining how effectively an individual speaks. Speaking skills are the combination of pragmatic, sociolinguistic, and linguistic skills that allow people to interact effectively, express ideas, and transmit information in a given context (Canale & Swain, 1980). Not only do these skills involve linguistic proficiency but also the effective use of non-verbal cues, such as tone, pitch, body language, and facial expressions (Brown, 2014; Celce-Murcia et al., 2019). On the other hand, speaking performance refers to the actual execution of these skills in real-time communication situations, reflecting an individual's ability to apply linguistic knowledge effectively (Bachman, 1990). Brown and Yule (1983) suggest that

speaking performance involves the integration of various linguistic and paralinguistic features to effectively convey messages and engage the audience.

### ***2.1.2 Components of Speaking***

Speaking encompasses several components, essential for effective communication. According to Hughes (2011), these include fluency, accuracy, coherence, interaction, and range of language. First, fluency refers to the ability to speak smoothly without undue pauses or hesitations (Bygate, 2001), supported by Harmer (2015), highlighting its significant role for learners to express themselves confidently and spontaneously. Second, accuracy involves the correct use of grammar and vocabulary, and pronunciation (Hammer, 2007). Next, coherence is the logical organization of speech, ensuring the speaker's ideas are understandable (Hughes, 2011; Thornbury, 2005). The interaction entails the speaker's responsiveness in conversation (Hughes, 2011; Harmer, 2012). Finally, the range of language signifies the variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures used, enabling the speakers to express ideas effectively in different contexts (Harmer, 2015).

### ***2.1.3 Factors Influencing Speaking Skills***

Several factors contribute to the development and enhancement of speaking skills. The social and cultural context in which individuals communicate also shapes their speaking abilities, influencing factors such as politeness norms, conversational turn-taking, and sociocultural appropriateness (Gudykunst, 2003; Scollon & Scollon, 2001). Additionally, educational environments, instructional methods, and exposure to authentic language use impact speaking skill acquisition (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Nunan, 2004).

### ***2.1.4 Interrelation between Skills and Performance***

Research by Nunan (1991) indicates a bidirectional relationship between speaking skills and speaking performance. Improvement in speaking skills often leads to enhanced speaking performance, while engaging in communicative tasks and real-world interactions aids in the development of these skills.

Furthermore, studies by Celce-Murcia (2007) emphasize the importance of context in shaping speaking skills and performance. The situational context,

including the purpose of communication and the interlocutors involved, significantly influences how speaking skills are utilized and perceived.

### ***2.1.5 Speaking Skills in English for Adolescent Learners***

According to Hammer (2007), one of the biggest distinctions between young children and adolescents is that the former has grown to have a higher capacity for abstract thought. In other words, adolescent learners can discuss more abstract topics and reveal ideas in a way that younger kids find challenging. Many teenagers quickly recognize and embrace the need for higher-order cognitive learning. They have an enormous knack for learning, a great deal of creative thought potential, and a strong commitment to subjects that they find interesting. This aligns with Piaget's theories of cognitive development which stated adolescents can "form logical systems, to abstract and combine variables, and to draw conclusions irrespective of concrete and real situations." (Piaget, 1966, as cited in Kohler, 2014, p.201)

### ***2.1.6 Features of Speaking in the Vietnamese Context***

In Vietnam, English speaking skills are often identified as a significant challenge for learners. Despite efforts to improve English language education, many students struggle to develop fluency, coherence, and pronunciation in spoken English. There are a variety of factors that affect the students' speaking performance. First, the majority of EFL Vietnamese students experienced linguistic difficulties such as lack of vocabulary and topical knowledge, their incapacity to arrange ideas logically or make full sentences ( Trinh & Pham, 2021; Ho et al., 2020). Further, the cultural hindrances the students encounter may affect their speaking performance (Thai et al., 2018).

## **2.2 Speaking Performance Assessment**

Assessing speaking performance is a complex task that involves evaluating various aspects of communicative competence. Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence Model (1980) suggests that speaking skills are an integral component of overall communicative competence, influencing an individual's ability to perform successfully in various communication contexts. Similarly, Bachman's construct of

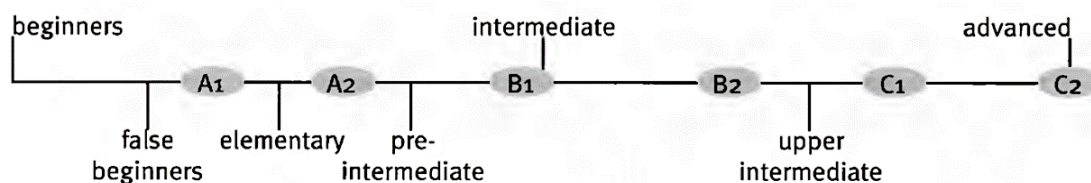
language proficiency (1990) emphasizes the dynamic interaction between underlying proficiency (speaking skill) and performance factors.

### ***2.2.1 Language Competency Level***

Hammer (2007) used descriptive terms in an attempt to be more specific about exactly what kind of beginner, intermediate, or advanced students. A distinction is made between beginners and false beginners to show the fact that the latter is not able to use any English but know quite a lot which can be quickly activated; they're not real beginners. Elementary students can communicate in a basic way. Pre-intermediate students have not yet reached the intermediate level, involving greater fluency and general comprehension of some general authentic English. However, they can use most of the basic structures and vocabulary. On the other hand, upper-intermediate students possess the competence of intermediate students in addition to a deeper understanding of grammatical construction and the use of skills. However, they may not have achieved the accuracy of knowledge which their advanced peers have acquired.

### ***2.2.2 Common European Framework***

In the last few years, the Council of Europe and the Association of Language Testers of Europe (ALTE) have been striving to establish language proficiency standards for multilingual learners. As a result, the Common European Framework (a document setting out in detail what students 'can do' at various levels) and a series of ALTE levels ranging from A1 (roughly equivalent to the elementary level) to C2 (very advanced) have been introduced. (Hammer, 2007) The following diagram shows the different levels in sequence:



**Figure 2.1** Terms for different student levels and ALTE levels (Hammer, 2007, p.17)

### 2.2.3 *The Student Oral Language Observation Matrix*

The evaluation of English language learners’ oral language proficiency by teachers is among the crucial and precise measures of their progress. To assess the learners’ oral proficiency, an observational instrument namely SOLOM can be used. The SOLOM is established to concentrate on general oral language characteristics: comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Wright, 2010; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017, p.185).

**Table 2.2.1** The Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017, p.186)

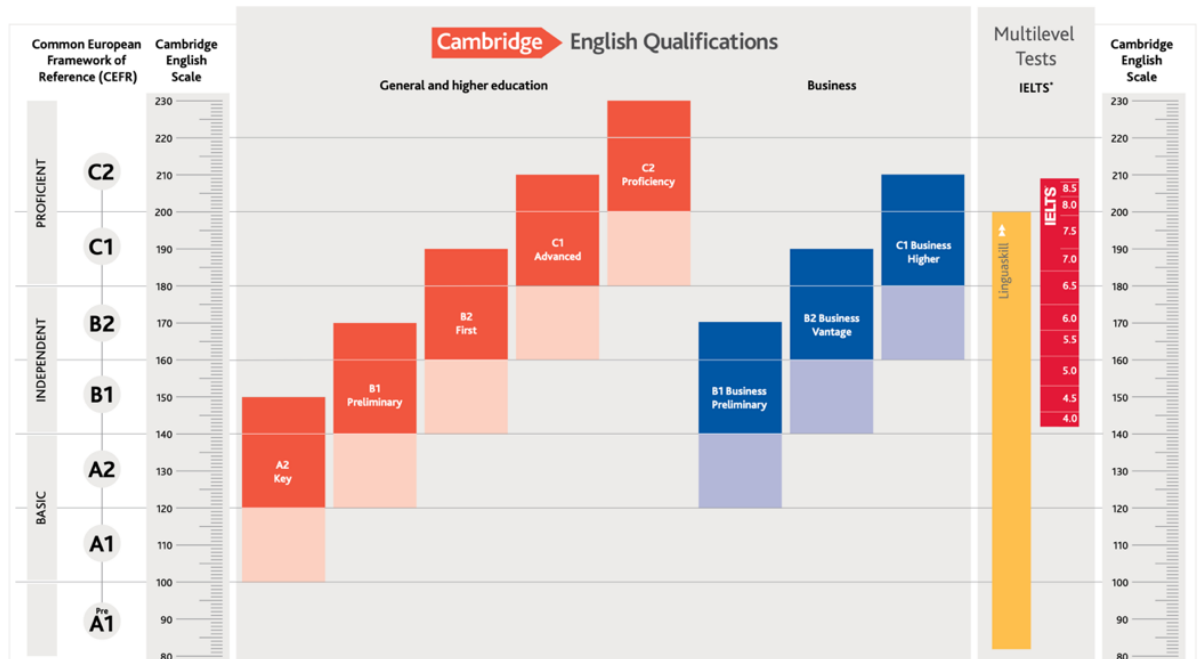
	1	2	3	4	5
A Comprehension	Cannot be said to understand even a simple conversation.	Has great difficulty following what is said. Can comprehend only “social conversation” spoken slowly and with frequent repetitions.	Understands most of what is said at slower-than-normal speed with repetitions.	Understands nearly everything at normal speed, although occasional repetition may be necessary.	Understands everyday conversation and normal classroom discussions without difficulty.
B Fluency	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible.	Usually hesitant; often forced into silence by language limitations.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussion frequently disrupted by the student’s search for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions generally fluent, with occasional lapses while the student searches for the correct manner of expression.	Speech in everyday conversation and classroom discussions fluent and effortless, approximating that of a native speaker.
C Vocabulary	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible.	Misuse of words and limited vocabulary; comprehension quite difficult.	Student frequently uses the wrong words; conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.	Student occasionally uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies.	Use of vocabulary and idioms approximates that of a native speaker.
D Pronunciation	Pronunciation problems so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Hard to understand because of pronunciation problems. Must frequently repeat to make himself or herself understood.	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentration on the part of the listener and occasionally lead to misunderstanding.	Always intelligible though one is conscious of a definite accent and occasional inappropriate intonation patterns.	Pronunciation and intonation approximate that of a native speaker.
E Grammar	Errors in grammar and word order so severe as to make speech virtually unintelligible.	Grammar and word-order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict himself or herself to basic patterns.	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order that occasionally obscure meaning.	Occasionally makes grammatical and/or word-order errors that do not obscure meaning.	Grammatical usage and word order approximate that of a native speaker.

SOLOM PHASES: Phase I: Score 5–11 = non-English proficient; Phase II: Score 12–18 = limited English proficient; Phase III: Score 19–24 = limited English proficient; Phase IV: Score 25 = fully English proficient.

Based on your observation of the student, indicate with an “X” across the block in each category that best describes the student’s abilities. The SOLOM should only be administered by persons who themselves score at level “4” or above in all categories in the language being assessed. Students scoring at level “1” in all categories can be said to have no proficiency in the language.

### 2.2.4 *The Assessment of Speaking Proficiency*

The assessment of speaking proficiency is a critical aspect of language evaluation, and two widely recognized frameworks, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), play pivotal roles in this domain.



**Figure 2.2** Cambridge English scale and IELTS scale (Cambridge Assessment English, 2019)

The CEFR, developed by the Council of Europe, provides a standardized framework to describe language proficiency across various European languages, including English. It consists of six levels, ranging from A1 (beginner) to C2 (proficient), with descriptors outlining the competencies at each level (Council of Europe, 2001). The CEFR, developed by the Council of Europe, provides a holistic and descriptive framework for language proficiency across six levels (A1-C2). CEFR speaking tests aim to evaluate communicative competence, emphasizing real-world language use and task authenticity (Council of Europe, 2001). The CEFR's focus on interactional competence aligns with a communicative language teaching philosophy, fostering a comprehensive understanding of speaking proficiency (Littlewood, 2007).

IELTS is a widely recognized English language proficiency test that assesses candidates' skills in listening, reading, writing, and speaking. IELTS scores are reported on a scale from 0 to 9, with bands indicating proficiency levels from non-user (band 1) to expert (band 9). The IELTS speaking test is a crucial component of the IELTS examination, assessing a candidate's ability to engage in spontaneous and structured conversations. The test comprises three parts, progressively evaluating

fluency, coherence, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical accuracy. (Cambridge English Language Assessment et al., 2021). IELTS places a strong emphasis on spontaneous and interactive communication, encouraging candidates to respond to real-life scenarios and prompts. Unlike the CEFR, the IELTS speaking test, with its structured format and targeted evaluation criteria, allows for a more detailed assessment of specific language skills crucial for academic and professional contexts.

**Table 2.2.2** IELTS Speaking Assessment Criteria (Cambridge Assessment English et al., 2021)

**IELTS™**

**SPEAKING: Band Descriptors (public version)**

Band	Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction; any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar</li> <li>speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features</li> <li>develops topics fully and appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics</li> <li>uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately</li> <li>produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety</li> <li>sustains flexible use of features throughout</li> <li>is effortless to understand</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language</li> <li>develops topics coherently and appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning</li> <li>uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies</li> <li>uses paraphrase effectively as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures flexibly</li> <li>produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of pronunciation features</li> <li>sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses</li> <li>is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence</li> <li>may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction</li> <li>uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics</li> <li>uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices</li> <li>uses paraphrase effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility</li> <li>frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation</li> <li>uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies</li> <li>generally paraphrases successfully</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility</li> <li>may make frequent mistakes with complex structures though these rarely cause comprehension problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control</li> <li>shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained</li> <li>can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going</li> <li>may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers</li> <li>produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility</li> <li>attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy</li> <li>uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction</li> <li>links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice</li> <li>rarely attempts paraphrase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare</li> <li>errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a limited range of pronunciation features</li> <li>attempts to control features but lapses are frequent</li> <li>mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks with long pauses</li> <li>has limited ability to link simple sentences</li> <li>gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information</li> <li>has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances</li> <li>makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pauses lengthily before most words</li> <li>little communication possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>only produces isolated words or memorised utterances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot produce basic sentence forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech is often unintelligible</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no communication possible</li> <li>no rateable language</li> </ul>			
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not attend</li> </ul>			

## 2.3 CLIL

### 2.3.1 What is CLIL?

The roots of CLIL (Content and Language Intergrated Learning) can be traced back to the 1960s when educators began to recognize the potential benefits of integrating language learning with subject matter instruction. The European context played a significant role in shaping the development of CLIL when it emerged as a

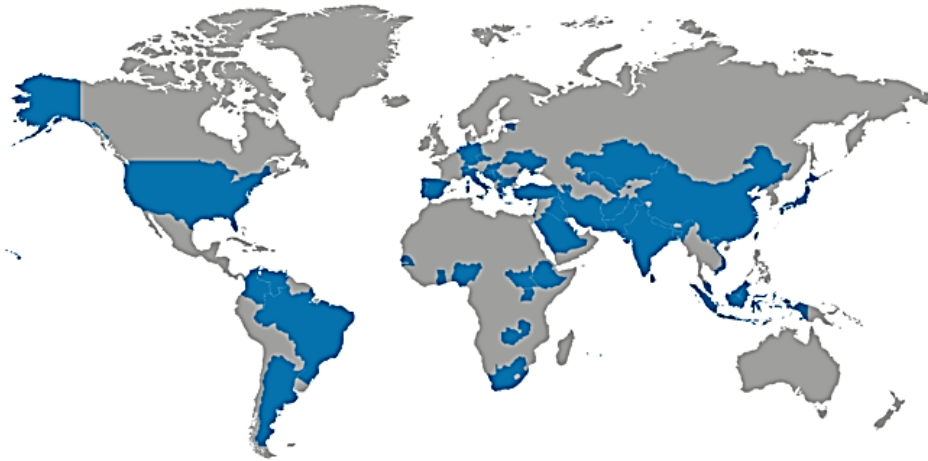
response to the need for multilingualism and improved language skills within various disciplines (Coyle, 1999). The European Commission's recognition of the importance of plurilingualism and the integration of language and content instruction led to the development of CLIL programs (Eurydice, 2006).

CLIL has various definitions. Marsh (2002) believed CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which the learning of language and other subjects is mixed in one way or another. Van de Craen et al. (2007) stated that CLIL is a meaning-focused method whose aim is learning the subject matter together with learning a language. Bentley (2010) suggested that “CLIL is an approach or method that integrates the teaching of content from the curriculum with the teaching of a non-native language”.

### ***2.3.2 CLIL Implementations around the World***

A study on English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) conducted by the British Council in 55 countries in which English is not the first language between October 2013 and March 2014 shows that CLIL has become a global trend. Nevertheless, some studies on CLIL conducted in European countries provide inconclusive evidence due to various typologies of CLIL programmes (Deardan, 2014).





Afghanistan	Cyprus	Iran	Netherlands	Sri Lanka
Argentina	Czech Republic	Iraq	Nigeria	Switzerland
Azerbaijan	Estonia	Israel	Pakistan	Taiwan
Bahrain	Ethiopia	Italy	Portugal	Turkey
Bangladesh	Germany	Japan	Qatar	Uganda
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ghana	Kazakhstan	Saudi Arabia	Ukraine
Brazil	Greece	Macedonia	Senegal	United States
Bulgaria	Hong Kong	Malaysia	Serbia	Uzbekistan
China	Hungary	Mauritius	South Africa	Venezuela
Colombia	India	Montenegro	South Sudan	Vietnam
Croatia	Indonesia	Nepal	Spain	Zambia

**Figure 2.3** Countries participating in the survey on EMI by the British Council (Deardan, 2014, p.6)


A study on English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) conducted by the British Council in 55 countries in which English is not the first language between October 2013 and March 2014 shows that CLIL has become a global trend. Nevertheless, some studies on CLIL conducted in European countries provide inconclusive evidence due to various typologies of CLIL programmes. (Deardan, 2014)

### ***2.3.3 The Different Models of CLIL***

“CLIL” is a term that refers to a variety of situations and models, in which Bentley (2010) proposed three possible CLIL models: language-led, subject-led, and

partial immersion. In a private setting, language courses include curriculum-based lessons.

**Table 2.3** CLIL models (Bently, 2010, p.6)

Soft CLIL	Type of CLIL	Time	Context
	Language-led	45 minutes once a week	Some curricular topics are taught during a language course.
	Subject-led (modular)	15 hours during one term	Schools or teachers choose parts of the subject syllabus which they teach in the target language.
	Subject-led (partial immersion)	about 50% of the curriculum	About half of the curriculum is taught in the target language. The content can reflect what is taught in the L1 curriculum or can be new content.
Hard CLIL			

### **2.3.4 CLIL in Language Acquisition**

CLIL is an educational approach that combines language learning with subject content instruction. This theoretical framework examines the potential impact of CLIL on the IELTS speaking test performance of EFL adolescents at the Hai Dang Language Centre.

Constructivist learning theory, proposed by Piaget (1973) and Vygotsky (1978), emphasizes that learning is an active process where learners construct knowledge by engaging with meaningful tasks and experiences. CLIL aligns with constructivism as it involves real-world contexts and promotes meaningful interaction, allowing EFL adolescents to connect language use with content understanding. The integration of subject content in CLIL encourages deeper comprehension, leading to enhanced vocabulary richness and improved coherence (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1973).

Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (1978) highlights the importance of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development. CLIL emphasizes collaborative learning, where EFL adolescents engage in discourse within the context of subject content. This sociocultural environment promotes the negotiation of meaning, which supports the development of speaking skills, critical thinking, and language accuracy (Vygotsky, 1978). In fact, in CLIL settings, collaborative

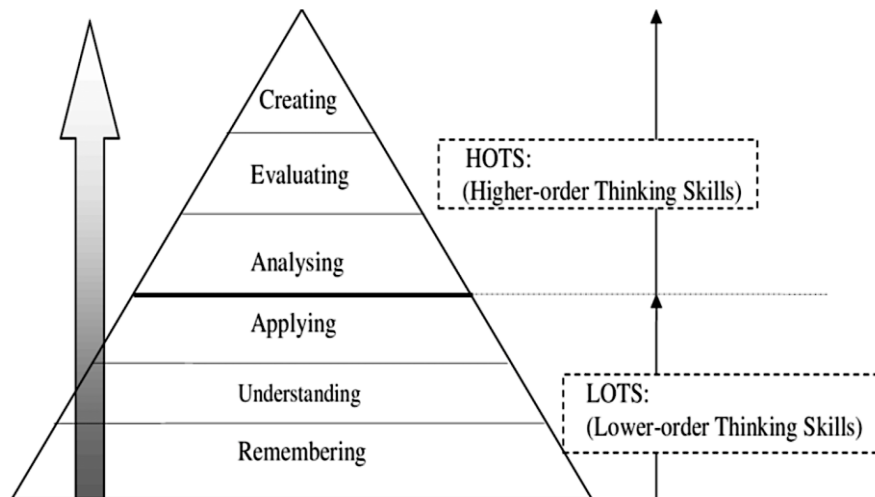
activities and negotiation of meaning between students can facilitate language learning and speaking skill development (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

Vygotsky's other theory, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), states the range of tasks that learners can perform with the support of a more knowledgeable individual. CLIL tasks, such as discussing abstract concepts, align with the ZPD, fostering EFL adolescents' growth in speaking skills. Collaborative interactions with peers and instructors provide scaffolding that helps learners address complex speaking test tasks (Vygotsky, 1978).

Krashen (1985) proposed the Input Hypothesis, asserting that language acquisition is most effective when learners are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current linguistic competence. CLIL classrooms provide content-rich environments where learners encounter meaningful language input (Marsh, 2002). Further, CLIL engages EFL adolescents in meaningful content, enhancing their motivation to learn English and creating a conducive environment for improved speaking test performance (Krashen, 1982).

Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985) suggests that learners refine their language skills by generating language output. CLIL encourages EFL adolescents to produce language during subject-based discussions, reinforcing language learning and improving fluency.

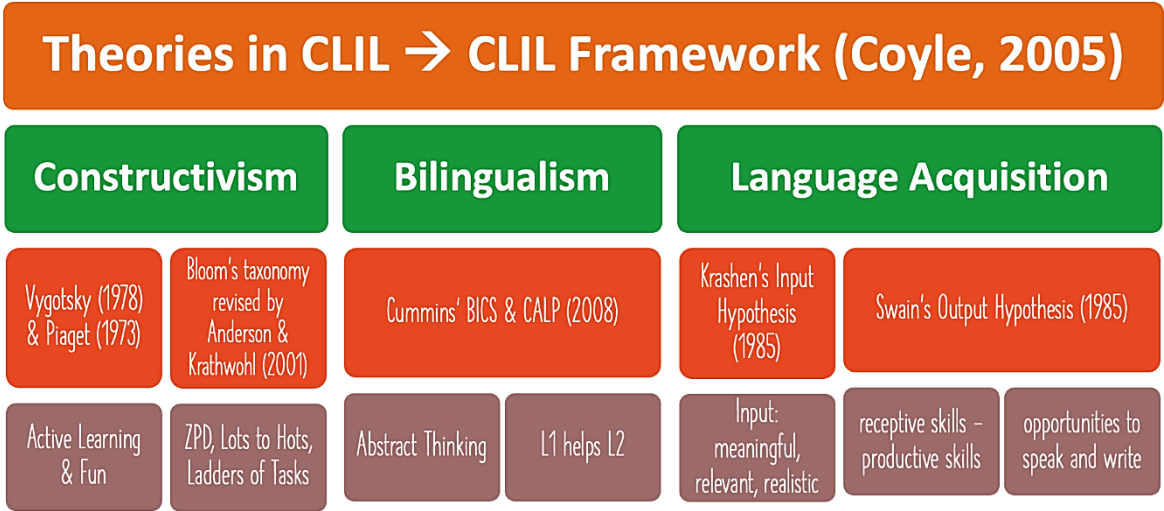
Additionally, Bloom's Taxonomy provides a framework for understanding and categorizing cognitive processes involved in learning. The revised version by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) expanded upon the original taxonomy to include a broader range of cognitive processes. Derived from this taxonomy, the distinction between lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) is developed (Ball, Kelly & Clegg, 2017). In CLIL-based lessons, the students made more cognitive efforts to meet the syllabus's academic requirements.



**Figure 2.3** Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Ikeda, 2011, p.8)

Bilingualism put forward by Cummins (2008) can enhance cognitive and linguistic skills, allowing EFL adolescents to transfer skills from their first language to their second language. BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) refers to the skills required for social, conversational situations. (Cummins, 2001; as cited in Bently, 2010). CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) refers to a level required for academic schooling, which is often more cognitively demanding. (Cummins, 2001; as cited in Bently, 2010)

CLIL Framework is based on principles of immersion, interdisciplinary teaching, and language learning through meaningful content. The 4Cs model (Coyle, 2007; Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010) forms the basis of the CLIL framework: Content, Cognition, Communication, and Culture. It posits that effective CLIL instruction should balance these four dimensions, fostering holistic language development. The integration of content learning and language use in CLIL enhances learners' cognitive engagement and language proficiency, potentially positively affecting IELTS Speaking test performance.

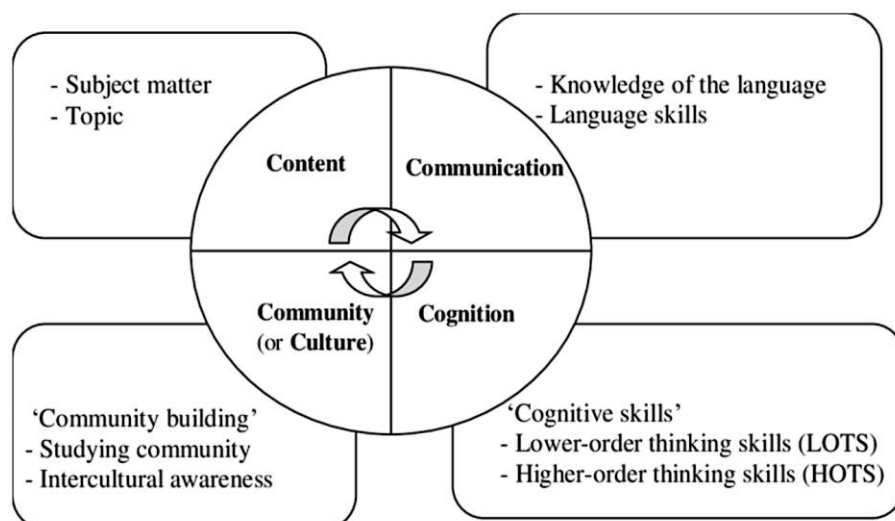


**Figure 2.4** Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework underscores the interplay of constructivism, Bilingualism, language acquisition theories, and CLIL framework in shaping the impact of CLIL on EFL adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance. CLIL methodology aligns with these theoretical perspectives by providing a holistic and interactive approach that fosters fluency, coherence, vocabulary richness, critical thinking, and confidence among EFL adolescents at Hai Dang Language Centre preparing for the IELTS speaking test.

**2.3.5 The 4Cs Framework**

The 4Cs model, proposed by Coyle (2007), is a framework for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) that emphasizes the integration of Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture in language learning contexts.



**Figure 2.5** The '4Cs' of CLIL (Ikeda, 2012, as cited in Cope, 2014)

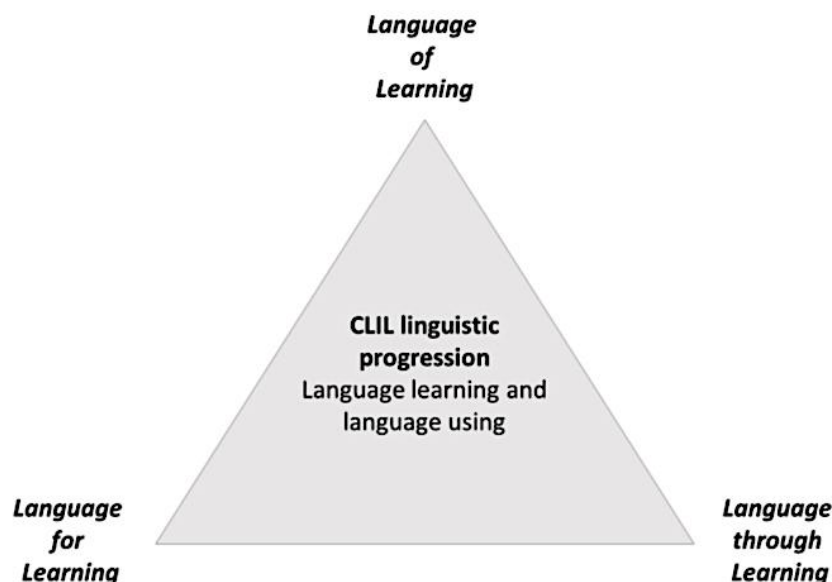
- Content refers to the subject matter or academic content that serves as the focal point of CLIL instruction. Coyle (2007) highlights the importance of selecting meaningful and engaging content that aligns with students' interests and learning objectives. Research by Marsh (2002) suggests that integrating content from various disciplines, such as science, and mathematics enhances students' motivation and facilitates language learning. Additionally, Dalton-Puffer (2007) emphasizes the role of content scaffolding strategies in supporting students' comprehension and acquisition of subject-specific vocabulary and concepts.
- Communication encompasses the use of language for meaningful interaction and expression of ideas. Coyle (2007) emphasizes the development of both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) language skills in CLIL contexts. Studies by Lasagabaster and Ruiz de Zarobe (2010) have shown that CLIL enhances students' communicative competence by providing opportunities for authentic language use in academic and real-world contexts.
- Cognition refers to the mental processes involved in learning, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and metacognitive skills. Coyle (2007) posits that CLIL fosters cognitive development by engaging students in inquiry-based learning tasks that require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. Research by Dalton-Puffer (2008) suggests that CLIL enhances students' cognitive abilities by

encouraging higher-order thinking skills and promoting a deeper understanding of complex concepts.

- Culture encompasses the socio-cultural aspects of language learning, including values, beliefs, customs, and cultural norms. Coyle (2007) advocates for the integration of cultural content and perspectives in CLIL instruction to promote intercultural awareness and sensitivity. Studies by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2009) have shown that CLIL enhances students' appreciation of diverse cultures and fosters positive attitudes towards linguistic and cultural diversity. Additionally, Byram (2008) emphasizes the role of CLIL in developing students' intercultural communicative competence and preparing them for participation in a globalized world.

### ***2.3.6 CLIL Lesson Planning***

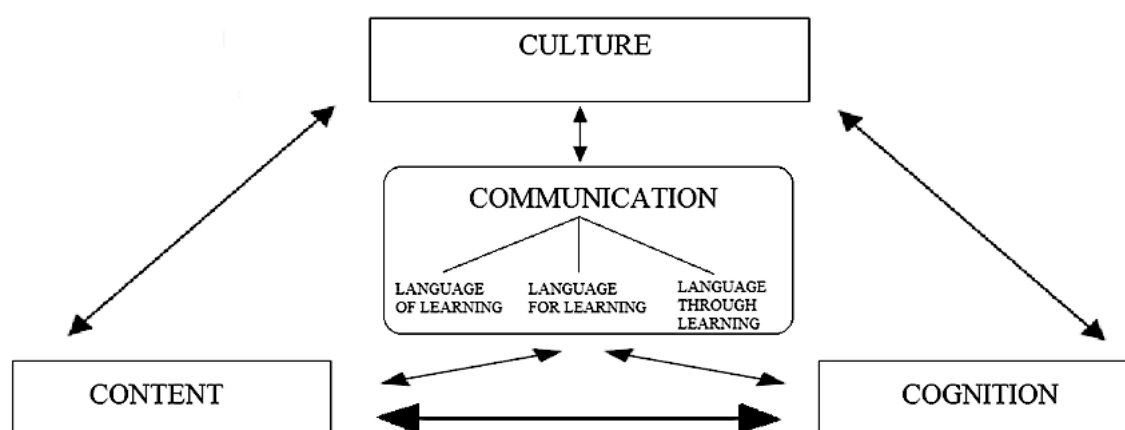
In terms of CLIL lesson planning, while the 4Cs serves as a helpful framework for organizing a unit of work, the 3As offer a comprehensive tool for CLIL lesson planning, ensuring a balanced focus on content delivery and language development. (Coyle, 2005; Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p.36).



**Figure 2.6** The Language Triptych (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p.36)

There are three stages to the 3As tool's operation. Through the stages of Analyse, Add, and Apply/Assure, teachers can create learning environments that foster not only the acquisition of subject knowledge but also the development of language proficiency (Coyle, 2005). Nikolić (2017) recommended a modified framework based on the Zydatiņ CLIL model with the communication dimension.

- Stage 1: **Analyse** content for the language **of** learning
- Stage 2: **Add** to content language **for** learning
- Stage 3: **Apply** to content language **through** learning



**Figure 2.7** The modified 4Cs of CLIL with Communication in the Centre (Nikolić, 2017)

**Table 2.3** 4Cs and 3As for CLIL lesson planning (adapted from Coyle, 2004; Banegas and Beamud, 2022)

Components	Aims	Objectives	Sample
<b>Content</b>	Define the content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the content knowledge</li> <li>- Teaching aims/objectives</li> <li>- Learning outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of the topic</li> <li>- What gender roles are</li> <li>- Feminism</li> <li>- Mini project</li> </ul>



<b>Communication</b>	Link content with communication	<b>Analyse</b> content for the language <i>of learning</i> (vocabulary and grammar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key vocabulary</li> <li>- Language of feminism</li> <li>- Present tenses</li> </ul>
		<b>Add</b> to content language <i>for learning</i> (language of tasks and classroom activities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language for project work</li> <li>- Arguments</li> </ul>
		<b>Apply</b> to content language <i>through learning</i> (discussion, debate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation skills</li> <li>- Technological skills</li> <li>- Discussion skills</li> </ul>
<b>Cognition</b>	Explore the kind of thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask kind of questions to go beyond ‘display’ questions</li> <li>- Encourage higher order thinking</li> <li>- Concentrate on appropriate thinking skills for the content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide learners with opportunities to understand the key concepts and apply them in different contexts</li> <li>- Enable learners to identify gender roles in specific situations.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage knowledge transfer about gender equality.</li> <li>- Vocabulary building, learning, and using.</li> <li>- Arouse learner curiosity – creativity use of language and learner questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture</b>	A thread weaves throughout the topic	The cultural implications of the topic CLIL context allows for ‘value added’ Otherness and self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify social problems from the people in Vietnam and other countries.</li> <li>- Become aware of the importance of the influence of the society.</li> <li>- Understand the history of feminism.</li> <li>- Understand that they can learn through music, no matter which language they are using.</li> </ul>

### 2.3.7 CLIL in Practices

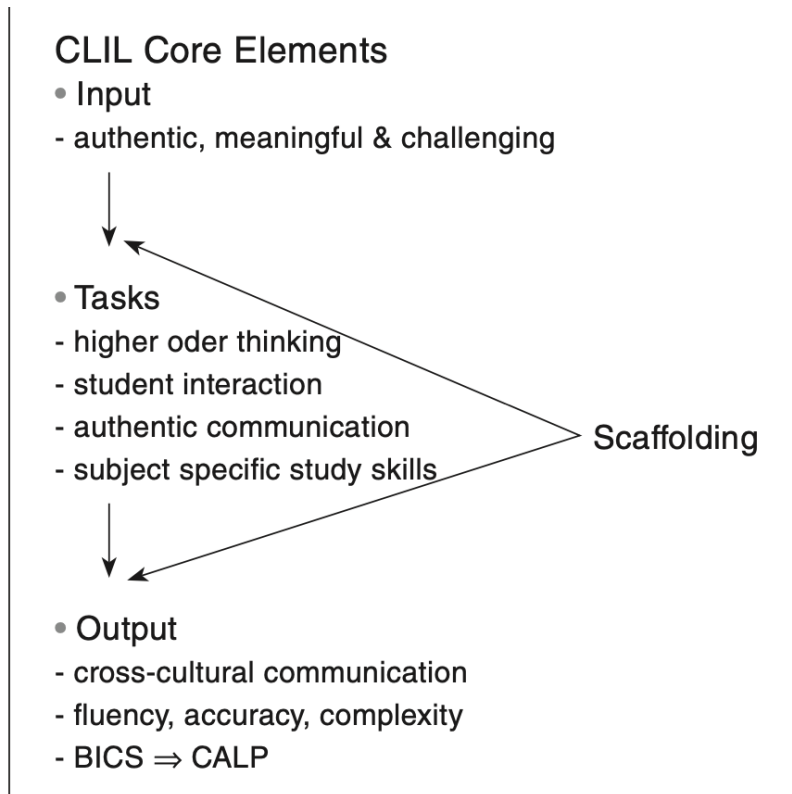
For secondary school students, strategies (EC, 2014) may be able to create a rich, integrated learning environment that supports both language and content mastery. First, initiating education from the viewpoint of the learners is essential to

weave together the learning of content and language seamlessly. This blend should culminate in varied outputs such as presentations, movies, posters, interviews, conceptual maps, dialogues, quizzes, or scientific trials, all of which are meant to be shared and experienced by classmates, teachers, family members, or other students. Leveraging textbooks and resources in a second language becomes a bridge rather than a barrier when students master effective strategies for engaging with these materials. Key terminologies within subject texts serve as crucial navigational tools, guiding students towards deeper comprehension. To aid in deciphering complex texts, teachers should equip students with various strategies, including paraphrasing, understanding lexical formations, and grasping the significance of prefixes and suffixes. Evaluation of students' work—whether tests, assignments, or oral contributions—should also consider language proficiency, rewarding excellence in language application.

Furthermore, each lesson should foster opportunities for students to discuss subject matter in the second language, encouraging them to articulate and defend their perspectives on the lesson's most significant aspects. This practice, while not time-consuming, significantly enriches the learning experience. Lastly, introducing complex terms in a foreign language becomes more approachable with the use of visual aids, enhancing students' understanding and retention of specialist vocabulary.

Meyer (2010) advocates for several recommendations to enrich the learning experience and support language and content mastery. First, utilizing rich input in the form of meaningful, challenging, and authentic materials such as videos and animations helps students stay engaged and connect new topics to their existing knowledge. Besides that, providing tasks that challenge students to think creatively and learn at their own pace fosters independent learning. Second, scaffolding is crucial in facilitating students' understanding and use of information by offering clear instructions and support. It also aids students in speaking or writing by providing them with the necessary words and phrases. Third, rich interaction and pushed output in CLIL lessons, supported by Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), deepen students' understanding and promote active learning. Additionally, intercultural

communication skills are essential for students to navigate different cultural contexts effectively. Last but not least, teaching students thinking skills, including how to discuss ideas and understand complex topics, is paramount for academic success. This involves using language systematically to express thoughts clearly, even when addressing complicated concepts (Meyer, 2010).



**Figure 2.8 CLIL Core Elements (Meyer, 2010)**

**Table 2.4 Traditional classroom and CLIL classroom (adapted from Cope, 2014)**

	<b>Traditional classroom</b>	<b>CLIL-based classroom</b>
Approach	Language knowledge-focused Teacher-led approach	Content-focused Student-centered approach
Materials	Authentic or materials written by Vietnamese scholars Pre-recorded audio, textbook	Authentic materials Multi-modal (videos, news bulletins, etc)
Cognitive activities	LOTS only	Scaffolding From LOTS to HOTS BICS to CALP
Motivation	Passive	Highly motivated and engaged
Understanding	Superficial understanding	Profound understanding

Interaction	Rarely happens	Meaningful
Freedom	Few chances to express the opinions	Many chances to express viewpoints
Outcomes	Individual work	Discussions Presentation
Lesson planning	Teaching materials made available by publishers Traditional methodologies: Grammar translation, Audio-lingual, ...	Time-consuming as CLIL-based materials need developing. It is required for teachers to possess the knowledge of linguistics, the content of subjects and the implementation of CLIL methodology

### ***2.3.8 Benefits of CLIL in EFL Contexts***

Bentley (2010, p.6) highlighted that CLIL presents an innovative approach to education, where learners are introduced to new concepts by studying curriculum subjects through a language that is not their mother tongue. This pedagogical strategy not only enhances students' proficiency in the language associated with academic disciplines but also boosts their performance across the board in both the subjects being studied and the target language. A notable benefit of CLIL is its ability to bolster learners' confidence in both the language of instruction and their first language, creating a supportive environment for language acquisition and subject matter comprehension. Furthermore, CLIL methodology incorporates materials designed to develop critical thinking skills from the outset, ensuring that learners are engaged in higher-order cognitive processes. It also promotes a deeper connection with community values and citizenship, aligning educational outcomes with broader social goals. Importantly, CLIL places the academic subject at the heart of the learning experience, ensuring that the acquisition of language skills serves to complement and enhance understanding of the curriculum content. Through this integrated approach, CLIL offers a holistic educational experience that prepares students for global citizenship in a multilingual world.

Other research suggests that CLIL can have positive effects on language learning outcomes, including improved linguistic competence and communicative skills (Marsh, 2002). By engaging with content in the target language, learners are

challenged to use language for authentic purposes, leading to increased motivation and confidence (Genesee et al., 2006). Furthermore, CLIL offers several benefits in terms of language acquisition and cognitive development. Studies by Dalton-Puffer (2007) and Marsh (2002) highlight that CLIL learners tend to demonstrate enhanced language proficiency, improved communication skills, and a deeper understanding of subject content. These cognitive benefits align with the integration of complex speaking tasks in language assessment, such as the IELTS speaking test.

### ***2.3.9 Challenges and Considerations in CLIL Implementation***

While CLIL offers several benefits, its implementation is not without challenges. Teachers may need training to effectively integrate content and language instruction (Pérez-Cañado, 2012). Moreover, striking a balance between content mastery and language development requires careful planning and scaffolding (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

#### ***2.3.10 CLIL and IELTS Speaking Test***

The IELTS is a widely recognized language proficiency test that assesses candidates' language skills across four key domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The speaking test, in particular, evaluates the ability to communicate effectively in English through a series of face-to-face interactions with an examiner.

##### **2.3.10.1 Fluency and Coherence**

CLIL's emphasis on authentic communication and real-world tasks naturally aligns with the development of speaking skills. In a study by Pérez-Cañado (2012), CLIL learners outperformed non-CLIL learners in speaking tasks, showcasing greater fluency, coherence, and vocabulary richness. According to McKay (2006), CLIL may promote fluency by requiring learners to engage in extended discussions in the target language. This finding underscores the potential impact of CLIL on EFL adolescents' speaking test performance.

##### **2.3.10.2 Lexical Resource**

CLIL classrooms often expose learners to authentic subject content, requiring them to engage with specialized vocabulary related to various academic disciplines

(Dalton-Puffer, 2007). Hence, CLIL learners possess a wider range of vocabularies comprising technical and semi-technical terms and general academic language (EC, 2014). This exposure to subject-specific terminology and language naturally contributes to the development of lexical richness, which benefits the IELTS speaking test.

### **2.3.10.3 Grammatical Range**

In CLIL lessons, students learn how to use appropriate grammar structures depending on the topic studied and what they are expected to talk about (e.g., past tenses for the description of an event; passive constructions for processes; conditional sentences for expressing a prediction or hypothesis) (Harmer, 2012). The students are encouraged to use formal and sophisticated language in their speech.

### **2.3.10.4 Pronunciation**

While not explicitly addressed in CLIL, improved pronunciation can be an indirect outcome of regular speaking practice in the target language. Lasagabaster (2008) conducted a study on the effectiveness of CLIL on secondary-education students in Spain and found an improvement in pronunciation. In the study in the Netherlands, Admiraal et al. (2006) found moderate positive effects on pronunciation.

## **2.4 Factors Affecting the Learners' IELTS Speaking Performance Using CLIL**

CLIL has emerged as a significant pedagogical approach in enhancing language proficiency alongside subject knowledge. Its effectiveness in enhancing language proficiency, including speaking skills, is well-documented. However, when it comes to preparing learners for specific language proficiency tests like the IELTS speaking component, several factors influence outcomes.

### ***2.4.1 Methodological Approaches in CLIL***

The implementation of CLIL varies significantly across contexts, affecting learners' speaking performance in IELTS. Ball, Kelly, and Clegg (2017) emphasize the importance of methodological clarity in CLIL, arguing that a well-structured CLIL program can significantly improve language fluency and confidence. These are

critical for the IELTS speaking test. The adaptability of CLIL methods to focus on speaking skills, such as through debates, presentations, and discussions on content subjects, provides practical speaking opportunities, directly impacting learners' performance.

#### ***2.4.2 Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development***

Banegas and del Pozo Beamud (2022) highlight the pivotal role of teacher preparedness in the success of CLIL programs. Teachers skilled in both the subject matter and language teaching methodologies can offer more effective feedback and strategies for speaking tasks, directly influencing IELTS speaking scores. Bentley (2010) also underscores the importance of professional development for CLIL teachers, suggesting that well-prepared teachers can create more engaging and linguistically challenging learning environments conducive to improving speaking skills. Dalton-Puffer (2008) and Van De Craen et al. (2007) point out that successful CLIL implementation requires teachers who are not only content experts but also proficient in pedagogical strategies that integrate language and content learning. Teachers' ability to scaffold language learning within content instruction directly impacts learners' ability to articulate their thoughts clearly and accurately in English.

#### ***2.4.3 The Role of Discourse in CLIL Classrooms***

Dalton-Puffer (2007) discusses the critical role of discourse in CLIL classrooms, pointing out how the integration of content and language learning creates authentic linguistic exchanges, which are essential for developing speaking skills. The complexity and variety of language encountered in content subjects challenge learners to adapt their language use for different contexts, benefiting their speaking fluency and coherence—key criteria in the IELTS speaking assessment.

#### ***2.4.4 Cognitive Engagement and Language Processing***

According to Dalton-Puffer (2007), the cognitive engagement required in CLIL classrooms, where students process subject content through a foreign language, significantly enhances cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). This proficiency is crucial for the IELTS speaking test, which assesses not just fluency and



coherence but also lexical resources, grammatical range, and accuracy. As Ball, Kelly, and Clegg (2017) note, putting CLIL into practice involves a balanced integration of subject matter with language learning objectives, which enriches the learning experience and promotes higher-order thinking skills to promote the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information during discussions.

#### ***2.4.5 Technological Integration in CLIL***

The EC (2014) discusses the role of technology in enhancing CLIL effectiveness, including language learning outcomes relevant to IELTS speaking performance. The integration of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in CLIL can provide learners with additional practice and exposure to authentic language use in speaking, through tools such as speech recognition and online communication platforms.

#### ***2.4.6 Motivation and Attitudes***

The motivation and positive attitudes towards learning fostered by CLIL can significantly impact IELTS speaking performance. Banegas and del Pozo Beamud (2022) highlight that CLIL's engaging and relevant content increases learner motivation, which is a key driver for language acquisition. Motivated learners are more likely to engage actively in speaking activities, seek out additional language practice opportunities, and, consequently, perform better in speaking assessments. Furthermore, the intrinsic motivation driven by learning content through a foreign language, as discussed by Van De Craen et al. (2007), contributes to improved speaking performance by fostering a deeper engagement with both the language and the subject matter.

#### ***2.4.7 Language Anxiety Reduction***

The CLIL approach can also help reduce language anxiety, which is a significant factor in speaking performance. The EC (2014) reports that CLIL's supportive and immersive environment can lower anxiety levels, making learners more willing to communicate in the target language. Reduced anxiety leads to improved fluency and coherence in speaking, as learners are less inhibited and more willing to take risks in language use.

## **2.5 Previous Studies**

Research investigating the influence of CLIL on oral proficiency has shown promising results. Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) pointed out that CLIL has a positive effect on students' speaking skills by helping to improve fluency, accuracy, and complexity in speech. Studies by Admiraal et al. (2006), Dalton-Puffer (2007, 2008), and Lasagabaster and Sierra (2009), etc. demonstrate that CLIL learners tend to exhibit higher levels of oral proficiency compared to their non-CLIL peers. These findings can be attributed to the immersive nature of CLIL, where learners engage in authentic language use and communication, thereby fostering confidence and fluency in oral expression. Similarly, Pavesi (2012) argues that CLIL learners develop enhanced pragmatic competence and discourse strategies due to exposure to real-world communicative situations.

In the Vietnamese context, research on CLIL is still emerging, especially in tertiary education. Phan (2021) and Nguyen (2021) revealed there was a lack of English language proficiency among both lecturers and students in CLIL-based university courses. According to Tran (2018), numerous English teachers in secondary schools are deficient in both experience with teaching CLIL and a comprehensive grasp of the methodology. Besides, Nguyen's study (2020) indicated that teachers perceived a lack or low level of student motivation towards CLIL, believing it benefited only a few; however, this perception contradicts student questionnaire results, where many cited CLIL's concept as their primary motivation.

## **2.6 Relevance to Hai Dang Language Centre**

Hai Dang Language Centre's adoption of CLIL aligns with its commitment to innovative language instruction. The context of Hai Dang presents an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of CLIL in an EFL setting and its specific impact on IELTS Speaking Test performance among adolescents.

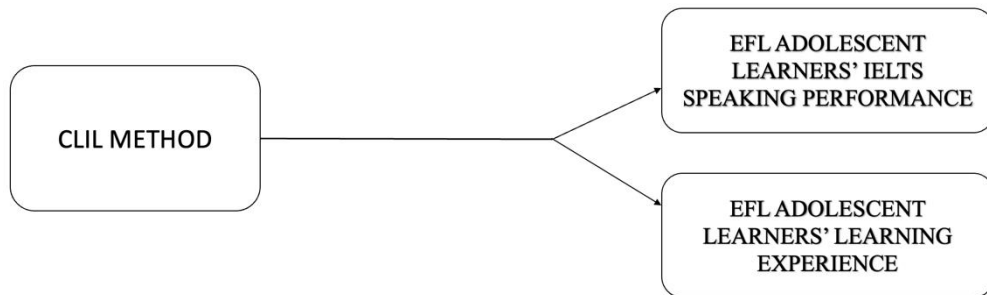
## **2.7 Literature Gaps**

Despite the growing body of literature examining the impact of CLIL on EFL learners' speaking proficiency, there is a notable gap in research specifically investigating the influence of CLIL on EFL adolescents' performance in the IELTS

speaking test, particularly in the context of private settings in Vietnam such as Hai Dang Language Centre.

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework

The major aim of this study is to focus on the impact of CLIL methodology on adolescent learners' IELTS Speaking Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre within 3 months between September and December 2023.



**Figure 2.9** A conceptual framework shows the relationships between CLIL methodology and adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre

Figure 2.5 shows the relationship between CLIL methodology and adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre. The process involves conducting the intervention (CLIL). The output variables include the effectiveness of CLIL on students' IELTS speaking performance and their learning experience.

## 2.9 Summary

The literature reviewed indicates that CLIL has the potential to positively impact the speaking performance of EFL adolescents in the IELTS Speaking Test. While the benefits of context-rich language learning and content integration are well-documented in studies around the world, little research on the implementations of CLIL programs in Vietnam exists. The next chapter presents the experimental study of implementing CLIL for English Speaking Proficiency at Hai Dang Language Centre in Phan Thiet City.

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three introduces and contains a discussion of the methodology approach and research design best suited to examine the research questions set out in Chapter One. An overview of the research design then follows, beginning with an outline of the key methods employed; namely, pre-tests and post-tests, a questionnaire survey, an observation checklist, and a focus group interview. Given the importance of design and validity in the choice of research instruments, justification for each method used is provided. The analytical framework clarifies the ways to analyze the intervention with CLIL and the traditional method, two tests (pre-test and post-test), a questionnaire, an observation checklist and a focus group interview. The subsequent section includes an illustration of the specific process of data collection, followed by an overview of methods used for data analysis. The last part highlights the validity and reliability of the three tools for data collection.

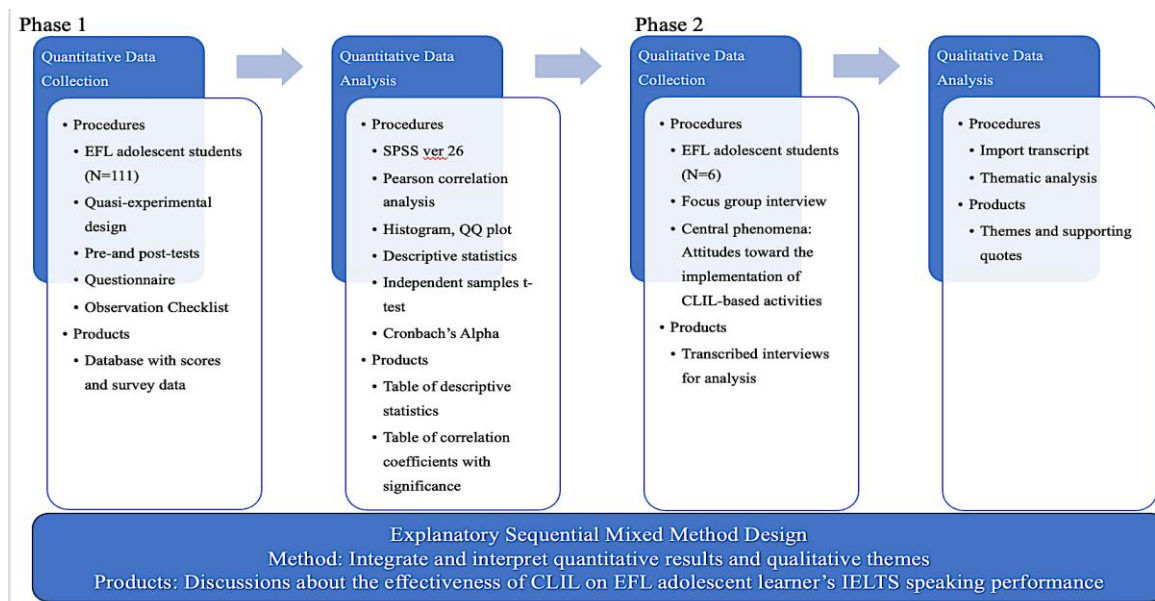
### 3.1 Research Design

#### 3.1.1 *Research Approach*

This current study was conducted to find out the effects of CLIL on students' speaking performance and explore the students' perceptions toward CLIL experience. The research design was guided by the following two research questions.

- What is the positive effect of CLIL on adolescent EFL learners' IELTS speaking test performance at the Hai Dang Language Centre?
- How do EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement at Hai Dang Language Centre?

Regarding relevant theoretical knowledge and research questions, it was hypothesized that CLIL would have positive effects on the students' speaking skills. In addition, it was expected that the students would have a positive attitude toward the CLIL method.



**Figure 3.1** Research Process Design

To address these research questions, the explanatory sequential mixed method design incorporating a quasi-experimental study was employed in this current research where four main data collection instruments were used as “*both quantitative and qualitative data provide a better understanding of the research problem than either type by itself*” (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

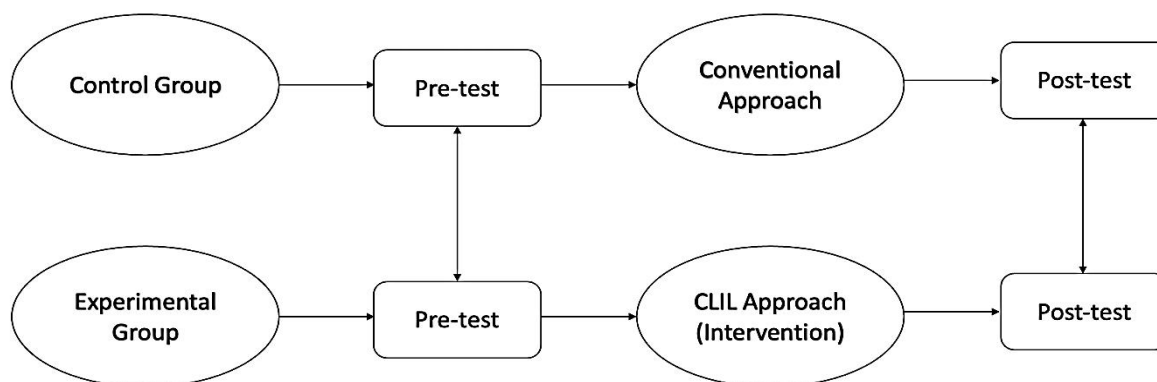
There were two phases in this current research. In the first phase, quantitative design is suitable for the issues in which trends or explanations are to be made (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p.19). In this case, the impact of CLIL-based lessons on adolescent learners’ IELTS speaking performance and their attitude towards speaking classes were investigated. Second, the study also examined two following hypotheses: The CLIL method has a positive effect on students’ speaking skills and the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL significantly enhance the IELTS speaking test performance of EFL adolescents at Hai Dang Language Centre. Further, the data in numeric form collected from tests and the questionnaire were statistically analysed (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p.19). Afterward, the observation checklist was gathered to evaluate the students’ speaking performance during the lessons. According to Creswell and Guetterman (2019), observational design allows

researchers to collect rich and detailed data that capture the complexity and nuances of educational environments.

In phase 2, qualitative research was employed to explore the problems or gain a deep understanding of the specific issues at hand (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p.19). Explanatory research seeks to understand the why and how of phenomena, often moving beyond mere description to explore underlying mechanisms and motivations (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Focus group interviews are ideally suited to this endeavor, as they facilitate a natural discourse among participants, allowing researchers to observe and analyze the complexities of human interaction and the construction of meaning in real-time (Mills & Gay, 2019). In this study, a group of six learners were interviewed, a method that facilitated a dynamic exchange of ideas and insights, enabling the researchers to delve deeper into the complexities of the learners' experiences. Instead of relying on the statistical procedure, the words recorded were transcribed to analysed based on themes. When it comes to the explanatory sequential mixed methods design, quantitative data collection is prioritized first, followed by gathering qualitative data to explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p.553).

### ***3.1.2 Research Design***

For quantitative data collection, English-speaking pre-tests and post-tests, adopted by a quasi-experimental study, were delivered to students before and after the CLIL learning experience to find out the difference in performance between the two groups.



**Figure 3.2** Quasi-experimental research design

These quantitative data were triangulated with the questionnaire and the observation checklist and qualitative data from the focus group interview was collected from EG at the end of the experiment. During the experiment, students in EG were required to work in teamwork every lesson. The learners joined in speaking activities incorporating various themes. They were also encouraged to explore other subjects outside the class time if they wished.

As the mixed method includes both quantitative and qualitative, four kinds of research instruments were employed to collect the data to answer the two research questions. The first instrument is the pre-and-post-tests for the students. Both groups were taken the same pretest and posttest. The remaining ones are a questionnaire, observation checklist, and a focus group interview solely for the experimental group. The instruments were piloted by the researcher, who also collected data in person.

Every phase of the research process took ethical issues, verbal and written consent, written permission, anonymity and confidentiality, voluntary participation, and withdrawal into account. Besides that, separate procedures were adopted to assess the reliability and validity of the quantitative data and results as well as the credibility and trustworthiness of the qualitative data and findings.

### **3.2 Research Site**

The study was conducted at Hai Dang Language Centre in Phan Thiet City, which is famous for its high-quality IELTS training courses. The study was conducted in this centre for around twelve weeks, beginning September 27th to December 20th.

There were some main reasons why the current research was carried out at this site. First of all, the centre has been recognised for its excellence in language education and its commitment to innovative teaching methods. The flexibility of the teaching staff in pedagogical methodologies and their experience with the IELTS examination can provide invaluable insights into the practical aspects of implementing CLIL in EFL contexts. Secondly, there is a wide range of age groups, including adolescents, who are the primary focus of this research. This demographic is critical for the study as it allows for an examination of CLIL's impact on learners at a crucial stage of language development. Last but not least, the centre has shown a

willingness to support academic research, including access to teaching materials, lesson observations, and interactions with both teachers and students. Such support is vital for conducting a thorough and detailed investigation.

### **3.3 The Research Subjects**

There are three types of nonrandom sampling approaches including convenience sampling, purposive sampling, and quota sampling. In terms of educational research, convenience sampling is the most preferable to use as “*sample selection is simple*” (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.158); in other words, the participants are available and they volunteer to be studied. Therefore, it was used in this study to investigate whether an intervention of the CLIL method has a positive impact on teenagers’ speaking performance and their attitudes towards CLIL-based speaking lessons.

To figure out how CLIL enhances speaking learners at Hai Dang Language Centre, a quasi-experimental design was carried out from September to December 2023. The sample to be analyzed in the current research consisted of about 111 students aged 15-17 years old from four intermediate classes, the majority of whom experienced the B1 Preliminary exam (PET). The research subjects were selected through convenience sampling in order not to disrupt the classes’ training schedule. In other words, the existing classrooms were kept intact (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.295) and two of them were planned to receive the treatment.

Before the treatment, there was an IELTS speaking test for two groups whose aim was to make sure that before the experiment, the students were expected to be equal in English proficiency of the intermediate level, and similar in several aspects of learning environment and conditions.

There were 54 students assigned to one control group (CG, n = 54) and 57 students in one experimental group (EG, n=57). The Experimental Group (EG) received a treatment that included various tasks such as presentation, group work, debate, role play, etc. while the Control Group (CG) only took traditional activities.

Further information on the research subjects is demonstrated in Table 3.3.



**Table 3.3** Students' demographic information

	<b>Group</b>	<b>CG (n=54)</b>	<b>EG (n=57)</b>	<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	27	30	57	51,4
	<b>Female</b>	27	27	54	48,6
<b>Age</b>	<b>15</b>	18	22	40	36
	<b>16</b>	34	34	68	61,3
	<b>17</b>	2	1	3	2,7

As can be seen from the table above, the participants of this study were 111 adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17. Most of them were 16 years of age (68/111). Given the gender variable, the ratio of males (57) is slightly higher than that of females (54).

All of the participants studied a coursebook called *Speaking for IELTS* (Kovacs, 2020), in their speaking lessons every week as they were given a chance to study different topics and experience CLIL in the classroom with this coursebook. All of the students in the EG group were expected to complete the questionnaire individually and voluntarily. Responses were kept anonymous. Participants were informed of the research aims and the instructions before completing the questionnaire.

When it comes to the focus group interview, six students were interviewed on a voluntary basis. The students who took part in the interview were given the names S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 and S6 in order to conceal their true identities.

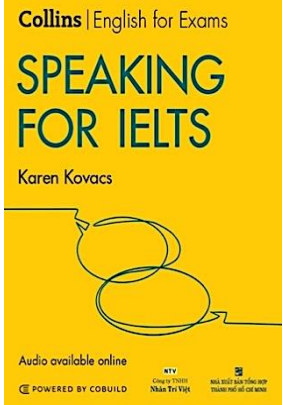
### **3.4 Materials**

#### ***3.4.1 The Material for Teaching and Learning Speaking Skills***

In this study, the material for the preparation for the IELTS speaking test at Hai Dang Language Centre is *Speaking for IELTS*, published by Collins COBUILD (Kovacs, 2020). The textbook consists of 12 units with many different speaking topics. During the intervention phase, the researcher would only choose 4 units to carry out the experiment on students' speaking skills with two different teaching

methodologies. Despite the textbook's well-designed tasks and activities, the researcher modified and redesigned them for the research purpose and students' convenience. Table 3.4 shows the material for teaching and learning.

**Table 3.3.1** The material for teaching and learning

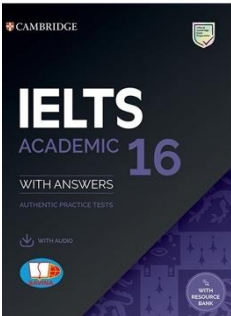
	<b>Contents</b> <table border="1" data-bbox="667 510 1038 891"> <thead> <tr> <th>Unit title</th> <th>Topic</th> <th>Page</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Introduction</td> <td></td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 People and relationships</td> <td>Family matters</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 A healthy body</td> <td>Health and fitness</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Studies and work</td> <td>Education and work</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 The world around us</td> <td>Nature and the environment</td> <td>32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Communication</td> <td>Language and communication</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 Technology</td> <td>Science and technology</td> <td>48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 Hobbies</td> <td>Employment and finances</td> <td>56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8 Youth</td> <td>Childhood</td> <td>64</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 Home</td> <td>People and places</td> <td>72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 Culture</td> <td>Culture and modern society</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 On the move</td> <td>Holidays and travel</td> <td>88</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12 Practice exam</td> <td></td> <td>96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Audio scripts</td> <td></td> <td>97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Answer key</td> <td></td> <td>128</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pronunciation chart</td> <td></td> <td>143</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Photo credits</td> <td></td> <td>144</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Unit title	Topic	Page	Introduction		4	1 People and relationships	Family matters	8	2 A healthy body	Health and fitness	16	3 Studies and work	Education and work	24	4 The world around us	Nature and the environment	32	5 Communication	Language and communication	40	6 Technology	Science and technology	48	7 Hobbies	Employment and finances	56	8 Youth	Childhood	64	9 Home	People and places	72	10 Culture	Culture and modern society	80	11 On the move	Holidays and travel	88	12 Practice exam		96	Audio scripts		97	Answer key		128	Pronunciation chart		143	Photo credits		144	<b>Introduction</b> Who is this book for? Speaking for IELTS will prepare you for the IELTS Speaking test whether you are taking the test for the first time, or re-taking the test. It has been written for learners with band scores 5.5-6.5 who are aiming to achieve band scores 6.5 or higher. The structured approach, comprehensive answer key and model answers have been designed so that you can use the materials to study on your own. However, the book can also be used as a supplementary speaking skills course for IELTS preparation classes. The book provides enough material for approximately 50 hours of classroom time. Content Speaking for IELTS is divided into 12 units. Each unit focuses on a topic area that you are likely to encounter in the IELTS Speaking test. This helps you to build up a bank of vocabulary and ideas related to a variety of the topics. Units 1-11 cover the vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and exam techniques to prepare you for the IELTS Speaking test. Each section is relevant to the exam. The aims listed at the start of each unit specify the key skills, techniques and language covered in the unit. You work towards Unit 12, which provides a final practice IELTS Speaking test. Additionally, the book provides examination strategies telling you what to expect and how best to succeed in the exam. Exam information is presented in clear, easy-to-read boxes. Exam tips in each unit highlight essential exam techniques and can be readily reviewed at a glance. The Pronunciation sections will help you to improve your speaking skills and increase your awareness of the characteristics of natural spoken English. There are also Watch Out! boxes that will help you avoid common errors made in the exam. Finally, the Exam tasks at the end of each unit gives you the opportunity to review and consolidate the exam skills you have studied. Unit structure Each of the first 11 units is divided into two parts. Part 1 Language development introduces vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation related to the topic. A range of exercises gives you the opportunity to express complex ideas and opinions so that you are able to do so in the IELTS Speaking test. The vocabulary is presented using Collins COBUILD Dictionary definitions. In every unit, you are given the opportunity to practise the new language you have learnt by answering questions from Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 of the IELTS Speaking test. These test questions increase your familiarity with the exam format and help to build your confidence. Part 2 Exam skills teaches you exam techniques. The information and exercises raise your awareness of what constitutes an effective IELTS response and also provide you with strategies on how to achieve this. Exam information and Exam tips show you how to approach each question type and help you develop successful test-taking strategies. There is also an Exam factor checklist after the exam practice that will help you assess your readiness for the actual exam. Answer key and audio scripts A comprehensive answer key is provided for all sections of the book including notes on why certain answers are correct or incorrect. You will also find full audio scripts of all speaking exercises at the back of the book.	
Unit title	Topic	Page																																																								
Introduction		4																																																								
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Photo credits		144																																																								
Unit	Topics	Components	Tasks																																																							
<b>3 STUDIES AND WORK</b>	Education and work	Vocabulary Speaking exam: Part 1 Speaking exam: Part 2	Task 1 - Task 8																																																							
		Grammar: Speculating with phrases, modal verbs and conditionals Speaking exam: Part 3	Task 9 – Task 15																																																							
		Pronunciation: Word stress	Task 16 – Task 19																																																							
		Exam Skills	Giving answers that are relevant and of the right length																																																							

<b>4 THE WORLD AROUND US</b>	Nature and the environment	Vocabulary: The environment, The climate	Task 1 – Task 8
		Speaking exam: Part 1	Task 9
		Grammar: Cleft sentences, Complex sentences, Subordinate Clauses Speaking exam: Part 2	Task 9 – Task 17
		Pronunciation: Long and short vowel sounds	Task 18 – Task 23
		Exam skills: Speaking exam: Part 3	Improve your answers
<b>5 COMMUNICATION</b>	Language and communication	Vocabulary: Language learning and keep in touch; Globalisation Speaking exam: Part 1	Task 1 – Task 7
		Grammar: comparisons, expressing attitude	Task 8 – Task 17

		Speaking exam: Part 2	
		Pronunciation: Consonants Speaking exam: Part 3	Task 18 – Task 21
		Exam Skills	Agreeing and disagreeing
<b>6 TECHNOLOGY</b>	Science and technology	Vocabulary: Technology, The Internet, Phrasal verbs particles Speaking exam: Part 1, Part 2	Task 1 – Task 12
		Pronunciation: Sentence Stress Speaking exam: Part 3	Task 13 - 20
		Exam Skills:	Coherence

### ***3.4.2 The Material for Designing the Pre-test and Post-test***

The content for the IELTS speaking exams was carefully chosen to correspond to the topics covered in units 3 and 6 in *Speaking for IELTS (presented in Appendix III)*, while also being appropriate for the students' level. In this study, IELTS 16 for the Academic module, published by Cambridge (2021) which provides authentic examination papers like real tests, was used to offer the opportunity for the students to familiarise themselves with IELTS. There are four tests in this book in total. The researcher would choose two tests to design a pretest and a posttest. Table 3.5 shows the material of pretest and posttest.

	<b>Test</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Part</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Topic</b>
	1	31	1	4-5 minutes	People you study/ work with
	4	97	2	3-4 minutes	Technology
	4	97	3	4-5 minutes	Computer games and Technology in the classroom

### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

#### 3.5.1 Pre-tests and Post-tests

To collect quantitative data, speaking pre-tests and post-tests were planned for two groups in the form of the IELTS speaking test, which were designed to simulate the actual test environment as closely as possible.

The IELTS speaking test consists of three parts. Part 1 requires the student to some questions about himself. In part 2, the student is given a topic and talks about it for one to two minutes. In the last part, they were asked some abstract and complicated questions related to the previous topic in part 2. The test lasts between 11 and 14 minutes (Cambridge et al., 2018); every one of the questions must be completed in the allotted time and assessed as presented in Table 2.2.4. The speaking tests were evaluated by two independent raters and cross-checked with the Pearson correlation analysis to ensure the test score's reliability.

**Table 3.3.3** Description of designing the pre-test and post-test

<b>Description of pre-test and post-test</b>				
<b>Part</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
1	4-5 mins	1	People you study work with	The students answer some general questions about themselves, their work and studies.
2	3-4 mins	4	Technology	The students are given a topic (technology you decided to stop using) and talk about it for one or two minutes. The students have one minutes to think about what they are going to say and make notes if they wish.

3	4-5 mins	4	Computer games and Technology in the classroom	The students answer some abstract questions related to the topic in part 2 (technology)
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### 3.5.2 Questionnaire

Besides the IELTS speaking pre-and post-tests, the questionnaire was developed to enrich the quantitative data. Its aim is to evaluate students' the impact of CLIL on students' IELTS speaking performance. To make sure that there is no misunderstanding when students give responses, the researcher designed both the Vietnamese and the English versions. A survey was developed to elicit answers to two research questions presented in the current study. It was prepared by the researcher and includes 28 five-point Likert-scale questions, ranging from a scale: 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Neutral, 4 for Agree, and 5 for Strongly Agree to conveniently analyse on SPSS version 26.

The questionnaire used in the study was designed to test two research hypotheses. The questionnaire includes two sections. The former involves the personal data concerning the learners' background and motivation, and the latter four main constructs. More specifically, the first and second ones focus on exploiting the effects that CLIL has on adolescents' speaking performance in the IELTS test regarding vocabulary, grammar, fluency and pronunciation, along with their ability to address complex speaking test tasks; the third explores the learner's experience and CLIL's benefits; the last one delve on how learner reflects on CLIL and their recommendations on the CLIL activities based on the theoretical framework described in 2.3.

**Table 3.3.4** Constructs included in the questionnaire.

No	Construct	Items
I.	Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy.	1-7
II.	Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks.	8-14
III.	Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL.	15-21
IV.	Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology.	22-28

The initial version of the questionnaire, written in both Vietnamese and English, was sent to the researcher's supervisor for review and evaluation regarding translation, ambiguity, validity, and syntax. It was then piloted on a sample of 25 students in the EG before the official administration at the end of the course. After checking its validity and reliability ( $\alpha_{\text{questionnaire}} = 0.956$ ), the current questionnaire version was selected as one of the instruments for the research's data collection.

The questionnaire in a digital version was delivered to participants in the experimental group on the last session of the course via Zalo groups and Messenger groups to complete.

### ***3.5.3 Observation***

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) emphasize the importance of observational design in educational research, highlighting its utility in understanding the dynamics of classroom interactions, teaching methodologies, and learning outcomes in natural settings. Mills and Gay (2019) also discuss observational design, focusing on its application in evaluating educational programs and interventions.

The observation checklist designed for this study was meticulously aligned with the criteria used in the IELTS Speaking Test, which are fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation, facilitating a targeted and standardized assessment of speaking skills. Additionally, the checklist incorporates elements specifically designed to gauge the effectiveness of CLIL in enhancing subject matter understanding and engagement, recognizing the dual focus of CLIL on content and language mastery. Each section of the checklist in the *Appendix V* contains items rated on a scale from 1 to 5 (poor, fair, good, very good, and excellent respectively). This quantitative approach allows for the collection of data that is both specific and comparable across participants. Scores are assigned based on observable criteria, with descriptors provided for each score point to ensure consistency and objectivity in rating.

### ***3.5.4 The Focus Group Interview***

In addition to the instruments mentioned above for collecting quantitative data, a focus group interview with seven open-ended questions was used to obtain

qualitative data. Open-ended questions may be challenging to code and analyse as the researcher takes a considerable time to categorise the responses into themes (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019, p.396), but this type allows for a detailed response and elaboration (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.554).

These interview questions in this study were designed to explain and clarify the results of the tests and the questionnaire. Seven open-ended questions enquire about (1) Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy (Questions 1-3), (2) Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks (Question 4), (3) Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL (Questions 5 & 6), (4) Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology (Question 7). To enable participants to fully understand the questions and provide their responses, the interview was conducted in Vietnamese.

### 3.6 Research Procedures for the Intervention

#### 3.6.1 Research Procedures of CLIL and Traditional Method

The current study was conducted in the 3-month course between September and December to verify whether implementing a CLIL-based approach could boost students' speaking skills as well as bring positive learning experiences during speaking lessons. During the research process, there was a wide range of tasks to do and finish on time. The table 3.3.5 below describes the procedures of the study.

**Table 3.3.5** Procedures for the control group and experimental groups

Time	Research activities	
	Control group	Experimental group
<i>Phase 1</i> (week 1-extra sessions)	The IELTS speaking pre-test of between 11 and 14 minutes was used for both groups. The purpose of giving students a pretest was to evaluate the student's input level of speaking performance.	
<i>Phase 2</i> (week 2-12)	Students in the control group join speaking lessons with the conventional method.	Students in the experimental group join speaking lessons with CLIL activities.



The purpose of the treatment stage was to enhance students' speaking performance. Four topics in the textbook would be taught to both groups:

Unit 3: STUDIES AND WORK (week 1 – week 3)

Unit 4: THE WORLD AROUND US (week 4 – week 6)

Unit 5: COMMUNICATION (week 7 – week 9)

Unit 6: TECHNOLOGY (week 10 – week 12)

<i>Phase 3</i> (week 12, extra sessions)	The individual posttest of – 11-14 minutes was employed for both groups to compare the effects of two methods including traditional method and CLIL approach. The purpose of the posttest was to evaluate whether the CLIL speaking activities could enhance students' IELTS speaking performance.
<i>Phase 4</i> (week 13)	The questionnaire would be sent to the experimental group. The purpose of delivering post-questionnaire was to evaluate students' perception towards the impact of CLIL on their speaking skills regarding language components and their ability to address complicated tasks; their learning experience and reflections after the intervention.

### 3.6.2 Description of Intervention

There are three stages in a speaking lesson including pre-speaking, while-speaking, and post-speaking. The lesson of speaking lasted 90 minutes, using two different approaches including the conventional method and the CLIL-based approach. Each topic was expected to have two or three sessions (180 - 270 minutes). Table 3.9 illustrates the outline of the lesson plan as well as the general description of treatment for two groups with the sample of the topic “Work and studies”.

**Table 3.9** The outline of the lesson plan description of treatment for two groups

Conventional method	CLIL-based approach
<b>I. Pre-speaking stage (20 minutes)</b>	
1. <i>Teaching vocabulary</i>	1. Stage 1: Language <i>of</i> learning

- Introduce the topic and translate words and phrases in the unit into Vietnamese.

- Ask the students to repeat the words and check their pronunciation.

- Ask the students to do the tasks relating to vocabulary in the book.

- Start with a brainstorming session where students list as many professions and fields of study as they can. Then, use pictures and flashcards to introduce new vocabulary. Focus on key terms related to job titles, workplace settings, and study fields like “degree,” “apprenticeship,” “vocational training,” “remote work”, “freelance”, “internship”, “scholarship”, “online courses” etc. and basic activities associated with each.

- Show the title of a video or article about works and studies. Have students predict the content and discuss the kind of professions or studies they expect to learn about.

- Model pronunciation and usage, encourage the students to do the tasks in the book and ask questions. Introduce some grammatical structures (modal verbs and conditionals) they can use to speak.

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### III. While-speaking stage (50 minutes)

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2. *Doing the given tasks in the book*

2. Stage 2: Language for learning

- Have the students listen the sample answers for Part 1 of the Speaking exam and note down any useful words and phrases.

- Ask the student to read Part 2 cue cards asking them to describe their dream job. Give them one minute to prepare their

<i>Tasks</i>	Role-play	Divide the class into pairs. Each pair receives a role-play card related to a work or study situation. Students take turns asking and answering questions, simulating an IELTS interview. Encourage them to use the
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monologue and two minutes to speak.

- Get the students to listen to the sample answers for Part 2 and read the audio script, then underline the language used to speculate.
- Ask the students to do the tasks given in the book to practice grammar.
- Introduce the forms of Conditionals and practice them with the tasks given.
- Answer the part 2 Exam question again, including the language for speculation and conditional constructions.
- Listen to the typical questions of Part 3 and the sample answer, then ask the students to use their own words to answer.
- Teach pronunciation: Word stress.

		vocabulary and expressions introduced earlier.
	Mock IELTS Part 2 Practice	Provide students with sample IELTS Part 2 cue cards asking them to describe a job they would like to have or a field of study they are interested in. Give them one minute to prepare their monologue and two minutes to speak.
	Debate	- Organize a debate on the topic: "Is it more important to pursue a career you love or one that offers stability?"
	Group Discussion	Organize a group discussion on a common IELTS topic, such as the advantages and disadvantages of working from home or studying abroad. This encourages students to express their opinions and experiences related to work and study.

	Problem-Solving Activity	Present a real-world problem related to work or studies, such as balancing work and education or choosing the right career path. Have students work in groups to discuss possible solutions, encouraging them to use specific language and concepts learned in the lesson.
3. Stage 3: Language <i>through learning</i>	<b>Group Presentation</b>	The group presentation was assigned to students as different individual students have their own perspective, then they answered randomly some abstract questions related to their topic from teacher. It aimed to check students' ability to address complicated tasks under the pressure and boost their confidence.

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**III. Post-speaking (20 minutes)**

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The purpose of feedback, reflection and homework assignments was to consolidate learning

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- Feedback (10 minutes): Provide feedback on students' language use, focusing on accuracy, fluency, and vocabulary based on their performance in mock speaking test.
  - Reflection (5 minutes): Lead a brief reflection session by asking students to share what they learned or found challenging during the speaking activity.
  - Homework assignments (5 minutes): Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students and assign the topic presentations.
  - Ask the students to write an essay at home and the deadline they were expected to hand their assignment in on Google Docs.
- Feedback Session (10 minutes): Provide individual feedback to students based on their performance in the role-plays and mock speaking tests. Highlight effective use of vocabulary and areas for improvement.
  - Reflection (5 minutes): Ask students to reflect on their own performance and identify one area they would like to improve in discussing works and studies.
  - Homework assignments (5 minutes): For homework, ask students to write an essay on Google Docs and prepare a group presentation on a related topic, such as the future of work, the impact of technology on education, or comparing education systems in different countries, encouraging them to use new vocabulary and expressions learned in class. This will help reinforce their speaking skills and prepare them for the IELTS writing component.
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### **3.7 Research Procedures for Data Collection**

At first, the researcher asked for permission from the Academic Department in Appendix I to take four different classes of intermediate level, and permission to extend four extra sessions from the fixed schedule for speaking pre-tests and post-tests without any benefits. Four classes are Mon-Wed-Fri (17:30 – 19:00), Tue-Thu-Sat (17:30 – 19:00); Tue-Thu-Sat (19:15 – 20:45), Fri-Sat-Sun (19:15 – 20:45). Their courses started in September 2023 and lasted 12 weeks. The duration of the session was 90 minutes. The researcher chose one of three sessions as a speaking class for

the research. Hence, there were 12 sessions in total for the intervention. Two of the four classes were assigned as experimental groups (EG=57) while the two remaining ones still followed their conventional method (CG=54). After that, the researcher sent the students' parents in EG classes the informed consent form in Appendix II.

### 3.7.1 *Administering and Scoring the Tests*

#### 3.7.1.1 Administering Pre-test and Post-test

At the beginning of the first interventional week, the students in both the experimental group and control group were asked to do the pre-test. Based on the pre-speaking scores, the researcher could know their level of speaking proficiency. One hundred and eleven students did the oral pre-test individually. Each lasted between 11 and 14 minutes. There were three parts in the IELTS speaking pre-and post-tests in *Appendix III*. Two raters scored these tests independently.

On the last extra session of the course, the researcher delivered the same kind of IELTS Speaking test to the two groups. The procedures at that time were the same as the pre-test. Next, two raters proceeded to score this post-test. After all, the researcher compared the results with the other rater and assessed the progress of these groups after the course.

#### 3.7.1.2 Scoring the Speaking Performance

The researcher asked for the cooperation of another English language teacher to mark the pretest and posttest along with the researcher based on **Figure 2.2.4 IELTS Speaking Assessment Criteria**. Two raters were scoring the tests at the same time, they would not reveal the results to each other until the end of the test. The table 3.7.1 demonstrates the range for the students' speaking performance in the pre-test and the post-test, which adapted from the IELTS scores and interpretation (Cambridge English Language Assessment et al., 2018).

**Table 3.7.1** The range for the students' speaking performance in the pre-test and the post-test.

Students' speaking score	Level of students' performance
0 - <3	Very poor

3 - <5	Below average
5 - <6	Average
7- < 8	Good
8 - 9	Excellent

### 3.7.2 Administering the Questionnaire

In terms of the questionnaire, the URL to the Google Form called **The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre** (as presented in *Appendix IV*) was shared with them. Two different ways were used for this purpose: Facebook Messenger and Zalo Group. The answers to the questions were automatically transformed into an Excel file, which was moved to the software SPSS for data analysis. The Excel contained information from 111 participants.

### 3.7.3 Administering the Observation Checklist

The classroom observations were conducted 90 minutes per week in each EG class during a 12-week intervention. Observations might be also recorded in order to set the stage for the interviews.

The observation checklist was filled out during speaking lessons to capture specific aspects of speaking performance influenced by CLIL methodology such as fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, pronunciation, and content knowledge and integration.

**Table 3.7.3** The range for the students' speaking performance in the observation checklist.

Score	Level of students' performance
1	Poor
2	Fair
3	Good
4	Very good
5	Excellent

### ***3.7.4 Administering the Focus Group Interview***

In terms of the focus group interview, six students in the EG group were invited to participate in a follow-up semi-structured interview after 12 weeks. A purpose sample of six students consented to participate and were interviewed face-to-face. The interviews were audio-recorded and ranged around 30 minutes in length. Interviews were conducted by the researcher in a private room at Hai Dang Language Centre. The interviews were transcribed verbatim.

## **3.8 Analytical Framework**

The present study employed the quantitative and qualitative approaches, particularly the quasi-experimental design, the survey design and the interview, to carry out the research purpose. Those sets of data were then undergone various analytical processes shown in the SPSS 26.

### ***3.8.1 Collecting the Data of Test Scores***

The quantitative data were collected and analyzed through the IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0. First and foremost, an independent samples T-test was conducted for the results of the pre-test and post-test to see if there was any statistically significant difference between the two groups before and after the treatment.

In terms of the scores collected from the pre-and post-tests, they were analysed through IBM SPSS, using descriptive analysis and independent samples T-tests. In order to illustrate the students' performance on the IELTS speaking tests and the central tendency of scores between the two groups, the former was used to demonstrate the sample size, the mean test score for each group, the standard deviation (SD), and standard error of the mean (Mills & Gay, 2019). Meanwhile, the latter was conducted for the results of the pre-tests and post-tests to see if there was any statistically significant difference between the two groups before and after the treatment. With the aim of testing the first hypothesis and research question that the positive impact of CLIL activities has on the students' speaking performance regarding the enhancement of fluency, coherence, vocabulary richness, grammatical



range, and their ability to address complex speaking test tasks, independent t-tests were employed to compare the mean IELTS speaking scores between students who were taught using the CLIL methodology and those who were not. Further, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is used to assess the equality of variances for a variable calculated for two or more groups (Mills & Gay, 2019). If Levene's test's result is significant (p or sig. (2-tailed) value is less than .05), it indicates that the variances are different, meaning that there is a significant distinction between the EG and CG or vice versa.

### **3.8.2 Questionnaire Responses**

Quantitative data collected from the questionnaire was analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the data. The first section involves students' personal data. Frequencies were analysed for each of the variables. In this study, the variables include age, gender, and ethnicity. When it comes to the second section, there are four constructs including Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, and Vocabulary Richness; Influence on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks; Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL, and Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology. A Likert scale was employed with numeric values with options ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree and from 1 to 5 respectively. Therefore, these ones were coded accordingly when inputted into SPSS.

### **3.8.3 The Focus Group Interview**

Interview data was analysed using thematic analysis. For this study, themes were generated both deductively and inductively: first, deductively themes were created based on the research questions (e.g. speaking components, ability to deal with abstract topics, perceptions towards CLIL). Next, sub-themes were generated from the data. Following this method, thematic frameworks were created to analyse responses from students for each data source.

### **3.8.4 The Observation Checklist**

Observational design integrates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the observed

phenomena (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Mills & Gay, 2019). The data from the observation checklist used to assess the impact of CLIL on students' IELTS Speaking Test performance during the course was collected in numeric form but qualitatively analysed to offer detailed insights for two research questions.

In short, descriptive analysis and independent samples t-tests were employed to analyse the test scores, and Likert items from the questionnaire (quantitative data), the qualitative data for this study was gathered by the interview and observation checklist analysed based on themes.

### **3.9 Issues of Validity and Reliability**

In terms of research studies, validity and reliability are fundamental elements to determine their feasibility and significance. Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure and thus permits the appropriate interpretation of the test scores (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.178). Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of the test results over time and across different conditions. (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.182)

#### ***3.9.1 Tests***

Pre- and post-test designs are widely used in educational research to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and treatment. However, pre-post tests are susceptible to various threats to validity and reliability. Ensuring the validity and reliability of these tests is of paramount importance in an attempt to make sure that the results accurately reflect the changes or outcomes being measured. Hence, when conducting pre-and-posttests, several validity and reliability issues should be considered to ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the findings.

In terms of validity, it is discussed there exist four forms of test validity: content validity, criterion-related validity, construct validity, and consequential validity. These approaches to validity assessment are not mutually exclusive. Moreover, as Mills and Gay (2019) has noted that the experiment is considered valid on condition that the results obtained are solely attributed to the manipulated independent variable and can be generalised to a larger population. There are two primary threats to validity including internal validity (i.e. history, maturation, testing

effects, statistical regression) and external validity (i.e. pre-test treatment interaction, multiple-treatment interference). Thus, during the research, it was vital to use a control group.

The reliability is represented in a numerical range between 0.0 and 1.0, the higher the coefficient, the higher the reliability. There are five different types of reliability consisting of stability, equivalence, equivalence and stability, internal consistency, and scorer/ rater (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.183). In the experiment, the students were studying in classrooms with the same equipment, so very few differences existed in the learning environment. Second, students' language proficiency was similar and they were monitored during the same hours, they also took the same pre-and post-tests namely IELTS speaking tests. Third, the marking scheme for the three parts of the pre-and post-tests was illustrated in the IELTS speaking band descriptors standardised by Cambridge Assessment; and these tests were marked by two different raters, which means ensuring inter-rater reliability.

### ***3.9.2 Questionnaire***

Likert questionnaires are popular rating scales for collecting quantitative data on subjective phenomena such as attitudes, beliefs, and preferences. The validity and reliability of Likert scales are crucial for ensuring the accuracy and consistency of data collected through such questionnaires.

In an attempt to ensure the reliability of the research, the questionnaire was piloted on 25 students and revised before being submitted to the official administration. Further, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha test was calculated to check how related items in the questionnaire are to the main constructs. The internal reliability of the four constructs and the whole questionnaire is described in Table 3.9.2. All 57 participants in the experimental groups completed their questionnaires. As can be seen in Table 3.9.2, no difference was observed between students' responses (Cronbach Alpha was 0.958), indicating reliable internal consistency and high accuracy of responses.

**Table 3.9.2** Reliability of the questionnaire and constructs

<i>No</i>	<i>Constructs</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha Value</i>
1	Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy.	7	0.859
2	Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks.	7	0.866
3	Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL.	7	0.887
4	Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology.	7	0.888
	Total	28	0.958

### ***3.9.1 The Observation Checklist***

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). For classroom checklists, content validity is critical; it ensures that the checklist covers all relevant aspects of the phenomenon being observed. To ensure the validity and reliability of observations, the observational checklist in this study was reviewed by the supervisor before being employed in the study.

### ***3.9.2 Focus Group Interview***

In qualitative research, the validity and reliability of focus group interviews are not assessed through traditional quantitative measures but rather through principles that ensure rigour and trustworthiness. According to Nobel and Smith (2015) and Korstjien and Moser (2018), these principles include credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and reflexivity. Credibility is achieved by accurately representing participant experiences and can be enhanced through techniques such as triangulation and member checking. Dependability, akin to reliability, requires consistency in the research process, which can be documented through an audit trail. Confirmability ensures that findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants rather than the researcher's biases, necessitating a reflexive approach to the research process. Transferability allows findings to be applicable in other contexts, supported by rich, thick descriptions of

the research setting. Lastly, reflexivity involves the researcher's critical self-reflection on their potential biases and influence on the research process. These principles collectively ensure that semi-structured interviews can provide reliable and valid insights into the phenomena under study.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are paramount in research involving human participants, especially vulnerable populations such as EFL adolescents. The ethical approach taken in this study on the impact of CLIL on EFL adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance at Hai Dang Language Centre was designed to ensure the integrity of the research process and the protection of participants' rights. The ethical framework for this study should be guided by established principles in educational research, as outlined by organizations such as the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the British Educational Research Association (BERA).

**Informed Consent.** Participants, in this case, EFL adolescents, and their guardians, must be fully informed about the nature of the research, including its objectives, methods, potential impacts, and any risks or discomforts involved. Consent should be obtained in writing, ensuring that it is informed, voluntary, and comprehensible to all parties involved (AERA, 2011; BERA, 2018).

**Confidentiality and Anonymity.** Participants' identities and personal information must be kept confidential. Data should be anonymized or pseudonymized to prevent the identification of individual participants. (AERA, 2011; BERA, 2018).

**Non-maleficence.** The principle of non-maleficence implies that the research should not harm the participants. This involves considering the psychological, social, and educational impact of the research on adolescents. Any potential risks should be minimized, and safeguards should be in place to address any issues that arise (BERA, 2018).

**Beneficence.** The research should aim to benefit the participants or the wider community, contributing positively to the field of EFL learning and teaching. This includes ensuring that the research is designed to produce meaningful and applicable results that can enhance language learning practices and outcomes (AERA, 2011).

**Voluntary Participation.** Participation in the study must be voluntary, with participants having the right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. This ensures that participation is based on free will, respecting the autonomy of the adolescents and their guardians (BERA, 2018).

**Right to Withdraw.** Participants should be made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage. This should be clearly communicated in the informed consent documentation, ensuring participants understand that withdrawal will not affect their standing or services received at the Hai Dang Language Centre (AERA, 2011).

### **3.11 Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter has covered an overview of English learning in the investigated educational private setting and then described the methodology used in the study; particularly the approach, the method and techniques of the study were also explained. The following parts of the study were the analytical framework and the research validity and reliability issues. The last one was ethical considerations applied in this study. The next chapter will describe and discuss the results obtained from the data collected.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the findings of the study on the effectiveness of CLIL on students' speaking performance at Hai Dang Language Centre are presented. This section is the interpretation of the data collected from the analysis of pre-and-post tests, the questionnaire, the observation checklist and the focus group interview. Further discussion of the results is shown in order to expose the answers to the research questions mentioned in Chapter 1.

### 4.1 Data Analysis

#### 4.1.1 *Speaking Test Results*

##### 4.1.1.1 Pre-Tests

The pre-tests for both the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG) were evaluated by two teachers (hereafter referred to as Rater 1 and Rater 2), with the objective of corroborating the inter-rater reliability of the pretest outcomes for subsequent comparative analysis. The correlations of the pretest scores assigned by the two raters were scrutinized utilizing the Pearson Correlation Coefficient within the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The association of pretest scores by Rater 1 and Rater 2 in CG is presented in Table 4.1, and the correlation of pre-test scores by Rater 1 and Rater 2 in EG is given in Table 4.2

**Table 4.1** Correlation of pre-test scores of the CG by two raters

		Correlations	
		Pre-test_CG_Rater 1	Pre-test_CG_Rater 2
Pre-test_CG_Rater 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.945**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	54	54
Pre-test_CG_Rater 2	Pearson Correlation	.945**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	54	54

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 4.2 Correlation of pre-test scores of the EG by two raters**

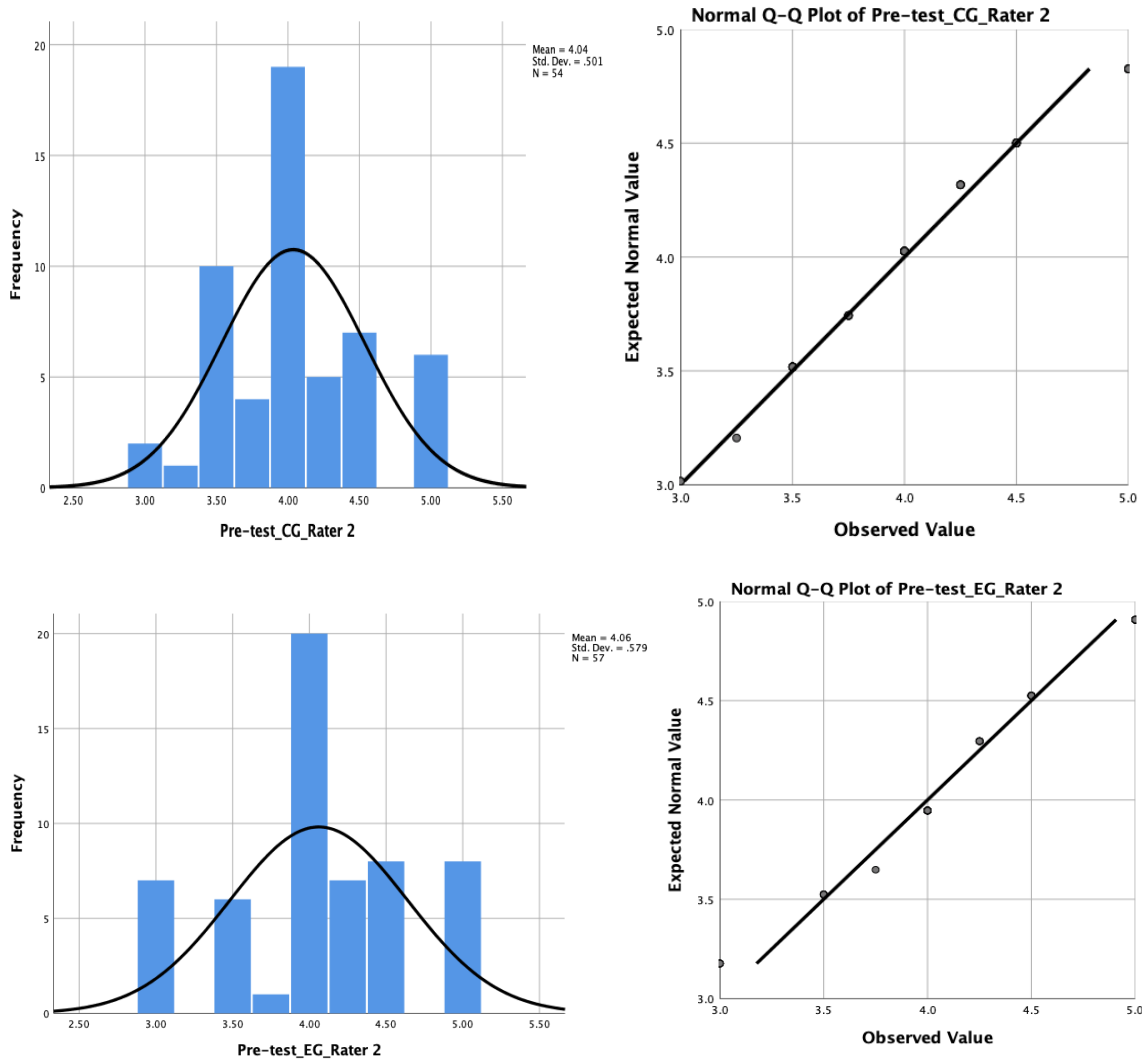
		<b>Correlations</b>	
		Pre-test_EG_Rater 1	Pre-test_EG_Rater 2
Pre-test_EG_Rater 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.975**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	57	57
Pre-test_EG_Rater 2	Pearson Correlation	.975**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	57	57

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It can be inferred from the data in Table 4.1, Sig. (2- tailed) =.000 <.05, that there was a statistically significant correlation between the pre-test score of Rater 1 and the pre-test score of Rater 2 in the CG. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for CG ( $r = .945$ ) demonstrated a strong correlation between rater A and rater B in terms of CG pre-test scores. Likewise, as shown in Table 4.2, a strong correlation between the pre-test scores of Rater 1 and the EG score of Rater 2 was found ( $r = .975$ ). Thus, with a strong interrater correlation between the scores of the two raters, the interrater reliability of the pre-test can be confirmed. Rater 2's scores were chosen for the subsequent analysis.

Furthermore, in order to check that the underlying population follows a normal distribution, the pre-test scores of CG and EG were checked and graphically presented by Histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots. Figure 4.1 indicated that the scores of the two groups scattered along a rather straight line, which means that the scores were normally distributed.





**Figure 4.1** Normal Histograms and Q-Q plots for speaking pre-test results

With the reliability of the speaking pretest scores validated, the mean scores of CG and EG pretests were measured. As shown in Table 4.3, CG’s pretest mean score was about 4.0370 while EG’s pretest mean score was approximately 4.0614. Specifically, the mean score of CG (M=4.04, SD=0.50, N=54) is slightly lower than the mean score of EG (M=4.06, SD=0.58, N=57). Apparently, there is only a modicum of difference between the two values. Then, an independent samples T-test was performed to see if there was a statistically significant difference. Based on Levene’s test for equality of variances, the Sig. value is  $.382 > .05$ . Hence, it can be concluded that the conditions for equal variance were satisfied. Besides, from the results of the T-test for equality of means, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is  $.813 > .05$  (seen in Table 4.4). This means the differences between the means of CG and EG are not

significant. Therefore, the speaking performance of CG and EG was considered the same or equal before the intervention.

**Table 4.3** Descriptive statistics of pre-test scores

		Group Statistics			
Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test	Control Group	54	4.0370	.50096	.06817
	Experimental Group	57	4.0614	.57918	.07671

**Table 4.4** Independent Samples T-Test of pre-test results

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene'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
Pre-Test	Equal variances assumed	.770	.382	-.236	109	.813	-.02437	.10303	-.22857	.17984
	Equal variances not assumed			-.237	108.124	.813	-.02437	.10263	-.22779	.17906

#### 4.1.1.2 Post-Tests

The two raters' post-test scores have been compared, just like with the pre-test. In CG, Table 4.5 showed a correlation between Rater 1 and Rater 2's post-test scores, while in EG, Table 4.6 showed a correlation between those same two raters' post-test scores.

**Table 4.5** Correlation of post-test scores of the CG by two raters

		Correlations	
		Post-test_CG_Rater1	Post-test_CG_Rater2
Post-test_CG_Rater1	Pearson Correlation	1	.914**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	54	54
Post-test_CG_Rater2	Pearson Correlation	.914**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	54	54

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

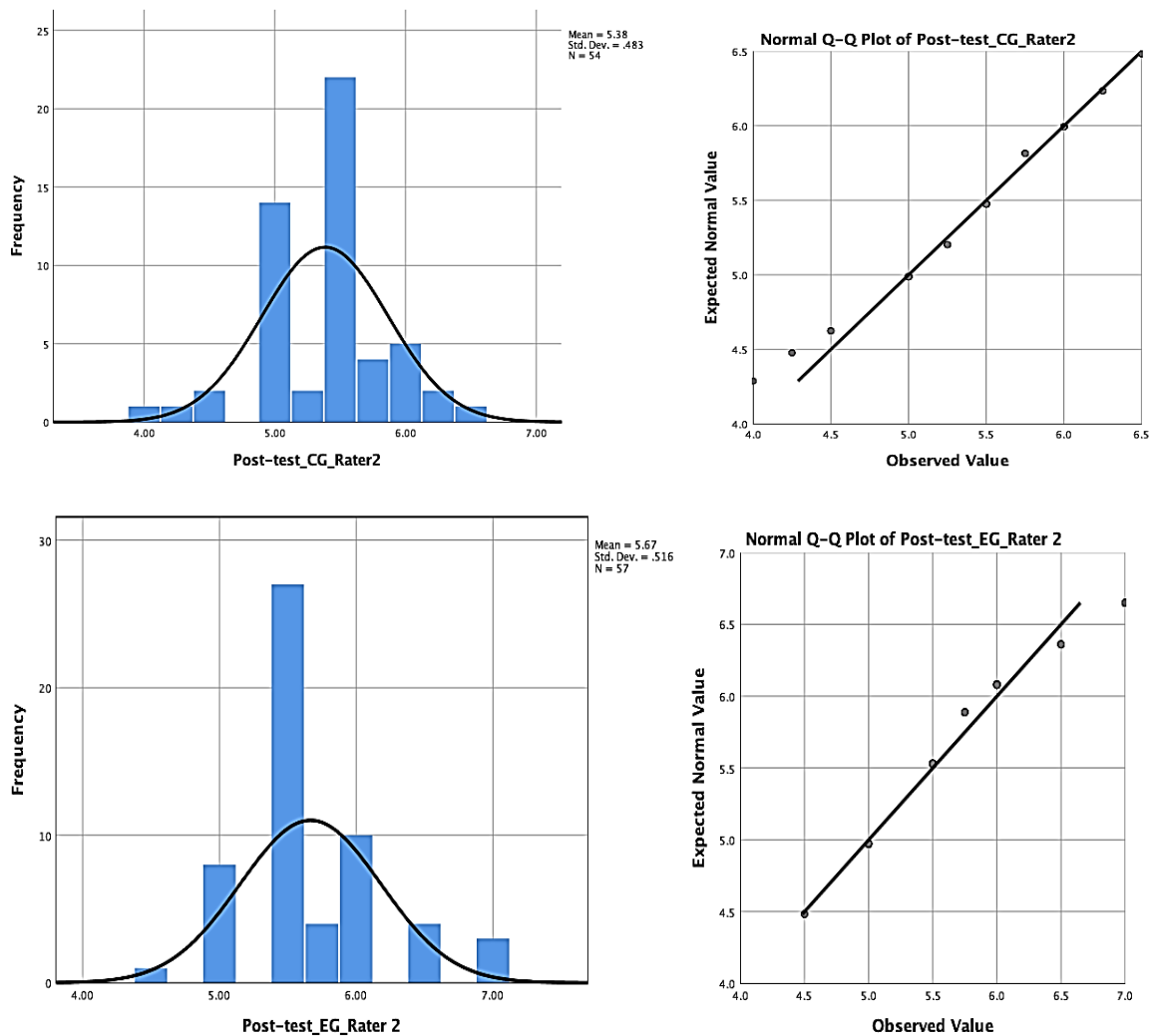
**Table 4.6** Correlation of post-test scores of the EG by two raters

		<b>Correlations</b>	
		Post-test_EG_Rater 1	Post-test_EG_Rater 2
Post-test_EG_Rater 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.971**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	57	57
Post-test_EG_Rater 2	Pearson Correlation	.971**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	57	57

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be indicated from the data in Table 4.5, Sig. (2-tailed) = .000 < .05, this indicates the presence of a statistically significant correlation between the post-test scores evaluated by rater 1 and those assessed by rater 2 within CG. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for CG ( $r = 0.0914$ ) proved a strong correlation between Rater 1 and Rater 2 in terms of CG post-test scores. Similarly, as tabulated in Table 4.6, with Sig. (2-tailed) = .000 < .05 and Pearson Correlation Coefficient ( $r = 0.971$ ), there was a strong correlation between scores of post-tests by Rater 1 and Rater 2 for EG as well. As a result of the strong inter-rater correlation between scoring by the two raters, the inter-rater reliability of posttests for both groups can be established and confirmed. Therefore, the scores by Rater 2 were selected for the subsequent analysis.

Moreover, similar to the previous part, the post-test scores of CG and EG were inspected and graphically depicted by Histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots to ensure whether the underlying population followed a normal distribution. Figure 4.2 indicated that the scores of the two groups scattered along a rather straight line, which means that the scores were normally distributed.



**Figure 4.2 Normal Histograms and Q-Q plots for speaking post-test results**

With the reliability of the speaking posttest scores validated, the mean scores of CG and EG posttests were measured. As shown in Table 4.7, the general descriptive statistics of posttest scores of CG and EG show that the posttest mean score of EG ( $M=5.7$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ,  $N=57$ ) is considerably higher than that of CG ( $M=5.4$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ,  $N=54$ ). As demonstrated in Table 4.8, the Independent Samples T-test proves that the difference between the post-test means of CG and EG existed, the Sig. Value is  $.771 > .05$ . Hence, it can be concluded that the conditions for an equal variance were assumed. Besides, from the results of the T-test for equality of means, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is  $.004 < .05$ . This proves that the difference between the posttest means of CG and EG existed, and it was statistically significant. Thus, the

speaking scores of CG and EG after the treatment notably changed. In other words, the speaking results in the post-tests of EG were slightly better than those of CG.

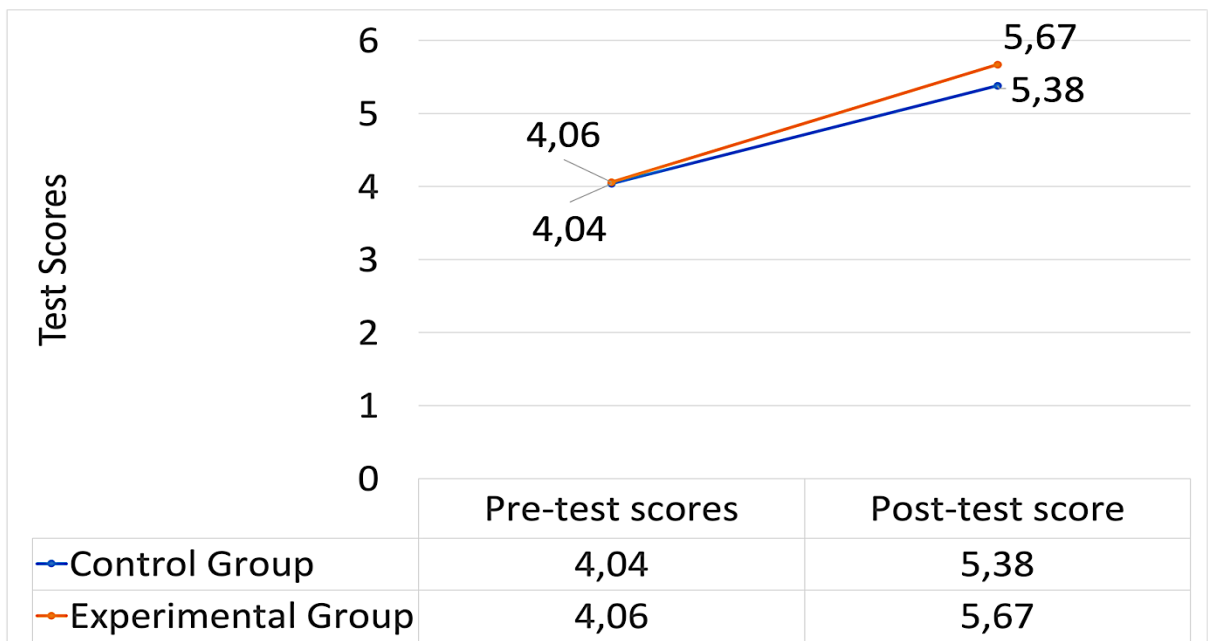
**Table 4.7 Descriptive statistics of post-test scores**

		Group Statistics			
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-Test	Control Group	54	5.3843	.48251	.06566
	Experimental Group	57	5.6667	.51611	.06836

**Table 4.8 Independent Samples T-Test of post-test results**

		Independent Samples Test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
Post-Test	Equal variances assumed	.085	.771	-2.974	109	.004	-.28241	.09496	-.47062	-.09420	
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.979	108.982	.004	-.28241	.09479	-.47027	-.09454	

The improvement can be visually seen from the following chart.



**Figure 4.3 Comparison of means of pre-test and post-test scores**

#### 4.1.2 Questionnaire

In order to gather data for the first research question regarding students' perceptions of the influence of CLIL on enhancing IELTS speaking performance in terms of fluency, coherence, vocabulary and grammar as well as on the ability to address the complex speaking test tasks, two groups of questions about linguistic

components (items 1-7) and ability to tackle the complex tasks (items 8-14) were examined to clarify the issue.

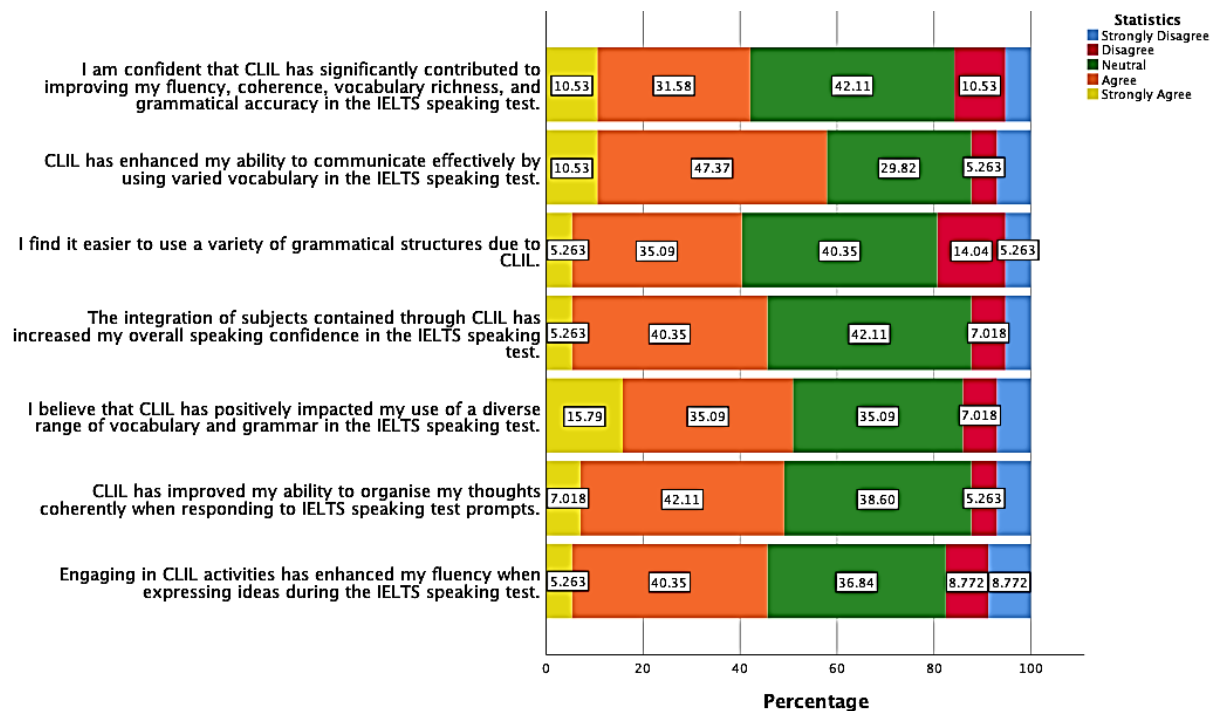
As for the second research question concerning how the EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement at Hai Dang Language Centre, 14 follow-up items were divided into two constructs, exploring the insights into learners' experiences with CLIL and its perceived benefits on IELTS test preparation and performance (items 15-21), and reflects the attitudes of EFL adolescents towards the CLIL methodology (items 22-28).

Every construct has been described and visually illustrated.

#### 4.1.2.1 Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy

The data presented in the Figure 4.4 provides insights into the perceived influence of CLIL on various aspects of language proficiency, specifically in the context of the IELTS speaking test.

**Figure 4.4** Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy



### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Engaging in CLIL activities has enhanced my fluency when expressing ideas during the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.25	1.005
CLIL has improved my ability to organise my thoughts coherently when responding to IELTS speaking test prompts.	57	1	5	3.37	.957
I believe that CLIL has positively impacted my use of a diverse range of vocabulary and grammar in the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.46	1.070
The integration of subjects contained through CLIL has increased my overall speaking confidence in the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.33	.893
I find it easier to use a variety of grammatical structures due to CLIL.	57	1	5	3.21	.940
CLIL has enhanced my ability to communicate effectively by using varied vocabulary in the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.49	1.002
I am confident that CLIL has significantly contributed to improving my fluency, coherence, vocabulary richness, and grammatical accuracy in the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.32	.985
Valid N (listwise)	57				

Overall, the majority of respondents seemed to acknowledge the positive impact of CLIL on their language skills.

A combined 45.7% of participants agreed or strongly agreed ( $M= 3.25$ ,  $SD=1.005$ ) that CLIL activities have enhanced their fluency in expressing ideas during the IELTS speaking test, while a slightly lower percentage (36.8%) remains neutral, and a minority of 17.6% disagreed with this statement. Similarly, when considering the ability to organize thoughts coherently, 49.1% of respondents ( $M=3.37$ ,  $SD=0.957$ ) concurred that CLIL has had a beneficial effect, with 38.6% remaining neutral and a lesser portion of 12.3% dissenting.

The role of CLIL in fostering a diverse range of vocabulary and grammar was also seen positively, with 50.9% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing ( $M=3.46$ ,  $SD=1.070$ ) with this statement. Notably, the strongest affirmation was found in the belief that CLIL enhances the ability to communicate effectively using varied vocabulary, where 57.9% of respondents were in agreement, and only 12.3% disagreed ( $M=3.49$ ,  $SD=1.002$ ). When discussing the ease of using various grammatical structures due to CLIL, the results show a more divided perspective, with 40.4% neutral, 35.1% agreeing, and a slightly higher percentage of disagreement (19.3%) compared to other statements ( $M=3.21$ ,  $SD=.940$ ).

Confidence in speaking, an important factor in the IELTS speaking test, also appeared to be positively influenced by CLIL, with 45.7% of participants agreeing and 5.3% strongly agreeing ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=0.893$ ), totaling over half of the respondents indicating a positive influence. However, it is noteworthy that a significant proportion of respondents remained neutral (42.1%) on this aspect.

Lastly, when considering the overall contribution of CLIL to improving fluency, coherence, vocabulary richness, and grammatical accuracy, the responses were more varied with 42.1% neutral, but a substantial combined total of 42.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement ( $M=3.32$ ,  $SD=0.985$ ).

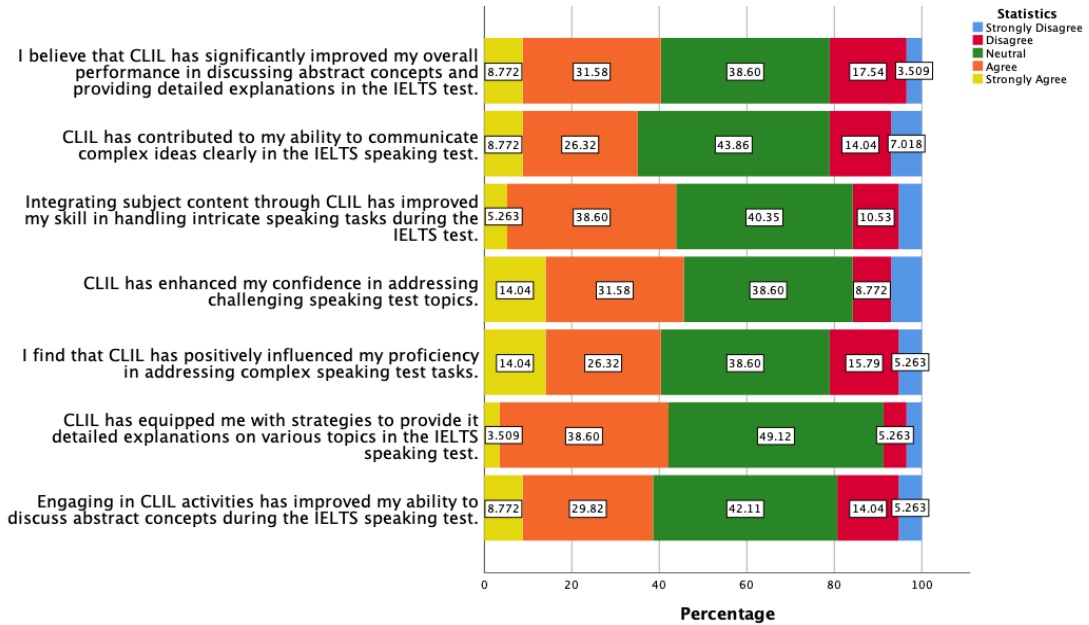
In conclusion, these results suggest that the majority of respondents perceive CLIL as beneficial to enhancing their English language proficiency in preparation for the IELTS speaking test, particularly in the areas of vocabulary use and thought organization.

#### 4.1.2.2 Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks

The following construct involved how students perceived using CLIL to tackle complicated speaking tasks. The Figure 4.5 presented a distribution of respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of CLIL on their abilities to tackle complex speaking tasks in the IELTS speaking test.



**Figure 4.5 Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks**



**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Engaging in CLIL activities has improved my ability to discuss abstract concepts during the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.23	.982
CLIL has equipped me with strategies to provide detailed explanations on various topics in the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.33	.787
I find that CLIL has positively influenced my proficiency in addressing complex speaking test tasks.	57	1	5	3.28	1.065
CLIL has enhanced my confidence in addressing challenging speaking test topics.	57	1	5	3.37	1.063
Integrating subject content through CLIL has improved my skill in handling intricate speaking tasks during the IELTS test.	57	1	5	3.28	.921
CLIL has contributed to my ability to communicate complex ideas clearly in the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.16	1.014

I believe that CLIL has significantly improved my overall performance in discussing abstract concepts and providing detailed explanations in the IELTS test.	57	1	5	3.25	.969
Valid N (listwise)	57				

In general, a close examination of the data suggests a moderate level of endorsement for the role of CLIL in enhancing the ability to discuss abstract concepts.

While a plurality of respondents, 42.1%, remained neutral, 38.6% agreed or strongly agreed that their abilities have improved, overshadowing the 19.3% who disagreed ( $M=3.23$ ,  $SD=0.982$ ). This indicates a cautiously positive reception of CLIL's effectiveness in this domain.

Similarly, regarding the provision of detailed explanations on varied IELTS topics, a significant 49.1% of respondents did not express a clear stance, yet 42.1% acknowledged the beneficial strategies gained through CLIL, with only 8.8% in disagreement ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=0.787$ ). This could reflect an appreciation for the methodological support CLIL provides, albeit with some reservations as indicated by the high neutrality.

The sentiment was somewhat less positive when respondents considered the general influence of CLIL on their proficiency in addressing complex tasks, with a combined 40.3% in agreement versus 21.1% disagreement, and a notable 38.6% adopting a neutral position ( $M=3.28$ ,  $SD=1.065$ ). This may suggest variability in how CLIL's influence is experienced individually in complex task management.

Confidence in addressing challenging topics, a critical component in speaking tests, appeared to be moderately bolstered by CLIL, as evidenced by 45.6% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing that CLIL has enhanced their confidence, compared to 15.8% who disagree ( $M=3.37$ ,  $SD=1.063$ ). Here, the data points to a more confident outlook among learners who have engaged in CLIL.

The impact of integrating subject content through CLIL on handling intricate speaking tasks demonstrated a near-even split between neutral responses (40.4%) and agreement (43.9%), with a smaller fraction disagreeing (15.8%) ( $M=3.28$ ,

SD=0.921). This reflects a general positivity towards CLIL's content integration in skill improvement, though not overwhelmingly so.

As for the clarity of communication in complex ideas, the responses were spread across the spectrum, with a slight lean towards agreement (35.1%) over disagreement (21%), and a significant portion remaining neutral (43.9%) (M=3.16, SD=1.014). This distribution may imply that while CLIL has potential benefits, it may not be universally felt or recognized by all learners.

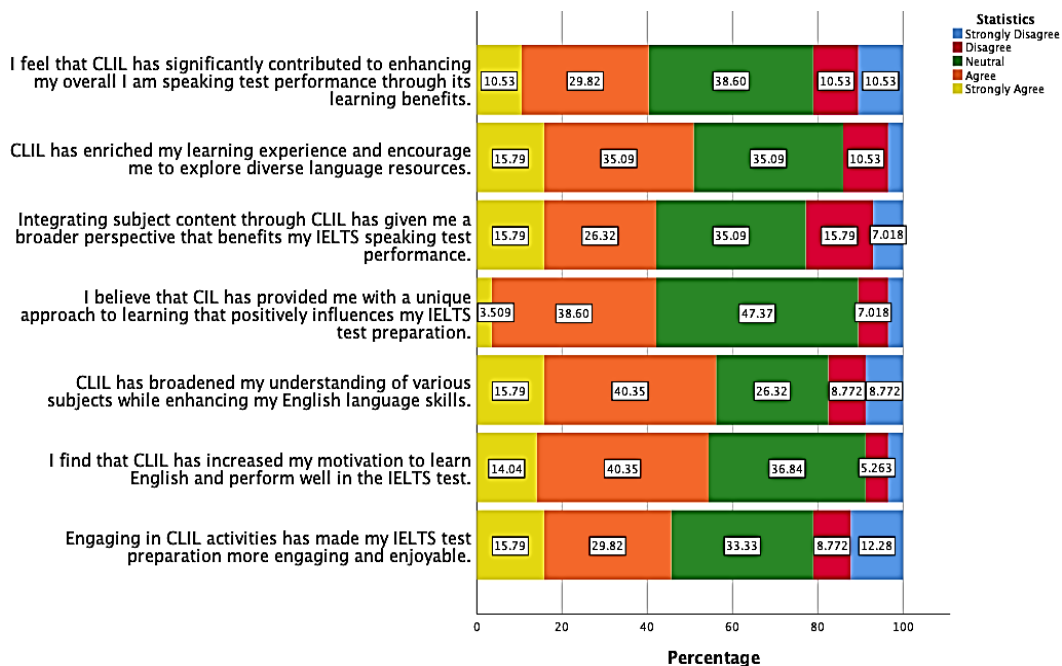
Finally, when respondents considered the overall enhancement of performance in discussing abstract concepts and providing detailed explanations, 40.4% confirmed improvement through CLIL, against 21% not recognizing such improvement, and a considerable 38.6% remaining undecided.

In summary, while there is a trend towards recognizing the positive influence of CLIL on addressing complex speaking tasks in the IELTS, a large proportion of respondents maintain a neutral stance. This could indicate that while CLIL has potential, its effectiveness may be dependent on individual learner differences or other contextual factors not captured by the data.

#### 4.1.2.3 Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL

The survey data demonstrated in Figure 4.6 offers insights into learners' experiences with CLIL and its perceived benefits on IELTS test preparation and performance.

**Figure 4.6 Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL**



**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Engaging in CLIL activities has made my IELTS test preparation more engaging and enjoyable.	57	1	5	3.28	1.206
I find that CLIL has increased my motivation to learn English and perform well in the IELTS test.	57	1	5	3.56	.926
CLIL has broadened my understanding of various subjects while enhancing my English language skills.	57	1	5	3.46	1.135
I believe that CIL has provided me with a unique approach to learning that positively influences my IELTS test preparation.	57	1	5	3.32	.805
Integrating subject content through CLIL has given me a broader perspective that benefits my IELTS speaking test performance.	57	1	5	3.28	1.130
CLIL has enriched my learning experience and encourage me to explore diverse language resources.	57	1	5	3.49	1.002

I feel that CLIL has significantly contributed to enhancing my overall I am speaking test performance through its learning benefits.	57	1	5	3.19	1.109
Valid N (listwise)	57				

A considerable portion of participants (45.6%) agreed that CLIL activities have made their IELTS test preparation more engaging and enjoyable, with a notable 15.8% feeling strongly about this positive influence (M=3.28, SD=1.206). This suggests that CLIL may contribute to higher levels of student engagement and enjoyment, which are critical factors in sustained learning. However, there is a visible dissent of 21.1% who disagreed, and a third of the respondents remain neutral, indicating that this experience is not universal.

The motivational impact of CLIL was affirmed by a majority of the respondents (54.4%), who agreed that it has increased their motivation to learn English and perform well in the IELTS test, with 14% strongly agreeing (M=3.56, SD=0.926). This highlights CLIL's potential to foster learner motivation, which is a significant aspect of effective language acquisition.

In terms of broadening understanding of various subjects, while enhancing English skills, 56.2% of respondents (M=3.46, SD=1.135) acknowledged this dual benefit, reflecting CLIL's core aim of integrating content learning with language development. The positive response here indicates a recognition of the additive effect of CLIL on both subject matter comprehension and language proficiency.

The survey also indicates that a plurality of participants (41.1%) believed CLIL offers a unique approach to learning that has a positive impact on their IELTS test preparation, although a large segment (47.4%) remained neutral, and a small group disagreed (10.5%) (M=3.32, SD=0.805). This could suggest that while many see the value in CLIL's approach, its effectiveness or applicability may not be clear or consistent across different learner contexts.

Furthermore, a combined 42.1% of respondents felt that integrating subject content through CLIL provided a broader perspective beneficial to IELTS speaking

test performance, with an equal number strongly agreeing and disagreeing (15.8%) ( $M=3.28$ ,  $SD=1.130$ ). This implies that while there was recognition of the broader perspective CLIL offers, a significant minority did not perceive this as beneficial, or the benefit was not directly observable in their test performance.

CLIL's role in enriching the learning experience and encouraging the exploration of diverse language resources was acknowledged by a total of 50.9% of participants, with 15.8% strongly agreeing ( $M=3.49$ ,  $SD=1.002$ ). This could reflect the varied and resourceful learning environment CLIL aims to provide, promoting deeper learner engagement with the language.

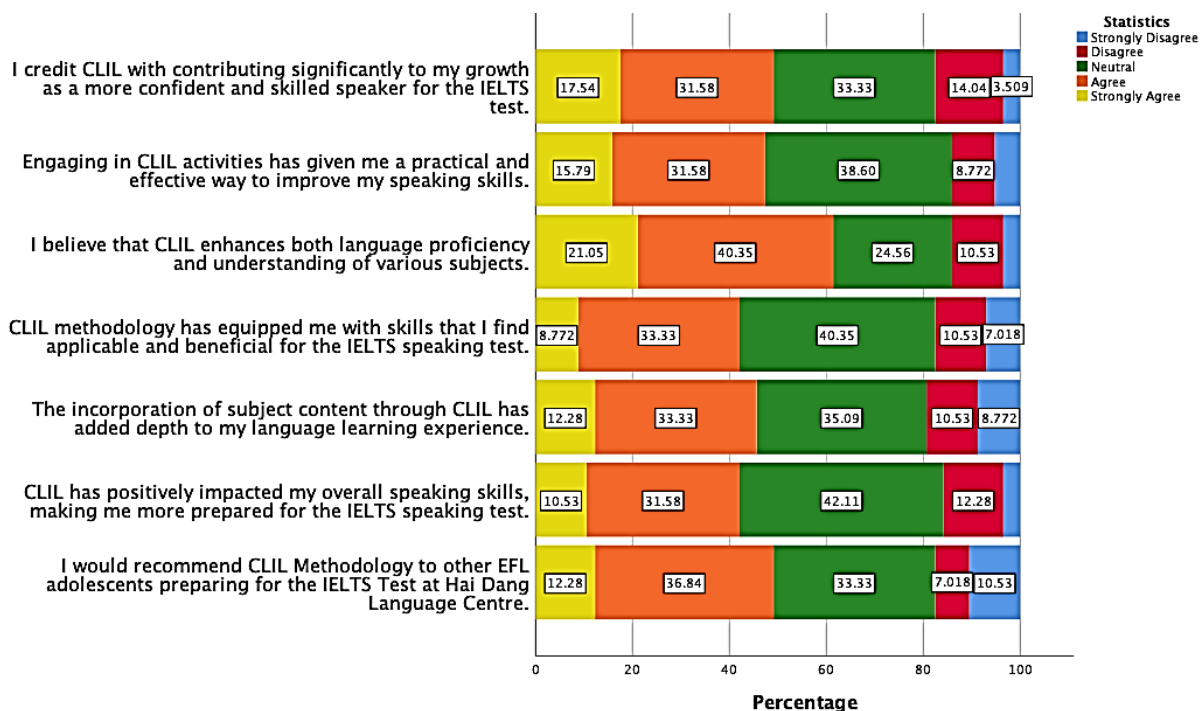
Finally, regarding the overall contribution of CLIL to enhancing IELTS speaking test performance, the results were more varied, with 40.3% of respondents in agreement, yet a substantial proportion (38.6%) remained neutral, and a fifth of the respondents disagreed ( $M=3.19$ ,  $SD=1.109$ ). This diversity in responses could indicate that the perceived effectiveness of CLIL in improving test performance is influenced by individual differences among learners or specific aspects of the CLIL approach.

In summary, the data reveals a generally positive perception of CLIL's impact on the learning experience and performance outcomes in the context of IELTS preparation. Notwithstanding, the presence of neutral and disagreeing responses suggests that the benefits of CLIL may not be uniformly experienced by all learners. This highlights the need for further exploration into how CLIL can be optimized to cater to diverse learning needs and preferences.

#### 4.1.2.4 Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology.

The survey data illustrated in the Figure 4.7 reflects the attitudes of EFL adolescents towards the CLIL methodology as part of their preparation for the IELTS test at Hai Dang Language Centre.

**Figure 4.7 Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology**



**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would recommend CLIL Methodology to other EFL adolescents preparing for the IELTS Test at Hai Dang Language Centre.	57	1	5	3.33	1.123
CLIL has positively impacted my overall speaking skills, making me more prepared for the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.33	.951
The incorporation of subject content through CLIL has added depth to my language learning experience.	57	1	5	3.30	1.101
CLIL methodology has equipped me with skills that I find applicable and beneficial for the IELTS speaking test.	57	1	5	3.26	1.009
I believe that CLIL enhances both language proficiency and understanding of various subjects.	57	1	5	3.65	1.044
Engaging in CLIL activities has given me a practical and effective way to improve my speaking skills.	57	1	5	3.44	1.035

I credit CLIL with contributing significantly to my growth as a more confident and skilled speaker for the IELTS test.	57	1	5	3.46	1.053
Valid N (listwise)	57				

A majority of respondents, 49.1%, would recommend CLIL to their peers, with 12.3% expressing strong endorsement ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=1.123$ ). Despite this, there was a substantial 17.5% who did not favor the recommendation, and a third of the participants were neutral. This suggests that while there is a positive inclination towards CLIL, there are reservations or uncertainties about its universal applicability.

Regarding the impact of CLIL on speaking skills, a combined 42.1% acknowledged a positive effect, enhancing their readiness for the IELTS speaking test. However, a significant 42.1% remained neutral, which could imply a lack of perceived impact or uncertainty in attributing improvements specifically to CLIL, and 15.8% did not perceive a positive impact ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=0.951$ ).

When it comes to adding depth to language learning experiences, 45.6% agreed that CLIL has been beneficial, indicating that the integration of content and language may contribute to a richer learning experience. Still, a notable 35.1% of respondents were neutral, and 19.3% did not share this perspective, reflecting diverse experiences and perceptions of the methodology's effectiveness ( $M=3.30$ ,  $SD=1.101$ ).

For equipping learners with applicable skills for the IELTS speaking test, 42.1% ( $M=3.26$ ,  $SD=1.009$ ) affirmed that CLIL has been beneficial. The neutrality rate (40.4%) remained significant, which points to a possible uncertainty about the direct applicability of these skills to the test context or variability in how these skills were acquired through CLIL.

A clear majority of respondents, 61.5% believed that CLIL enhances language proficiency and subject understanding, with a noteworthy 21.1% strongly agreeing ( $M=3.65$ ,  $SD=1.044$ ). This is one of the more definitive responses, indicating a strong perception of CLIL's comprehensive educational benefits.



In terms of practicality and effectiveness in improving speaking skills, 47.4% felt that CLIL activities have been beneficial, and 15.8% strongly agreed (M=3.44, SD=1.035), suggesting that CLIL was seen as a functional methodology for language skill enhancement.

Lastly, the contribution of CLIL to personal growth as a confident and skilled speaker was recognized by 49.1% of the participants, with 17.5% attributing significant growth to it (M=3.46, SD=1.053). This indicates that CLIL may be influential in fostering self-confidence and speaking proficiency, which are crucial for performance in the IELTS test.

In summary, the data presents CLIL as a generally favored methodology among learners, with particular strengths noted in enhancing subject understanding alongside language proficiency, and in fostering practical speaking skills and learner confidence. However, the presence of neutral and negative responses suggests that the perceived benefits of CLIL may vary among individuals, warranting further exploration into the factors that influence these differing perceptions and outcomes.

#### ***4.1.3 The Observation Checklist***

The observation checklist serves as an extensive instrument aimed at evaluating the different dimensions of how CLIL affects the IELTS speaking abilities of EFL adolescent learners. Observers utilized a detailed scale ranging from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent) for rating each parameter, offering a systematic approach to gauge the success of the CLIL-based lessons. This checklist was divided into four primary sections. The outcomes are presented in the table below:

**Table 4.9 Observation Checklist**

<b>Observation Checklist</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b><i>I. Speaking Performance</i></b>	
This section is based on the IELTS Speaking Test assessment criteria but tailored to observe the potential impact of CLIL.	
<b>1. Fluency and Coherence</b>	
Maintains flow of speech without noticeable effort.	2
Uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with flexibility.	3
Effectively manages self-correction and/or repetition without hindering communication.	2

Demonstrates spontaneity in responses, reflecting natural conversational language.	2
<b>2. Lexical Resource</b>	
Uses vocabulary range appropriate to the topic, including subject-specific terminology (where applicable).	4
Demonstrates awareness of style and collocation, with some flexibility.	3
Shows ability to paraphrase effectively when lacking vocabulary.	3
Utilizes idiomatic language appropriately.	2
<b>3. Grammatical Range and Accuracy</b>	
Uses a variety of complex structures with flexibility.	3
Shows high levels of grammatical control; errors are rare and difficult to detect.	3
Applies tense consistency and accuracy throughout the conversation.	2
Exhibits accurate use of conjunctions, prepositions, and articles.	4
<b>4. Pronunciation:</b>	
Uses a range of pronunciation features effectively to convey and enhance meaning.	4
Speech is generally clear and understandable, with only occasional mispronunciations.	5
Demonstrates control over intonation patterns, stress, and rhythm appropriate to the message.	3
Accent does not interfere with intelligibility.	3
Uses a range of pronunciation features effectively to convey and enhance meaning.	3
<b>II. Ability to Address Complex Speaking Tasks</b>	
Demonstrates the ability to discuss abstract concepts clearly and effectively.	3
Provides detailed explanations, examples and elaborations when required.	5
Addresses the speaking tasks comprehensively, fulfilling all task requirements.	4
Engages critically with the task, offering analysis or evaluation.	2
Engages with hypothetical questions competently.	5
<b>III. Content Understanding and Engagement</b>	
Demonstrates clear understanding of the subject matter discussed.	5
Uses subject-related vocabulary and concepts accurately.	4
Engages with the topic critically and analytically.	3
Applies knowledge from CLIL sessions to support arguments or explanations in speaking.	4
<b>IV. Learning Experience</b>	

1. Student Involvement:	
Students actively engages with the CLIL activities.	5
2. Learning Atmosphere:	
Positive and supportive learning atmosphere.	5

The findings from the observation checklist offer a detailed assessment of the CLIL-based sessions, examining different facets including the learners’ speaking performance, ability to address the complex speaking tasks, content understanding and engagement, and learning experience.

In terms of the speaking performance, the findings suggest that the students exhibited a solid foundation in English speaking skills, with particular strengths in lexical resource and pronunciation. Areas for further enhancement include the broader application of discourse markers for improved fluency and coherence, increased use of idiomatic language to enrich lexical resource, and advancing complex grammatical structures for greater accuracy.

The evaluation of the participants' ability to address complex speaking tasks reveals a proficient level of performance, marked by several strengths and areas for development. While students showed proficiency in elaboration and handling hypothetical scenarios, their ability to critically engage with and evaluate tasks requires further development. Enhancing their analytical and evaluative speaking skills could provide a more rounded and thorough approach to addressing complex speaking tasks in the IELTS.

Regarding content understanding and engagement in the CLIL-based speaking classes, the checklist yields encouraging results, showcasing participants' proficiency and areas for further enhancement. The findings reveal a strong content understanding and application among participants, coupled with proficient use of relevant vocabulary. However, fostering deeper critical and analytical engagement with topics could further enrich their speaking performances, offering a more comprehensive and nuanced exploration of subjects.

The findings concerning the learning experience, particularly focusing on student involvement and the learning atmosphere, present an overwhelmingly positive picture. High levels of student involvement coupled with a positive learning atmosphere indicate a successful implementation of CLIL, suggesting that such an approach can significantly enhance the learning experience, fostering both academic and personal growth.

#### ***4.1.4 The Focus Interview***

The interview with experimental-group students was conducted following the questionnaire completion. Six students from this group were selected based on the range of scores and voluntary basis. The reason for this decision is that the researcher could attract a variety of voices with different perspectives. To safeguard the authentic identities of the interviewees the students were assigned pseudonyms such as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, and S6 as their responses to the eight subsequent questions were quoted and summarized. Four of the students interviewed are male, the others are female. The duration of the interview was approximately thirty minutes. The data from the interviews was textually examined using processing.

Analysis of the data collected from the interviews revealed four themes: (1) Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy, (2) Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks, (3) Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL, (4) Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology.

##### **4.1.3.1 Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness and Grammatical Accuracy**

Based on the interview responses regarding the influence of CLIL on various aspects of English language skills, the outcomes are analysed as follows.

Most students (S1, S2, S3, S5, S6) reported a significant improvement in fluency and coherence, citing the constant use of English in various topics as a key factor. This has led to an increased comfort in speaking English naturally and spontaneously. As S3 said:

*“CLIL has really helped my speaking skills for the IELTS test. It's given me the chance to practice speaking English in a more academic way, discussing various topics and using a wider range of vocabulary and structures. This exposure has been crucial in helping me become more fluent and articulate as well. Through CLIL, I've learned how to better structure my thoughts and present my ideas logically, which is essential for the IELTS speaking section.”* (S3)

However, S4 and S5 expressed some uncertainty regarding the improvement in fluency, indicating a desire for more direct speaking practice that closely mimics the IELTS speaking test.

*“... when it comes to fluency and coherence, I really need that kind of practice, where I can speak a lot and get corrected or guided on how to express ideas more smoothly. I wish there was more focus on actual speaking practice, you know, the kind that mimics the real test scenarios.”* (S4)

S2, S3, and S6 highlighted a noticeable expansion in their vocabulary, particularly due to the exposure to subject-related terminology and concepts.

*“...The subject-related vocabulary and concepts have also been helpful for expressing myself in the test.”* (S2)

S1 and S5 also implied that their vocabulary has grown as a result of the CLIL approach, although S5 still notes some difficulty in accessing this richer vocabulary quickly.

*“...I still struggle to form sentences quickly, and I often find myself searching for words.”* (S5)

While grammatical accuracy was not explicitly mentioned, the reported improvements in sentence structuring (S2) and expressing complex ideas (S3) suggest an indirect enhancement.

S1, S2, and S3 all noted the benefit of discussing various topics in English, which aligns with the spontaneous speaking component of the IELTS test (*“constant practice of discussing a variety of topics,”* S1).

S6's comment on being comfortable with discussions and questions in the IELTS test indicated that CLIL has been beneficial for test preparation.

*“...being exposed to all these topics has made me more comfortable with the kind of discussions and questions that come up in the IELTS test” (S6).*

However, S4's response indicated a need for more targeted speaking practice, suggesting that while CLIL helps with language learning (*“my vocabulary’s definitely richer”*, S4), it might not fully replicate the IELTS test conditions (*“I wish there was more focus on actual speaking practice,”* S4).

In summary, the majority of responses supported the notion that CLIL positively influences fluency, coherence, vocabulary richness, and indirectly grammatical accuracy. This corresponds with the literature that suggests integrated content and language study can lead to deeper language competencies (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). Nevertheless, there is a recognition, particularly from S4, that additional, more focused practice may be necessary to maximize these benefits specifically for IELTS speaking test preparation.

#### 4.1.3.2 Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks

Several students highlighted that CLIL facilitates a deeper engagement with complex topics by necessitating analysis, opinion formation, and debate in English (S1, S5, S6). This approach contrasts with conventional learning, promoting critical thinking and the ability to process language more naturally and fluently. As S1 noted, this method *“forced me to actually think in English, not just translate from Vietnamese in my head,”* emphasizing the transition from passive language knowledge to active language use, a skill crucial for the spontaneous speaking tasks in IELTS.

The necessity to discuss a wide array of complex subjects in CLIL classes appeared to significantly enrich students' vocabulary, making them more comfortable using sophisticated language in the IELTS speaking test.

*“Discussing complex stuff in English, like climate change or the future of work, definitely ups your vocabulary game. CLIL classes are full of these discussions, so I wasn't just memorizing random words for a test, but actually using them in real conversations”*, (S2).

This context-based vocabulary acquisition is more effective than memorization, as it ensures words are learned with an understanding of their use in conversation, thereby directly benefiting speaking fluency and lexical resource scores in IELTS.

CLIL's emphasis on detailed explanations and answering questions clearly and concisely is seen to mirror the demands of the IELTS speaking section, particularly in part 3 where abstract and complex topics are often introduced (S3). This suggests that the regular practice of organizing thoughts and articulating them in a structured manner in CLIL classes can directly improve performance in similar IELTS tasks.

*“Second, CLIL has helped me improve my fluency and organization when speaking. We often have to explain things in detail and answer questions in a clear and concise way, which is similar to what you need to do in the IELTS speaking test.”*  
(S3)

While the majority of feedback underscores the benefits of CLIL, one student's experience (S4) indicates that the pressure of group work and presentations on complex topics might detract from the focus on improving specific speaking skills. This suggests that the effectiveness of CLIL might vary depending on individual learning styles, the classroom environment, and perhaps the implementation fidelity of CLIL methodologies.

*“I don't feel it's had much impact on my speaking skills for the IELTS test. We did a lot of group work and presentations, which can be good practice, but the pressure and the complex topics made it hard to really focus on improving speaking.”*  
(S4)

Overall, the responses indicate that CLIL positively impacts learners' ability to address complex speaking test tasks, particularly in terms of critical thinking, vocabulary development, varied speaking practice, and preparation for abstract topics. However, there are also mixed perceptions regarding its effectiveness, with some learners feeling that the pressure and complexity of CLIL topics may not directly translate to improvement in speaking skills for standardized tests like the IELTS.

#### 4.1.3.3 Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL

All of the students, except for S4, highlighted how CLIL activities, particularly debates on contemporary issues such as AI ethics, social media, and environmental challenges, significantly improved their fluency and ability to think and respond quickly.

*“We debate current tech issues, all in English. From AI ethics to the future of social media, we gotta argue our points and defend them. This has seriously improved my fluency and ability to think on my feet, which is super important for the speaking test.”* (S1)

This experiential learning approach, which simulates real-life discussions, directly supports the development of skills crucial for the IELTS speaking section, such as articulating thoughts clearly and engaging in spontaneous conversation.

The thematic focus on real-world issues within CLIL also expanded students' academic vocabulary and content knowledge, directly applicable to the IELTS speaking test. Students reported learning relevant terminology through projects and discussions on topics like climate change and the evolution of communication (S2, S6).

*“My group had to research the topic, prepare a presentation, and answer questions from our classmates. This not only helped me practice talking about a complex topic in an organized way but also helped me learn relevant vocabulary like “global warming,” “greenhouse gases,” and “sustainable practices.” This knowledge and vocabulary will be helpful when discussing environmental topics in the IELTS speaking test.”* (S2)

This approach not only facilitated vocabulary acquisition but also provided a context for its application, thereby enhancing students' ability to discuss complex topics in the IELTS format.

A recurrent theme in the responses was the increased confidence and naturalness in speaking English. CLIL's immersive environment, where students engaged in discussions, presentations, and debates on varied topics, fosters a more holistic learning experience. S3 and S6 particularly noted how CLIL transformed



their speaking abilities, making English communication “*way more natural*” and boosting their confidence significantly.

*“We even did debates and presentations, which totally prepared me for talking in front of people, like in the IELTS. So, CLIL definitely made me feel way more confident and prepared for the speaking test.”* (S3)

This increase in confidence and the shift towards more natural language use are critical for performing well in the IELTS speaking test, where examiners assess spontaneous language use and the ability to communicate ideas effectively.

CLIL's emphasis on engaging with content in English not only aids language development but also enhances critical thinking and articulation skills. S1's observation that CLIL taught them to “*think in English*” underscores the cognitive benefits of this approach, facilitating a deeper understanding and the ability to express complex ideas during the speaking test. This skill is particularly valuable for Part 3 of the IELTS speaking test, which requires candidates to discuss abstract ideas and justify their opinions.

*“When you're learning various in another language, you're not just memorizing words; you're learning to follow complex arguments and express your own thoughts. This skill is gold for the IELTS speaking test, especially in Part 3, where you need to discuss abstract ideas and justify your opinions.”* (S6)

Despite the overwhelming positivity, some students expressed mixed feelings about CLIL's effectiveness for IELTS speaking test preparation. S4 and S5 pointed out the need for more targeted speaking strategies, suggesting that while content knowledge and fluency improved, there could be a greater emphasis on formal speaking styles and specific exam strategies.

*“I was digging into these topics, which was awesome, but I kinda wished there was more focus on the actual speaking strategies and practice on things like pronunciation and fluency. Plus, the discussions were awesome, but they didn't always mimic the kind of formal speaking style IELTS wanted.”* (S4)

In summary, the interview results underscore the positive impact of the CLIL approach on students' speaking abilities and readiness for the IELTS speaking test.

The benefits span from enhanced fluency and vocabulary to improved confidence and critical thinking skills. However, the feedback also indicates areas where CLIL could be supplemented with more targeted IELTS preparation to meet the test's specific demands.

#### 4.1.3.4 Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology

Most students (S1, S2, S3, and S6) reported a significant increase in confidence and fluency in speaking English. S1's expression, "*I can speak more fluidly and with fewer pauses,*" exemplifies the positive impact CLIL has had on overcoming linguistic barriers and improving the ability to discuss complex and abstract ideas. This is further supported by S2 and S6, who note improvements in expressing themselves and engaging in discussions with greater clarity (S2; S6).

*"I've become more adept at expressing complex ideas and have learned to manage my nerves during speaking tasks."* (S3)

S3 and S6 highlight an important aspect of CLIL — its ability to make learning more engaging and reduce test anxiety. S6's statement, "*CLIL made me practice English in a way that didn't feel like practice, which is cool. So, yeah, heading into the IELTS speaking test, I felt prepared and less stressed,*" underscores the effectiveness of CLIL in making language practice feel more natural and less like a conventional study task.

While the feedback is predominantly positive, there are notes of caution and varied experiences that offer a more nuanced understanding of CLIL's effectiveness. S4 expresses a lack of optimism and perceived limited improvement in speaking skills despite using the CLIL approach.

*"As for my IELTS speaking test performance, I'm not very optimistic. Despite using the CLIL approach, I don't feel much more prepared. I'm worried about the test because I don't think my speaking has gotten much better, and I'm not sure I can express my ideas the way I want to."* (S4)

This sentiment is somewhat echoed by S5, who, despite recognizing the comfort gained in speaking English, cast doubt on the direct impact of CLIL on IELTS speaking test scores.

*“Maybe with more time using CLIL, it would have helped more, but for now, my feelings are kinda neutral on the impact it had on my specific test performance.” (S5)*

The reflections from students on their experiences with CLIL before their IELTS speaking tests reveal a predominantly positive impact, particularly in terms of confidence, fluency, and the ability to articulate complex ideas. However, the variability in outcomes and the acknowledgment of the need for supplementary study methods indicate that while CLIL is a powerful approach to integrated learning, its application should be flexible, accommodating individual learner differences, and possibly integrated with other learning strategies for optimal outcomes.

## **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

Based on the findings provided, this part serves to present a discussion of those findings in relation to previous research in the area of incorporating CLIL into speaking learning. The discussion in this section is based on two themes related to two research questions, i.e. enhancing Speaking competence and learners' perceptions towards CLIL content.

***Research question 1:*** What is the positive effect of CLIL on adolescent EFL learners' IELTS speaking test performance at the Hai Dang Language Centre?

CLIL is beneficial for the enhancement of IELTS speaking performance based on the data collected from the pre-and-post tests, the two first constructs of the questionnaire, and some ideas gathered from the interview. Regarding the IELTS speaking scores, both groups were nearly the same before the treatment; however, the experimental group (EG) had a considerable improvement (from M= 4.06 to M=5.7), while the control group (CG) made progress (from M=4.04 to M=5.4). Because the EG had a chance to immerse themselves in the CLIL-based lessons with the context-rich input, rich interaction, and pushed outcomes; hence, they practiced speaking academic topics in English more, which helped enhance their IELTS speaking performance and ability to tackle the complex tasks.

This view was supported by the findings from the questionnaire, the observation checklist, and the interview suggesting a generally positive view of CLIL's impact on essential language skills. First, vocabulary and grammar

improvements reported by over half of the respondents in the survey and interviewees are consistent with findings from Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010), who suggest that CLIL's integration of language and content naturally extends learners' linguistic resources. The significant endorsement of CLIL's role in vocabulary enrichment is particularly compelling, as this is a critical component of communicative competence (Bachman & Palmer, 2010).

Second, fluency, as indicated by the majority of respondents, seemed to be positively affected by CLIL, with nearly half of the participants recognizing improvement in their ability to express ideas. This is consistent with the notion that CLIL's immersive, content-focused approach can lead to greater linguistic responsiveness and agility (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). However, the substantial neutrality might reflect a contingent of learners for whom CLIL's impact on fluency is less clear, potentially due to varying levels of engagement with the method or the nature of their prior language learning experiences (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

Similarly, the acknowledgment by nearly half (49.1%) of participants that CLIL aided in organizing thoughts coherently during speaking tasks can be seen as a testament to CLIL's focus on higher-order thinking skills alongside language development (Dalton-Puffer, 2007). Nonetheless, the 38.6% neutrality could indicate a potential gap in CLIL's consistent delivery or learners' recognition of these skills, necessitating further investigation into pedagogical practices.

The overall perceived contribution of CLIL to improving key aspects of language proficiency in the context of IELTS preparation suggested a positive trend, yet the presence of neutrality and the mixed review from S4 indicated that the perceived effectiveness of CLIL is non-uniform. This may call for a more nuanced understanding of how different learners respond to CLIL and the conditions under which it is most effective (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009).

The findings also revealed a cautiously optimistic view of CLIL's effectiveness, with a notable proportion of respondents acknowledging improved capabilities in discussing abstract concepts and providing detailed explanations on varied IELTS topics, despite a significant level of neutrality. The findings align with

the body of research that posits CLIL as a beneficial approach to language learning, offering methodological support that extends beyond traditional language instruction methods (Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

CLIL's integration of content and language learning aims to provide learners with authentic contexts for language use, enhancing their ability to tackle complex linguistic tasks (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008). However, the high rate of neutrality and the presence of disagreement in the study's results highlighted the variability of CLIL's effectiveness, echoing the call for personalized approaches in language teaching (Ball, Kelly & Clegg, 2017). The slightly more positive perception of CLIL's impact on confidence in addressing challenging topics suggested that CLIL can foster a conducive learning environment for enhancing speaking skills, particularly in high-pressure situations like the IELTS speaking test. This is consistent with the communicative competence framework, which emphasizes the importance of confidence and strategic competence in effective communication (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Nonetheless, the significant neutrality and variability in responses underscored the complexity of measuring CLIL's effectiveness solely through learner perceptions. Factors such as the duration of CLIL exposure, the quality of CLIL implementation, and individual learner differences might play critical roles in the outcomes observed (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009).

**Research question 2:** How do EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement at Hai Dang Language Centre?

Based on the data gathered from the survey, the observation checklist and the interview, it can be concluded that CLIL had a considerable positive impact on the student's learning experience and perceived benefits of CLIL in the context of IELTS test preparation.

The responses from three instruments suggested that CLIL has a positive effect on students' engagement and enjoyment in test preparation. This aligns with pedagogical theories that suggest integrative learning approaches can enhance

motivation and engagement (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). Additionally, a significant portion of the respondents (54.4%) in the survey acknowledged an increase in motivation to learn English and perform well on the IELTS test, potentially due to the authentic and contextualized learning environments that CLIL is known to create (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008).

More than half of the participants in the survey and most interviewees experienced a broadening of their content knowledge alongside their English language development, which echoes the dual-focused approach of CLIL that is designed to promote both language and content learning (Dalton-Puffer, 2007). Moreover, 42.1% of respondents and four of six interviewees felt that CLIL provided a unique approach to learning that has had a positive influence on their IELTS test preparation. This finding suggests that the methodology's emphasis on cognitive engagement and real-world relevance resonates with learners (Ball, Kelly & Clegg, 2017).

The integration of subject content through CLIL appeared to give a broader perspective that 42.1% of respondents found beneficial to their IELTS speaking test performance, possibly due to the method's inherent focus on language use in academic contexts. The enrichment of the learning experience and encouragement to explore diverse language resources is another significant outcome, shared by most of the interviews and a half (50.9%) of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing, which could be indicative of CLIL's capacity to foster independent learning and exposure to varied linguistic inputs (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009).

Considering the overall contribution of CLIL to enhancing IELTS speaking test performance, 40.3% of respondents and four of six interviewees recognized its significant benefits. This feedback underscores the efficacy of CLIL in improving not just language skills but also in promoting strategies relevant to test-taking scenarios (Genesee et al., 2006).

Regarding the impact of CLIL on speaking skills, a majority of participants (42.1% neutral, 42.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing) and interviewees believed that CLIL has had a positive effect and recommended it. The depth added to the language

learning experience through CLIL, acknowledged by 45.6% of respondents, aligns with the research of Dalton-Puffer (2007), highlighting CLIL's contribution to cognitive academic language proficiency. The data also indicates that 42.1% of learners found the skills gained from CLIL to be directly applicable and beneficial for the IELTS speaking test. This practical application is a significant facet of CLIL, as noted by Ball, Kelly, and Clegg (2017), who emphasized the real-world relevance of CLIL's approach.

In terms of enhancing both language proficiency and subject understanding, a substantial 61.5% agreed or strongly agreed, supporting the dual-focused efficacy of CLIL reported by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2009). Furthermore, 47.4% of the participants found CLIL activities to be a practical and effective method to improve speaking skills, and 49.1% credited CLIL with significant contributions to their growth as confident and skilled speakers. These perceptions are in line with the study by Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2012), which identified increases in self-confidence as a common outcome of CLIL programs.

In summary, the gathered data from both the survey, observation checklist and the focus group interview suggests that CLIL was valued among learners for its positive influence on language skills and its applicability to IELTS preparation.

## CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

This study aims to look into how CLIL affects the speaking abilities of EFL students. The goal of the study is to investigate how much CLIL influences EFL students' proficiency in spoken English, particularly in oral communication academic tests like IELTS. The study also looked into how EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement. The participants were 111 students who were divided into two groups: control (54 students) and experimental (57 students).

### 5.1 Conclusions

To achieve the goals of the study, the dependent variables were assessed using pre-and-posttests, a questionnaire, observation checklist and interviews. In order to gauge the effectiveness of the intervention, the student's speaking abilities were first evaluated using the pretest and posttest. A questionnaire was then used to look at how the students felt about the treatment. Using SPSS version 26, the pretest, posttest, and questionnaire results were examined and discussed in light of the two study topics outlined in Chapter I.

The following is a summary of what was said:

**Research question 1:** What is the positive effect of CLIL on adolescent EFL learners' IELTS speaking test performance at the Hai Dang Language Centre?

After twelve weeks of treatment, the speaking post-test results indicated that learning activities in CLIL-based lessons had a more positive impact on the IELTS speaking performance of learners in the experimental group compared to those who received traditional instruction in the control group. Following the intervention, students in the experimental groups demonstrated a slight improvement in their IELTS speaking performance. Besides, the findings of the survey, the observation checklist, and the focus group interview suggested that CLIL-based learning activities boosted the students' confidence in answering the complicated abstract questions in part 3 of the IELTS speaking test.



**Research question 2:** How do EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement at Hai Dang Language Centre?

Despite the significant neutrality and variability in responses, the results of the questionnaire, observation checklist and focus group interview demonstrated that the majority of the students acknowledged the effectiveness of CLIL-based lessons on their learning experience and perceived benefits to IELTS speaking performance. Further, with CLIL, the pedagogical shift toward a learner-centered approach was accentuated, compared to the previous one. Therefore, the students were motivated to contribute to the lessons.

## **5.2 Pedagogical Implications**

The findings of this study on "The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre" offer several pedagogical implications for English language teaching, particularly in contexts where English is not the native language. The insights drawn from the responses of the adolescents participating in CLIL-based lessons can guide teachers, and curriculum designers in enhancing English language learning experiences and outcomes.

First, the positive feedback from students on the effectiveness of CLIL in improving their IELTS speaking scores suggests that integrating CLIL methodologies into the EFL education program can be beneficial, which highlights the need for language centres to consider adopting CLIL approaches, not only for speaking skills but across all four skills assessed in the IELTS exam (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). The integration should be done thoughtfully, ensuring that content subjects are relevant and engaging to students, thereby enhancing their motivation and learning outcomes (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

Second, the success of CLIL programs significantly depends on the proficiency and preparedness of teachers in delivering content in English. This study

underscores the importance of providing teachers with adequate training and professional development opportunities focused on CLIL methodologies. Such training should cover strategies for content delivery, language support, and assessment methods tailored to the CLIL framework (Ball, Kelly & Clegg, 2017). Investing in teacher training will equip teachers with the necessary skills to effectively implement CLIL, thereby enhancing student outcomes.

Third, the wide range of responses from students about their learning experience suggests that resources and materials should be specially designed to customize various learning styles and proficiency levels. Learning resources designed for CLIL programs may bridge the gap between language acquisition and content knowledge. A wide variety of texts, audiovisual aids, and interactive activities should be included in these resources (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008).

Finally, in order to track student progress and address learning gaps, CLIL programs must have efficient mechanisms for assessment and feedback. According to this study, incorporating formative assessments is aligned with the objectives of the CLIL program and provides timely feedback to students. Such assessments should evaluate both content knowledge and language proficiency, helping teachers tailor their instruction to meet the diverse needs of students (Dalton-Puffer, 2007).

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

The investigation into the influence of CLIL on the IELTS speaking performance of EFL adolescents at Hai Dang Language Centre yields promising evidence; however, several limitations must be acknowledged.

Initially, the temporal scope of the study, constrained to a 12-week period encompassing 12 sessions, may not adequately reflect the comprehensive linguistic development or capture the enduring impact of CLIL on oral proficiency. An extension of the study's duration could potentially yield a more substantive understanding of the CLIL methodology's effectiveness and a richer dataset.

Moreover, the sample size, consisting of 57 learners, while providing initial insights, restricts the strength and applicability of the findings. A broader participant base would enhance the reliability and validity of the study's outcomes.

Furthermore, the current study's methodology did not delineate an explicit comparative analysis of the discrete elements comprising the IELTS speaking test between CG and the EG. A more detailed examination across these two cohorts could yield nuanced insights into the specific components of the speaking test—namely fluency, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation—and how they are differentially impacted by traditional EFL instruction versus CLIL methodologies.

Additionally, as this study was conducted in a language centre, there was inevitably a wide range of ages in the same class. As a result, uniformity regarding physical, emotional, and cognitive development among participants was unattainable from the outset.

Last but not least, the research had to be meticulously designed to align with the existing educational program, ensuring that the investigation's interventions did not deviate from the centre's curricular requirements. This necessitated a delicate balance between the integrity of the research design and the operational parameters of the language centre. Consequently, the ability to implement a fully flexible and controlled research environment was somewhat restricted, potentially influencing the study's methodology and outcomes.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Further Study**

Given the constraints identified in the study "The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre," the following recommendations are proposed for further research:

First of all, future research should consider employing a longitudinal design to track the progress of EFL learners over a more extended period. This would allow for a comprehensive evaluation of the long-term effects of CLIL on IELTS speaking performance.

Second, to enhance the generalizability of the findings, subsequent studies should incorporate a larger and more diverse sample of learners. This would provide a more representative dataset and allow for a more nuanced analysis.

Third, further investigation into the specific elements of the CLIL and IELTS that most effectively contribute to improvements in speaking performance would be beneficial. Researchers could experiment with different instructional strategies within the CLIL framework to identify which are most impactful.

Next, since the effectiveness of CLIL can be influenced by teacher competence, further research might explore the impact of targeted professional development for CLIL teachers on student outcomes.

Finally, it is recommended that researchers dissect the IELTS speaking test into its constituent criteria and conduct a comparative analysis of the performance between the CG and EG. This would involve a systematic evaluation of how each group fares on these subcomponents after the intervention.

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## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX I. REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

Subject: Request for Permission to Conduct a Study: "The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre"

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Ngô Thuý Nga, and I am a researcher in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. I am writing to seek your permission to conduct a study titled "The Impact of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre."

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the potential effects of implementing CLIL methodology on the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) Speaking Test performance of EFL adolescents enrolled at Hai Dang Language Centre. CLIL is a pedagogical approach that integrates content and language instruction, and it has gained attention for its potential to enhance language learning outcomes. However, its impact on specific language skills, such as speaking proficiency, requires further research.

To carry out this study, I am seeking your permission to access the Hai Dang Language Centre as a research site and to work with EFL adolescents who are willing to participate voluntarily in the research. The study will involve the following activities:

**Methodology:** My research will involve collecting data through classroom observations, interviews with students and teachers, as well as the analysis of pre-test and post-test IELTS Speaking Test scores.

**Confidentiality:** All data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and the identity of participants will be protected. The study will strictly adhere to ethical guidelines and legal requirements regarding the protection of human research subjects.

**Duration:** The study is expected to be conducted over a period of 12 weeks, starting from September 23 to December 20th, and I will work closely with the Hai Dang Language Centre staff to ensure minimal disruption to the regular educational activities.

**Reporting:** Upon completion of the study, I will provide a comprehensive report of my findings to the Hai Dang Language Centre, which can be used for internal purposes and improvement of teaching practices.

**Benefits:** The findings of this research can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of CLIL approaches in enhancing EFL students' IELTS speaking skills, potentially leading to improvements in teaching and learning strategies at Hai Dang Language Centre.

I understand that Hai Dang Language Centre values the quality of education it provides to its students, and I believe that the results of this study may provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of CLIL in enhancing EFL adolescents' speaking skills, which could benefit both the institution and the field of language education in Vietnam.

I kindly request your permission to proceed with this study and collaborate with Hai Dang Language Centre. I understand that this research may require access to classroom facilities, interaction with students and teachers, and the collection of test data. I assure you that the research will be conducted with the utmost professionalism and respect for the institution's rules and regulations.

Additionally, I am committed to sharing the research results with your institution, which may provide you with valuable information for curriculum development and improving the quality of English language instruction at Hai Dang Language Centre.

Your support and cooperation will be crucial in ensuring the success and ethical conduct of this research project. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [ngothuynga1509@gmail.com](mailto:ngothuynga1509@gmail.com).

Thank you for considering my request, and I look forward to your positive response.

Yours faithfully,

Ngô Thuý Nga

[ngothuynga1509@gmail.com](mailto:ngothuynga1509@gmail.com)

## APPENDIX II. CONSENT FORM FOR MINORS

### Hai Dang Language Centre

### Consent Form for Minors

Research Title: The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I would like to invite your child to participate in a research study titled "The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre." This study is being conducted by Ngô Thúy Nga, a researcher at Hai Dang Language Centre, and it is to investigate the effects of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on the IELTS Speaking Test performance of adolescents studying English as a foreign language (EFL) at Hai Dang Language Centre. The study aims to gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of CLIL in improving language skills among young learners.

Before your child can participate, I need your informed consent. Please take the time to read this consent form carefully and ask any questions you may have. Your child's participation is entirely voluntary, and your decision to allow them to participate or not will not affect their current or future standing at Hai Dang Language Centre.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research study is to assess whether the implementation of CLIL methodology has an impact on the IELTS Speaking Test performance of EFL adolescents. The findings from this study may contribute to my understanding of effective language teaching methods and may help improve language instruction at Hai Dang Language Centre and similar institutions.

#### **Study Description**

Your child will be involved in a research study that includes the following activities:

- Participation in CLIL-based English language lessons at Hai Dang Language Centre.
- IELTS Speaking Test assessments as required by the curriculum.
- Access to their IELTS Speaking Test scores for research purposes.
- Completion of questionnaires related to their language learning experience.



### **Risks and Benefits**

Participation in this study carries minimal risk to your child. Participation may benefit your child by improving English language skills, potentially enhancing their performance on the IELTS Speaking Test, and gaining a better understanding of CLIL as an educational approach. There are no direct financial incentives for participation.

### **Confidentiality**

All information collected during the study will be kept confidential. Data will be anonymized and stored securely. Only authorized research personnel will have access to this information.

### **Compensation**

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact the researcher, Ngô Thuý Nga, at [ngothuynga1509@gmail.com](mailto:ngothuynga1509@gmail.com). Additionally, you may contact the Hai Dang Language Centre at [tngoainguhaidang@gmail.com](mailto:tngoainguhaidang@gmail.com) for any institution-specific inquiries.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your child can withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. Their decision to participate or withdraw will not affect their status at Hai Dang Language Centre.

### **Participant Information:**

- Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Researcher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact Information (Researcher): \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact Information (Parent/Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_
- Study Location: Hai Dang Language Centre
- Study Dates: [Specify dates]
- Principal Investigator: [Name and contact information]

**Informed Consent:**

I, the undersigned, give my consent for my child, [Participant's Name], to participate in the research study titled "The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance" conducted by Hai Dang Language Centre. I have been provided with sufficient information about the study, and I understand its purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits. I also understand that my child's participation is entirely voluntary.

I understand that my child's identity will be kept confidential, and the results of this study may be published or presented in an anonymous and aggregated form.

I understand that I can contact the Researcher, Ngô Thuý Nga, at ngothuynga1509@email.com, if I have any questions or concerns about the study.

I hereby grant permission for my child to participate in this research study.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Name:

Participant's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this consent form, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided and voluntarily agree to your child's participation in the study. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

## **APPENDIX III. SAMPLE OF IELTS SPEAKING TEST: PRE-TEST & POST-TEST**

### **PART 1 – IELTS Speaking Test**

The examiner asks you about yourself, your home, work or studies and other familiar topics.

#### **EXAMPLE**

##### **People you study/work with**

- Who do you spend most time studying/working with? [Why?]
- What kinds of things do you study/work on with other people? [Why?]
- Are there times when you study/work better by yourself? [Why/Why not?]
- Is it important to like the people you study/work with? [Why/Why not?]

### **PART 2 – IELTS Speaking Test**

Describe some technology (e.g. an app, phone, software program) that you decided to stop using.

You should say:

- when and where you got this technology
- why you started using this technology
- why you decided to stop using it
- and explain how you feel about the decision you made.

You will have to talk about the topic for one to two minutes. You have one minute to think about what you are going to say. You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

### **PART 3 – IELTS Speaking Test**

#### **Discussion topics:**

##### **Computer games**

Example questions:

- What kinds of computer games do people play in your country?
- Why do people enjoy playing computer games?
- Do you think that all computer games should have a minimum age for players?

##### **Technology in the classroom**

Example questions:

- In what ways can technology in the classroom be helpful?
- Do you agree that students are often better at using technology than their teachers?
- Do you believe that computers will ever replace human teachers?

## APPENDIX IV. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

### **Topic: The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre**

*Dear Participants,*

*I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your participation in my study, "The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre." Your insights are invaluable as I explore the effects of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) adolescents' IELTS speaking test performance.*

*This study aims to explore how CLIL affects language proficiency and your experiences in this context. Rest assured, your responses will remain strictly confidential, and your anonymity is guaranteed.*

*Your thoughtful and honest feedback will contribute significantly to my research, and I am genuinely thankful for your cooperation. I look forward to your participation and the opportunity to enhance English language education at Hai Dang Language Centre.*

*Sincerely,*

*Ngô Thuý Nga*

*Researcher*

### **Section A. Personal Data**

The first section of the questionnaire asks you to provide some personal data. Please put a tick (✓) on your answers.

- Full name (Optional)
- Gender                     Male     Female
- What year were you born? .....
- Number of Years Studying English .....years
- Current English Proficiency Level

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

• Have you ever taken an IELTS speaking exam?

Yes       No

• How often do you self-learn your English-speaking skills?

always       usually       often

sometimes       seldom       never

• List some ways that you self-learn speaking skills at home:

.....

.....

.....

• Do you have any specific plan to commit acts to improve your English-speaking level at a certain time?

Yes       No

☞ If yes, how long:.....

### **Section B: Likert Scale Questionnaire**

#### **The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre**

*Put a tick (✓) on each item that represents your opinion according to this scale:*

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

<p><b>Influence of CLIL on Fluency, Coherence, Vocabulary Richness, and Grammatical Accuracy</b></p> <p><i>This construct investigates whether the integration of content from various subjects through CLIL contributes to greater fluency, coherence, and vocabulary richness, grammatical accuracy in the responses of EFL adolescents during the IELTS speaking test.</i></p>	<p><b>Strongly Disagree</b></p>	<p><b>Disagree</b></p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p><b>Agree</b></p>	<p><b>Strongly Agree</b></p>
<p>1. Engaging in CLIL activities has enhanced my fluency when expressing ideas during the IELTS speaking test.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>2. CLIL has improved my ability to organise my thoughts coherently when responding to IELTS speaking test prompts.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>3. I believe that CLIL has positively impacted my use of a diverse range of vocabulary and grammar in the IELTS speaking test.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>4. The integration of subjects contained through CLIL has increased my overall speaking confidence in the IELTS speaking test.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>

5. I find it easier to use a variety of grammatical structures due to CLIL.	1	2	3	4	5
6. CLIL has enhanced my ability to communicate effectively by using varied vocabulary in the IELTS speaking test.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am confident that CLIL has significantly contributed to improving my fluency, coherence, vocabulary richness, and grammatical accuracy in the IELTS speaking test.	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Influence of CLIL on Addressing Complex Speaking Test Tasks.</b> <i>This construct investigates the extent to which the CLIL method influences the overall performance of EFL adolescents in addressing complex speaking test tasks.</i>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1. Engaging in CLIL activities has improved my ability to discuss abstract concepts during the IELTS speaking test.	1	2	3	4	5
2. CLIL has equipped me with strategies to provide it detailed explanations on various topics in the IELTS speaking test.	1	2	3	4	5

3. I find that CLIL has positively influenced my proficiency in addressing complex speaking test tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
4. CLIL has enhanced my confidence in addressing challenging speaking test topics.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Integrating subject content through CLIL has improved my skill in handling intricate speaking tasks during the IELTS test.	1	2	3	4	5
6. CLIL has contributed to my ability to communicate complex ideas clearly in the IELTS speaking test.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I believe that CLIL has significantly improved my overall performance in discussing abstract concepts and providing detailed explanations in the IELTS test.	1	2	3	4	5

<p><b>Learning Experience and Benefits of CLIL</b></p> <p><i>This construct explores how EFL adolescents describe the overall learning experience and benefits of CLIL in terms of their IELTS speaking test performance enhancement.</i></p>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
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1. Engaging in CLIL activities has made my IELTS test preparation more engaging and enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I find that CLIL has increased my motivation to learn English and perform well in the IELTS test.	1	2	3	4	5
3. CLIL has broadened my understanding of various subjects while enhancing my English language skills.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I believe that CILL has provided me with a unique approach to learning that positively influences my IELTS test preparation.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Integrating subject content through CLIL has given me a broader perspective that benefits my IELTS speaking test performance.	1	2	3	4	5
6. CLIL has enriched my learning experience and encourage me to explore diverse language resources.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel that CLIL has significantly contributed to enhancing my overall I am speaking test performance through its learning benefits.	1	2	3	4	5

<p><b>Recommendations and Reflections on CLIL Methodology.</b></p> <p><i>This construct gathers participants' recommendations and reflections on the effectiveness of CLIL methodology in enhancing their IELTS speaking test performance</i></p>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<p>1. I would recommend CLIL Methodology to other EFL adolescents preparing for the IELTS Test at Hai Dang Language Centre.</p>	1	2	3	4	5
<p>2. CLIL has positively impacted my overall speaking skills, making me more prepared for the IELTS speaking test.</p>	1	2	3	4	5
<p>3. The incorporation of subject content through CLIL has added depth to my language learning experience.</p>	1	2	3	4	5
<p>4. CLIL methodology has equipped me with skills that I find applicable and beneficial for the IELTS speaking test.</p>	1	2	3	4	5
<p>5. I believe that CLIL enhances both language proficiency and understanding of various subjects.</p>	1	2	3	4	5

6. Engaging in CLIL activities has given me a practical and effective way to improve my speaking skills.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I credit CLIL with contributing significantly to my growth as a more confident and skilled speaker for the IELTS test.	1	2	3	4	5

*Thanks for your response!*

**APPENDIX V. OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR CLIL IMPACT  
STUDY**

Observer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Session: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating for the Checklist:

1 (Poor) - 2 (Fair) - 3 (Good) - 4 (Very Good) - 5 (Excellent)

<b>Observation Checklists</b>	<b>1 (Poor)</b>	<b>2 (Fair)</b>	<b>3 (Good)</b>	<b>4 (Very Good)</b>	<b>5 (Excellent)</b>
<p><b><i>I. Performance Evaluation:</i></b> This section is based on the IELTS Speaking Test assessment criteria but tailored to observe the potential impact of CLIL.</p>					
1. Fluency and Coherence					
Maintains flow of speech without noticeable effort.					
Uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with flexibility.					
Effectively manages self-correction and/or repetition without hindering communication.					
Demonstrates spontaneity in responses, reflecting natural conversational language.					
2. Lexical Resource					
Uses vocabulary range appropriate to the topic, including subject-					

specific terminology (where applicable).					
Demonstrates awareness of style and collocation, with some flexibility.					
Shows ability to paraphrase effectively when lacking vocabulary.					
Utilizes idiomatic language appropriately.					
3. Grammatical Range and Accuracy					
Uses a variety of complex structures with flexibility.					
Shows high levels of grammatical control; errors are rare and difficult to detect.					
Applies tense consistency and accuracy throughout the conversation.					
Exhibits accurate use of conjunctions, prepositions, and articles.					
4. Pronunciation:					
Uses a range of pronunciation features effectively to convey and enhance meaning.					
Speech is generally clear and understandable, with only occasional mispronunciations.					
Demonstrates control over intonation patterns, stress, and rhythm appropriate to the message.					

Accent does not interfere with intelligibility.					
Uses a range of pronunciation features effectively to convey and enhance meaning.					
<b><i>II. Ability to Address Complex Speaking Tasks:</i></b>					
Demonstrates the ability to discuss abstract concepts clearly and effectively.					
Provides detailed explanations, examples and elaborations when required.					
Addresses the speaking tasks comprehensively, fulfilling all task requirements.					
Engages critically with the task, offering analysis or evaluation.					
Engages with hypothetical questions competently.					
<b><i>III. Content Understanding and Engagement</i></b>					
Demonstrates clear understanding of the subject matter discussed.					
Uses subject-related vocabulary and concepts accurately.					
Engages with the topic critically and analytically.					
Applies knowledge from CLIL sessions to support arguments or explanations in speaking.					
<b><i>IV. Learning Experience:</i></b>					

1. Student Involvement:					
Students actively engages with the CLIL activities.					
2. Learning Atmosphere:					
Positive and supportive learning atmosphere.					

## APPENDIX VI. INTERVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the interview for the research study entitled "*The Impact of CLIL on EFL Adolescents' IELTS Speaking Test Performance at Hai Dang Language Centre.*" This research project aims to explore the influence of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on the IELTS Speaking test performance of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) adolescents at the Hai Dang Language Centre. The study seeks to understand how incorporating CLIL methodologies affects language acquisition and the ability to perform well on the IELTS Speaking Test.

During this interview, the researcher will delve into your experiences, perceptions, and insights related to CLIL implementation and its impact on your IELTS Speaking test outcomes. Your unique perspective is invaluable in shedding light on the effectiveness of CLIL and its relevance in the context of language education. Your duty is to answer the following questions and the interview lasts between 20-30 minutes. However, you may withdraw from the interview at any time without consequence, the researcher is willing to accept your requirement.

Rest assured that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and all responses will remain confidential. The researcher is committed to protecting your privacy and will ensure that your data is anonymized and securely stored.

Furthermore, I kindly request your permission to record this interview, ensuring the accuracy of our data collection. Rest assured that these recordings will be used solely for research purposes.

Your honest and candid responses will play a pivotal role in contributing to our understanding of CLIL's significance in the context of English language education and the Hai Dang Language Centre's unique setting. I sincerely appreciate your time and insights, which will help inform my research and potentially benefit language education practices.



Once again, thank you for your participation, trust, and contribution to my study. Your experiences and perspectives are indispensable to my research.

Before starting the interview, please let me know your concerns. If not, we will start with the first question.

### **Questions for The Group Interview**

- **Interviewees' background**

There are 6 learners who volunteered to join in the interview. All the participants are in the experimental group (EG) and they have the intention of taking the IELTS test in the immediate future.

- **Questions for the group interview**

1. Have you noticed any differences in your English language skills since starting CLIL?
2. In what ways do you think CLIL has influenced your speaking skills for the IELTS test?
3. What do you find most helpful about the CLIL approach in preparing for the IELTS speaking test, particularly fluency and coherence?
4. Reflecting on your IELTS speaking practice, how has CLIL prepared you for tasks that involve discussing complex or abstract topics?
5. Can you provide specific examples of how CLIL has helped you in improving your speaking abilities for the IELTS test?
6. Reflecting on the overall learning experience provided by the CLIL approach. In what ways do you think it has contributed to your preparedness and performance in the IELTS speaking test?
7. How do you feel about your IELTS speaking test performance since you started using the CLIL approach?

## Interview Transcript

### 1. Have you noticed any differences in your English language skills since starting CLIL?

S1: Since starting CLIL, I've noticed significant improvements in my English language skills, especially in terms of my speaking and listening abilities. The focus on using English to learn other subjects has made me more accustomed to thinking and responding in English, which has greatly enhanced my fluency and confidence.

S2: Definitely! Since starting CLIL, I've become much more comfortable with English. My vocabulary has expanded, and I've gotten better at structuring sentences and speaking more fluently. It feels great to express myself more clearly.

S3: Oh, duh, yeah! There's a total difference in my English since CLIL. It's not just about memorizing grammar rules anymore. I can actually, like, think in English now. Like, in unit 5, we gotta explain complex stuff about social media, all in English. At first, it was a total mind-blow, but now it feels way more natural, you know? We have to discuss stuff, collaborate, and stuff, all in English. Honestly, I think it's totally helped me level up my English game.

S4: I'm not sure if my English has improved much since starting CLIL. I understand the idea is to immerse us in English, but sometimes it feels like too much. I'm not sure my language skills have improved as much as they could have with a more traditional approach.

S5: I've noticed that I'm more aware of English around me since starting CLIL, but I'm not sure my skills have really improved. I still struggle to form sentences quickly, and I often find myself searching for words.

S6: Oh, totally! CLIL has been a game-changer for my English. It's not just about memorizing stuff anymore. We actually use English for real stuff, like projects and class debates. It's like being forced to level up your English skills all the time, which

is kind of intense, but definitely helps. I feel way more confident speaking English now.

**2. In what ways do you think CLIL has influenced your speaking skills for the IELTS test?**

S1: The most helpful aspect of the CLIL approach in preparing for the IELTS speaking test is the constant practice of discussing a variety of topics. This has not only expanded my vocabulary but also made me comfortable with the kind of spontaneous speaking required in the test.

S2: I think CLIL has helped me in several ways for the IELTS. It's made me more comfortable speaking English for longer periods, discussing different topics, and thinking critically. The subject-related vocabulary and concepts have also been helpful for expressing myself in the test.

S3: Yeah, I definitely feel like my English has improved since starting CLIL. I'm more confident speaking in English now, and I can express myself more clearly and fluently. I also feel like my vocabulary has gotten bigger, and I'm learning new words and phrases all the time.

S4: Well, honestly, it hasn't really been all that great for my speaking skills. There's this whole thing about the topics we cover. They're super academic or specific, which I guess is useful for some people, but not for someone like me.

S5: CLIL's definitely given me more practice talking in English about academic stuff, which could be helpful for the IELTS. It's not exactly the same as the test itself, but it's gotta be better than just textbook, right?

S6: Oh, CLIL has been pretty awesome for my speaking skills, honestly. It's made me way more confident in using English, since we're always talking about different topics in English, not just doing language exercises. My vocab has seriously expanded, and I feel like I can express my ideas more clearly now. Plus, being

exposed to all these topics has made me more comfortable with the kind of discussions and questions that come up in the IELTS test. It's been a big help!

**3. What do you find most helpful about the CLIL approach in preparing for the IELTS speaking test, particularly fluency and coherence?**

S1: The most helpful aspect of the CLIL approach in preparing for the IELTS speaking test is the constant practice of discussing a variety of topics. It's not just about answering questions; it's about discussing topics deeply. It's beneficial because it trains you to think and articulate your thoughts on the spot, just like in the actual exam. This has not only expanded my vocabulary but also made me comfortable with the kind of spontaneous speaking required in the test.

S2: What's most helpful about the CLIL approach for the IELTS speaking test is the way it integrates language learning with real content. It isn't just about random English words. It's about using them to connect ideas and form a coherent flow of thought. We analyze stuff, make arguments, and explain our reasoning, all in English. This trains your brain to organize your thoughts and present them logically, which is key for acing the IELTS speaking test.

S3: CLIL has really helped my speaking skills for the IELTS test. It's given me the chance to practice speaking English in a more academic way, discussing various topics and using a wider range of vocabulary and structures. This exposure has been crucial in helping me become more fluent and articulate as well. Through CLIL, I've learned how to better structure my thoughts and present my ideas logically, which is essential for the IELTS speaking section.

S4: Frankly speaking, it's kinda hard to say anything super positive about CLIL for IELTS speaking prep. Don't get me wrong, it's not all bad – like, my vocabulary's definitely richer, but when it comes to fluency and coherence, I really need that kind of practice, where I can speak a lot and get corrected or guided on how to express ideas more smoothly. I wish there was more focus on actual speaking practice, you

know, the kind that mimics the real test scenarios. That'd definitely help in feeling more prepared and confident about the speaking test.

S5: Well, I think the coolest part about CLIL for the IELTS speaking test is how it's kinda forced me to use English in a more natural way, especially with all the different subjects we cover. This has made me more fluent because I'm constantly practicing speaking on a variety of topics, which is great for the test. And, for coherence, learning to explain complex ideas in class has definitely helped me organize my thoughts better when I'm speaking. So yeah, it's been pretty helpful for improving both fluency and coherence, even if it's been a bit challenging at times.

S6: Oh, the best part? Definitely how CLIL's made me way more fluent and coherent. Since we're always discussing different subjects in English, it's like my brain's gotten used to switching between topics smoothly. Plus, hearing and using all these academic terms in class discussions has been super helpful for organizing my thoughts better and making my speaking more coherent. It's like, without even realizing it, I've gotten better at connecting my ideas and keeping the conversation flowing naturally, which is exactly what you need for the IELTS speaking test.

#### **4. Reflecting on your IELTS speaking practice, how has CLIL prepared you for tasks that involve discussing complex or abstract topics?**

S1: In CLIL classes, we don't just memorize facts. We gotta analyze stuff, form opinions, and even debate about complex topics, like the impact of social media on mental health or the ethics of artificial intelligence. This forced me to actually think in English, not just translate from Vietnamese in my head, which is crucial for those unexpected IELTS topics.

S2: Discussing complex stuff in English, like climate change or the future of work, definitely ups your vocabulary game. CLIL classes are full of these discussions, so I wasn't just memorizing random words for a test, but actually using them in real conversations. This made me feel way more confident throwing out fancy words in the IELTS speaking test, even if I was nervous.

S3: I think CLIL has helped me in several ways for the IELTS test. First, it's given me more opportunities to practice speaking English in different contexts. We talked about various topics in class, so I'm getting used to discussing different topics and using different vocabulary. Second, CLIL has helped me improve my fluency and organization when speaking. We often have to explain things in detail and answer questions in a clear and concise way, which is similar to what you need to do in the IELTS speaking test.

S4: CLIL is supposed to help with real-life English skills, but I don't feel it's had much impact on my speaking skills for the IELTS test. We did a lot of group work and presentations, which can be good practice, but the pressure and the complex topics made it hard to really focus on improving speaking.

S5: CLIL's definitely been a low-key advantage when it comes to tackling those weird, abstract topics in the IELTS speaking test. It's like, in Unit 4, we're constantly discussing complex stuff like the ethics of AI or the impact of social media, all in English. This forced me to actually think in English about these kinda deep topics, not just translate from Vietnamese in my head. So, it's definitely helped me feel more prepared to discuss anything the IELTS throws my way.

S6: CLIL's been pretty cool for the IELTS speaking, especially the parts where you gotta talk about abstract stuff. In previous classes, it's usually memorization and stuff, but in CLIL, we gotta discuss complex topics like the impact of social media or the future of work, all in English. It's like brain training, forcing me to think and express myself on the spot, which is way more helpful than just memorizing for the test, you know? So yeah, CLIL definitely gave me a head start when it comes to tackling those tricky, abstract topics in the IELTS.

**5. Can you provide specific examples of how CLIL has helped you in improving your speaking abilities for the IELTS test?**

S1: Guess what? We debate current tech issues, all in English. From AI ethics to the future of social media, we gotta argue our points and defend them. This has seriously

improved my fluency and ability to think on my feet, which is super important for the speaking test.

S2: For example, in unit 4, we discussed climate change and its effects and did a project on climate change using CLIL. My group had to research the topic, prepare a presentation, and answer questions from our classmates. This not only helped me practice talking about a complex topic in an organized way but also helped me learn relevant vocabulary like "global warming," "greenhouse gases," and "sustainable practices." This knowledge and vocabulary will be helpful when discussing environmental topics in the IELTS speaking test.

S3: For example, when we covered the 'work and studies' topic in CLIL, I learned how to talk about my education and career goals. We did mock tests, and that practice made me feel more prepared and confident for similar tasks in the IELTS.

S4: For the topic of work and studies, we had a project where we had to present our future career plans in English. I guess it was helpful for learning specific vocabulary related to jobs and education, but I didn't feel it made me much better at actually speaking. I still felt quite scripted and not very spontaneous, which is important for IELTS.

S5: Oh, yeah! We did this cool project on climate change. I had to research and then chat about it in English, which was awesome for practicing speaking. Plus, we debated on topics like plastic pollution, which really helped me get better at arguing and discussing in English, especially on the fly. It was like prepping for the IELTS speaking part but with topics I'm super passionate about. Totally boosted my confidence and skills!

S6: Oh! We worked on this project about the evolution of communication. I had to present all about it in English, from smoke signals to smartphones. It forced me to get my point across clearly and confidently. And then, debating on the impact of social media improved my ability to think quickly and express my thoughts on the spot. It

was like real-life practice for the IELTS speaking test, but with topics I actually found cool. Helped me big time!

**6. Reflecting on the overall learning experience provided by the CLIL approach. In what ways do you think it has contributed to your preparedness and performance in the IELTS speaking test?**

S1: Looking back on the whole CLIL thing, I've gotta say, it's actually been pretty beneficial for getting ready for the IELTS speaking test. First, learning different topics in English seriously bulked up my academic vocabulary. So now, I've got words and phrases for just about anything they could throw at me in the speaking test. It's like having a secret weapon. When they ask me to talk about environmental issues, I've got it. If we move to communications or technology, no worries, I've got terms for them. This has made me way more confident about handling whatever topics come up. Second, there's the critical thinking and articulation part. CLIL hasn't just taught me English; it's taught me how to think in English, which is huge. When you're learning various in another language, you're not just memorizing words; you're learning to follow complex arguments and express your own thoughts. This skill is gold for the IELTS speaking test, especially in Part 3, where you need to discuss abstract ideas and justify your opinions.

S2: CLIL has trained me to think and process ideas in English directly, rather than translating from my first language. This is huge for fluency and making my responses more natural and spontaneous.

S3: CLIL was, like, a game-changer. Instead of just cramming vocab and grammar, we used English to actually talk about the stuff. At first, it was a bit cringe, fumbling for words and all, but soon, speaking English became way more natural. We even did debates and presentations, which totally prepared me for talking in front of people, like in the IELTS. So, CLIL definitely made me feel way more confident and prepared for the speaking test. It wasn't just about memorizing answers, but actually thinking and speaking English, which, I think, made a big difference. Plus, learning through



English helped me understand the vocab better, not just random words on a page, but stuff we actually used. Overall, CLIL was awesome. It made learning more interesting and definitely helped me ace the IELTS speaking test.

S4: To be honest, CLIL was a bit of a mixed bag for me. Like, it was cool learning through different topics, but sometimes it felt a bit off-track from what I really needed for the IELTS speaking test. I was digging into these topics, which was awesome, but I kinda wished there was more focus on the actual speaking strategies and practice on things like pronunciation and fluency. Plus, the discussions were awesome, but they didn't always mimic the kind of formal speaking style IELTS wanted. I mean, I got better at talking about specific stuff, like environmental issues, but when it came to the broader range of topics in the IELTS speaking test, I felt kinda underprepared.

S5: CLIL was, like, okay. It was definitely different. It wasn't necessarily bad, but it wasn't amazing either. I guess it kinda helped me get used to speaking English more, which might have been helpful for the IELTS speaking test. But honestly, I don't know if it made a huge difference. I still had to study pretty hard for the speaking part anyway. So, yeah, CLIL was just kind of neutral for me. Didn't love it, didn't hate it.

S6: Oh, reflecting on it, CLIL was pretty awesome for the IELTS speaking test prep. Learning through actual interesting topics made me way more into practicing English. It wasn't just about drilling grammar; it was about getting comfy with speaking on a bunch of cool subjects. This approach boosted my confidence big time because I was constantly chatting in English about things I cared about. Plus, the focus on real-life communication skills over textbook stuff made me feel way more prepared. By the time the IELTS test rolled around, speaking felt more natural, and I could handle different types of questions better. So yeah, CLIL totally amped up my preparedness and performance for the speaking part!

**7. How do you feel about your IELTS speaking test performance since you started using the CLIL approach?**

S1: I feel much more confident about my IELTS speaking test performance since starting the CLIL approach. Initially, I was hesitant and often struggled to find the right words, but now I can speak more fluidly and with fewer pauses. I also feel better equipped to tackle complex questions and discuss abstract ideas, which has been a significant improvement.

S2: While I still feel nervous about the IELTS, I feel more confident in my speaking abilities thanks to CLIL. I believe I can express myself more effectively and discuss various topics with greater clarity.

S3: Since starting the CLIL approach, I feel much more optimistic about my IELTS speaking test performance. I've become more adept at expressing complex ideas and have learned to manage my nerves during speaking tasks. It's given me a strong foundation, and I'm excited to see how I'll do on the test!

S4: As for my IELTS speaking test performance, I'm not very optimistic. Despite using the CLIL approach, I don't feel much more prepared. I'm worried about the test because I don't think my speaking has gotten much better, and I'm not sure I can express my ideas the way I want to.

S5: CLIL definitely helped me feel more comfortable speaking in English, which is cool, but I'm not sure it made a huge difference in my IELTS score. I still had to study pretty hard on my own, focusing on vocabulary and grammar and stuff. Maybe with more time using CLIL, it would have helped more, but for now, my feelings are kinda neutral on the impact it had on my specific test performance.

S6: Oh, since starting with CLIL, I feel way more confident about my IELTS speaking test performance. It's like, before, talking in English felt like a chore, but now it's more like having a chat about stuff I'm actually interested in. CLIL made me practice English in a way that didn't feel like practice, which is cool. So, yeah, heading into the IELTS speaking test, I felt prepared and less stressed. Totally feel good about how it's improved my performance!

## APPENDIX VII. OTHER ACTIVITIES

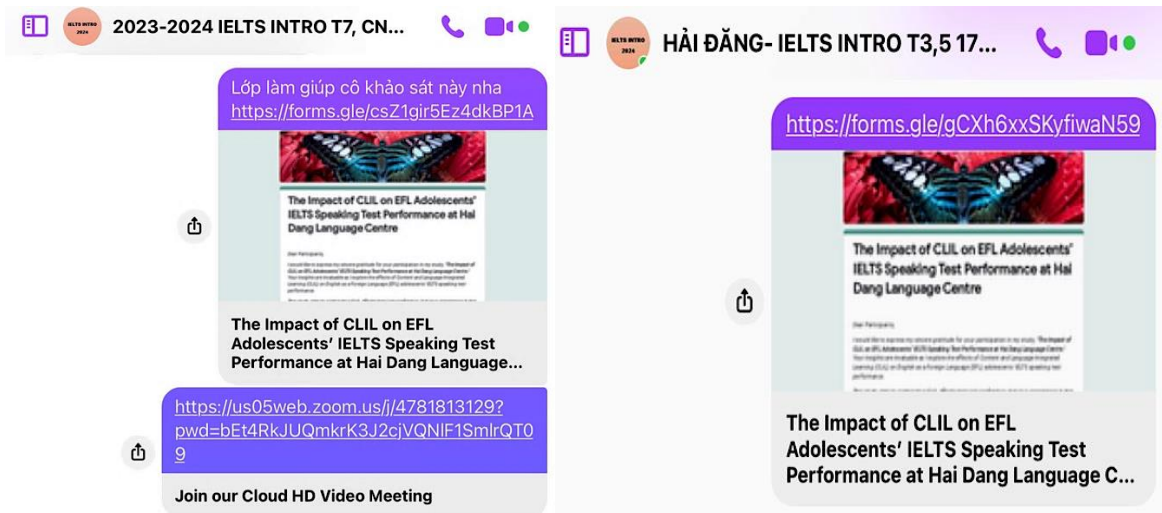
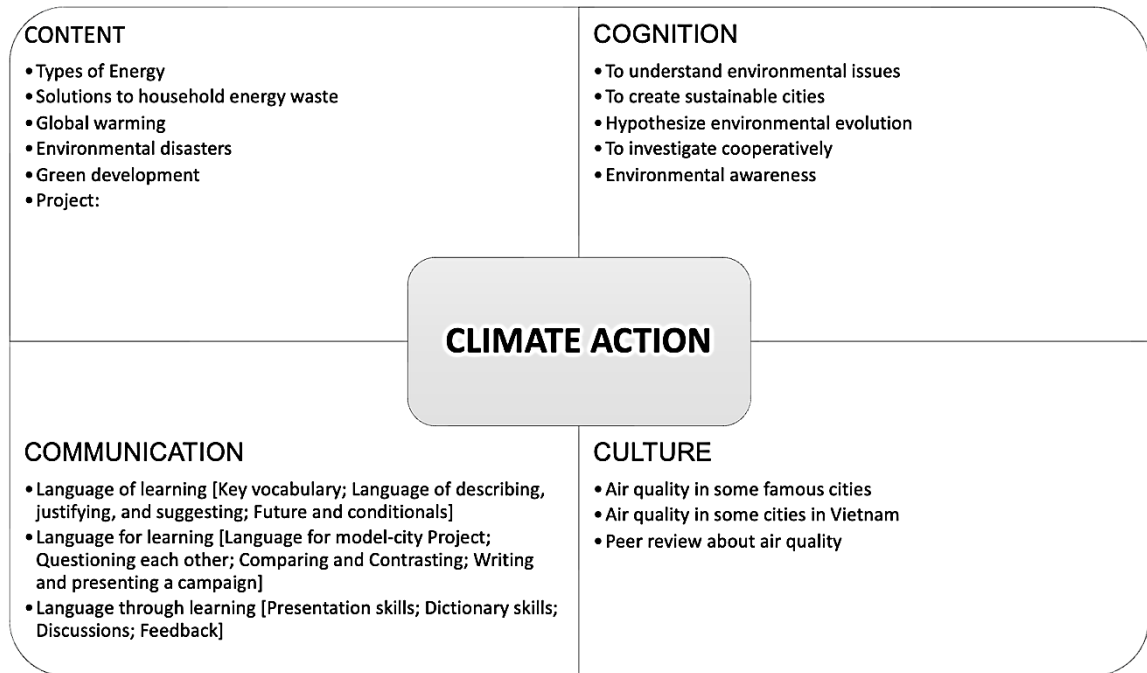


Figure 1 The screenshots to Messenger group



Figure 2 IELTS Speaking Class



**Figure 3** Teaching Objectives adapted from 4Cs (Coyle, 2005)



**Figure 4.** A presentation about Water Pollution



**Figure 5** A Presentation about Natural Disasters (Flood)

2023



## CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING

This certificate is awarded to

**NGO THUY NGA**

for successfully completing **IELTS Teacher's Training Program**  
organized by IELTS IDP Education on August 08<sup>th</sup> 2023.

*With the focus on IELTS Teaching Strategies for Writing & Speaking skills.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Xuan Le', is written over a horizontal line.

**Xuan Le**  
IELTS IDP Vietnam

