

Potentialities and Limitations of Applying CBI in EFL settings

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Abstract

Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is an innovative approach that combines content learning with language teaching instruction; this approach has been implemented in several ESL (English as a Second Language) contexts, but it still remains unfamiliar to most EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings, where characteristics like teaching grammar structures in isolation, lack of resources and absence of communicative language use could become the most relevant limitation to CBI implementation.

However, CBI involves different models such as Immersion Education, Content-Enriched Courses, Theme-based, Adjunct and Sheltered Model, which present a number of characteristics that could fit the EFL setting needs.

Key words: Content-Based Instruction, EFL settings, CBI models

Resumen

El aprendizaje por contenido (CBI) es un enfoque innovador que combina el aprendizaje de contenido con la enseñanza de los idiomas. Este enfoque ha sido implementado en diversos contextos de enseñanza del Inglés como Segunda Lengua (ESL). Sin embargo, CBI aún permanece desconocido para la mayoría de contextos de enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (EFL), cuyas características incluyen: la enseñanza de gramática explícita, falta de materiales y ausencia de lenguaje comunicativo, lo que podrían convertirse en las más notables limitaciones para la implementación de CBI. No obstante, CBI enmarca diferentes modelos tales como: Inmersión educativa, cursos de contenido enriquecido, contenido basado en el tema, modelo adjunto y modelo protector. Estos modelos presentan diferentes características que podrían adaptarse mejor a las necesidades de los contextos de enseñanza del Inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras claves: Aprendizaje por contenido, Contextos de Enseñanza del Inglés como lengua Extranjera, Modelos de CBI.

Potentialities and Limitations of Applying CBI in EFL settings

Historically, language teaching has been in a continuous state of change, in terms of approaches and methods attempting to find the most suitable and effective ones for language teaching and learning. As a result of this search recent approaches have emerged to offer new alternatives to create conditions more conducive to language learning.

An illustration of these new trends is Content-Based Instruction (CBI), a recent approach which integrates language and content instruction (Snow & Brinton, 1995). CBI also includes five different models: Immersion Education, Content-Enriched Courses, Sheltered, Adjunct and Theme based model, which could provide a more organized and complete rationale of this approach.

In addition, CBI can be applied in both ESL and EFL settings, although the conditions to language learning and teaching in EFL settings might cause some drawbacks to its application.

However, the use of subject matter to facilitate language teaching could contribute to the motivation of learners towards the target language.

Taking into account this situation, the aim of the present paper is to analyze the positive and negative aspects of applying CBI, considering the EFL contexts characteristics.

This discussion will be divided as follows:

1. What is CBI?
2. Characteristics of EFL settings
3. Which model of CBI could be the most suitable to be applied in EFL settings?
4. Requirements for a successful application of CBI in EFL settings
5. Limitations of applying CBI in EFL settings
6. Potentialities of applying CBI in EFL settings

What is CBI?

Before starting with a definition of what CBI is, it would be wise to examine first, what content is and what relevance does content have to language learning. In view of this, Richards & Rodgers (2001, p.204) describe content as "the subject matter that we use to communicate or learn through language".

In contrast to this definition, for some teachers content is implicit on the items of language supposed to be taught (Cook, 1983), but the language forms established in a syllabus do not always specify the content of a lesson.

According to Cook (1983, p.229), the passive voice, for example, could be taught through "a report of a football match or a recipe for cooking beans" not just through the use of language structures alone.

Furthermore, Snow (2001, p.303) argues that the emergence of communicative approaches has changed the traditional content known as grammar structures, and nowadays content is defined as "the communicative purposes for which speakers use the ESL/EFL language". In other words, the content should be implemented based on the students interests, and the language forms stated in the syllabus could serve as a basis to choose the content, not as content *per se*.

After having a better understanding of "content", it is appropriate to examine what CBI is. As Snow, (2001) explains, Content-based Instruction combines both language teaching and subject matter objectives. This subject matter can not only be defined as an academic subject such as mathematics, biology or geography, but also that content can refer to a specific topic, for instance, sports, the biography of a music group, the weather, or any other content which leads to the use of authentic language.

With regard to the roots of CBI, Snow (2001) claims that CBI has a strong orientation towards the tradition of teaching English for specific purposes (ESP), where learners' needs are kept in mind to develop curricula and materials.

On top of this, the theoretical foundations of CBI involve Educational and Cognitive Psychology and Second language Acquisition (Snow, 2001). But particularly the work of Stephen Krashen stated in the "Comprehensible Input" hypothesis, has been a strong support to CBI, since Krashen (1984, p.62, cited in Snow, 2001) argues that "second language acquisition occurs when the learners receive comprehensible input", and when "the emphasis is given to the content not the grammar structures", that is, learners should be exposed to a more natural input.

Considering this, CBI makes use of "real content" which according to Cook (1983, p.229), "is the content based in the world outside of the classroom"

Consequently, this "real content", should highly be attached to learners' culture, age, and needs.

Granted that CBI involves "the teaching of content in the language being learned" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.204), Brown proposes a strong and weak version of CBI. In the strong version the emphasis is given to the content (Brown, 2001, Linana &

Chiyokura, 2008) and language teaching is subordinated. An illustration of this is a sheltered course, where "teachers use specific techniques and strategies to develop concepts and themes" (Rosen & Sasser, 1997, p.36).

On the contrary, a weak version of CBI focuses on both content and language but giving more emphasis to the development of communicative proficiency in the second or foreign language through a curriculum organized around the learning content (Brown, 2001, Linama & Chiyokura, 2008). To illustrate this, Salsbury and Crummer (2008) describe a content-based course designed for engineering and architecture students at a large Mexican University, in which they are enrolled in lessons with grammar, spoken and written production that are facilitated through the use of authentic materials.

On the other hand, it is well-known that elements such as content and language are fundamental parts of CBI.

Nevertheless, there are two other aspects which are equally important; they are teachers and learners. Richards & Rodgers (2001) claim that in CBI teachers should master both the Second or Foreign language and the subject matter, moreover teachers face the responsibility for choosing content of relevance and interest for the learner.

The characteristics of a teacher working with CBI, previously mentioned, may not guarantee successful language teaching if the teachers do not have a positive attitude towards CBI application, which is relevant, especially in EFL contexts where teachers' attitudes could help to lessen the difficulties that might appear. Finally, the learner is another key element in CBI, since it is expected that learners become "autonomous, active interpreters of input and willing to explore learning strategies" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 213).

This implies a great challenge, mainly to EFL learners who are accustomed to traditional language teaching, where grammar structures are used as content, that is, the use of content which is not significant for the learner.

Nonetheless, learners who might be involved in a CBI course could raise their motivation towards the foreign language learning, considering that CBI provides learners with opportunities to use English as a tool for learning subject matter. (Linama & Chiyokura, 2008).

In brief, CBI could contribute to integrate the diverse disciplines as fundamental part of Language teaching in order to provide meaningful content as a pre-requisite for successful language learning.

Characteristics of EFL settings

Although CBI has increased its popularity in ESL settings, it is still new for EFL contexts (Murphey, 1997), where learners and teachers have little access to communicative language use outside the classroom. In addition to this, Krieger (2005) says that EFL students lack of intrinsic motivation towards language learning, due to the fact that learners do not use English in their real lives.

This situation could therefore cause EFL learners not to see language learning as a real need. Another characteristic that EFL settings share is stated by Sandra Fotos (1998, p. 304) who claims that in EFL contexts could exist a government control to the education systems, thus " curriculum, content of courses and even textbooks" are chosen by an agency, presumably not acquainted with the learners needs and interests.

Furthermore, Fotos argues that the main objective of these agencies in charge of education is to prepare students to pass an examination, which is a pre-requisite for university entrance.

A clear example of the above mentioned situation occurs in the current language teaching in Colombia. As Usma (2009), Cardenas (2006) and Valencia (2007) have noted, the Government has shaped the national school system as an attempt to follow

international expectations and models but without caring about the reality of the language classrooms in Colombia, which present adverse working conditions for language teaching, mainly in public schools. More explicitly, Cardenas (2006) describes a limited number of hours for English Language teaching, not many resources, large classes, a shortage of qualified teachers and scarce use of the English language.

But the main concern could be the fact that this problematic situation seems to be common for most EFL settings and it might take a long time so that the current EFL teaching conditions improve.

Ideally, EFL contexts are defined as "the situations where students were learning English in order to use it with any other speaker of the world" (Harmer, 2008, p.19), that is, EFL learners are seen as "learners of English as an International Language" (EIL). But quite apart from this view, Long (cited in Fotos, 1998) states that most of the EFL classrooms focus on traditional approaches to language, where grammar is taught in isolation and learners become unable to use English communicatively.

From this, it is possible to think that in some EFL settings learners do not make use of the target language even inside the classroom, which might contribute to make classes not engaging

enough to awaken learners' motivation. However, returning to Harmer's EFL definition, which claims that English is learned to be put into practice, no matter if learners are not living in the target language setting, it is possible to say that EFL learners could be motivated towards language learning for different reasons, among them travelling abroad, interacting with tourists or chatting with people from all over the world through the Internet.

In this sense, the application of CBI in EFL settings could serve to motivate students towards the target language, since they will be enrolled with content of relevance for their lives and at the same time they will have access to diverse information in English that they could use to communicate with people around the world.

Which Model of CBI could be the most suitable to be applied

In ELF settings?

After having discussed some of the main EFL settings' characteristics, the five models of CBI stated by Snow (1991), immersion education, Content-Enriched learning, theme based, Adjunct and Sheltered model will be described in order to find out which one could fit the EFL conditions better.

Immersion Education

According to Grabe & Stoller (1997) Immersion programs emerged in the 1960s, initially as L2 immersion.

But recently, immersion programs have gained a strong popularity in EFL settings. This being so, it is worth noting that the use of the foreign language as a medium to teach content area classes, does not guarantee that students attain native-like proficiency (Swain & Johnson, 1997; Genesse, 1994 cited in Met, 1999).

Nonetheless, it is very likely that this type of CBI could somewhat compensate the lack of foreign language interaction outside the classroom.

Regarding the role of the immersion programs in CBI, Dickey (2001) states that foreign language immersion is the extreme form of CBI, since the priority is mainly focused on content, and the "foreign language is not the subject of instruction" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 206).

In other words it can be said that there is no explicit language teaching.

Nonetheless, Met (1999) claims that there are some immersion programs that have included little explicit instruction in the foreign language. In light of these findings, it can be suggested

that even though learners are exposed to EFL input through content instruction; some explicit foreign language instruction might contribute to reinforce learners' accuracy in the foreign language proficiency.

Keeping in mind that immersion programs have been successfully implemented in different EFL settings such as Hungary, Hong Kong, Spain and Finland (Grabe & Stoller; Snow 2001), it is possible to think that immersion education could be a good alternative to be applied in EFL contexts. Nevertheless, one complicating factor may be the recruitment of teachers with the knowledge and experience required to teach the different subject areas through the foreign language, especially in the case of Total immersion programs where the entire curriculum is taught initially in the foreign language.

However, those EFL contexts presenting some obstacles to the application of this type of immersion education could start by implementing "partial education" where half of the teaching day is dedicated to teaching the different subjects in English (Met, 1999).

In conclusion, it is worth saying that although immersion programs in some EFL settings might result ambitious, it is

certain that this form of CBI offers to EFL contexts a closer possibility of being in contact with the foreign language.

Content-Enriched courses

Content-Enriched courses also known as Content- Enriched Foreign language in the Elementary school (Snow, 2001) and Content -Enriched learning (Met, 1999) involve the use of the foreign language to support the L1 content. These courses that serve to complement the different subject matter classes, could become one of the most suitable options to deal with some of the limitations that EFL contexts present, since Content-Enriched courses offer different chances of success by reinforcing the content area through the foreign language use.

In a more detailed support to this claim Snow (2001) describes a number of advantages of Content-Enriched Foreign Language (Elementary School). In the first place, learners have the opportunity to be exposed to a more contextualized and meaningful foreign language content.

This, at the same time shows a significant change of the traditional foreign language teaching, which lacks of engaging content since the emphasis is primarily given to grammar teaching that is not connected to the reality of the world.

Finally, Snow (2001) proposes that the school curriculum could be a noticeable contribution that may provide teachers with different materials and also foster the teachers' creativity, that is, some of the resources of the content areas can be adjusted to the English class or simply present rich ideas that language teachers can take to make FL classes more relevant and interesting for learners.

To conclude, one may say that this approach provides convincing points in favor of enhancing the quality of language teaching in EFL settings.

Theme-based model

The Theme-based model involves the use of topics and themes that teachers utilize to create language learning activities (Snow, 2001). This model can be a "weak version" of CBI (Brown, 2001, p. 236) due to the fact that in the theme based model "content and language objectives" are considered equally important.

Moreover, the theme-based model could become an appropriate way to start the application of CBI in EFL settings, because diverse topics such as drugs, abortion rights, technology and music can be used to accompany language classes.

In this way learners will be willing to learn vocabulary, participate in a discussion or probably write a summary in the foreign language. Thus, Theme based language courses provide learners with interesting subject to learn or communicate about (Eskey, 1997: cited in Met, 1999).

In addition, as Brown (2001) explains, Theme-based might not imply a drastic change since the focus on language will remain. Related to this suggestion, Eskey argues that in the Theme-based model, the emphasis is given to topics of interest for learners rather than the language forms and functions.

Having cited some of the potentialities of this model of CBI, it is worth recognizing that the implementation of this model might depend highly on language teachers, since, unlike the Adjunct and Sheltered model, which also require a content teacher, in the Theme-based model the topics are generally taught by the language teacher (Met, 1999).

Foreign language teachers, therefore have the responsibility for choosing the most suitable content to be delivered in the foreign language.

This for Snow (2001, p, 307) represents the "teachers' goal" since the content selected by the teachers should cope with the diverse needs and interests of the learners. On top of this, Met

(1999) states that themes are also selected on their potential to enhance the language learners knowledge in particular topics. But selecting the right topic is not probably the main challenge for foreign language teachers.

The materials needed to convey those topics, is another responsibility that EFL teachers could assume, since as we mentioned before, some EFL settings could present lack of materials and resources for language teaching. Hence, it is expected that teachers develop and design their own materials.

To sum up, one can say that EFL settings could still present some difficulties to apply this approach.

Nonetheless, EFL teachers willing to change traditional foreign language classes could be a huge influence on deciding the implementation of this model.

Adjunct model

In the Adjunct model "learners enroll in a regular academic course and additionally they take a language course that is linked to the academic course" (Larsen-freeman, 2000, p.141). As Richards & Rodgers (2001) affirm, the Adjunct model requires a large amount of coordination, between both the language teacher

and the subject teacher, since the language teacher's role consists of helping students to understand the language, thus, facilitating the comprehension of the academic content presented by the subject teacher (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Another feature that would be worth describing is that the language teacher can contribute to the clarification of terms related to the subject matter.

It is important to note that this model of CBI is usually found in Tertiary Education programs and as Snow (2001, p.308) has observed in these courses "such linking or adjuncting between language and content departments is feasible".

Sheltered model

Finally, the sheltered model refers to the courses taught in the second language to students who have been separated from the second language native speakers (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The students in sheltered classes are taught both content and language simultaneously, by members who made content and language more comprehensible by using specialized strategies like condensing large amounts of reading materials into reading notes, preparing study guides, giving more time so that students read, and get familiarized with the content, modifying the input, using a slower rate of speech, clear enunciation and controlled

vocabulary, using contextual clues, such as gestures, visual aids, role play, and checking for understanding. These strategies stated by Snow (2001), suggest some of the alternatives that teachers can use to facilitate language learning.

Additionally, the sheltered model could permit the use of the four skills through the use of different techniques (Gaffield-Vile,1996). Firstly, techniques such as scanning and skimming can be used to find key ideas; also, summarizing and reinterpreting may provide students with the basis to reinforce reading skills. Secondly, writing summaries, planning and writing essays are activities that would increase learners' abilities in writing. Thirdly, the teachers' lectures will be used to develop listening comprehension skills. Finally, speaking could take place through opinions given after the teachers' lecture, and other conversational strategies for interrupting and disagreeing or agreeing, clarification among other techniques (Gaffield-Vile, 1996).

Considering that Sheltered model has been especially designed for ESL scenarios, where English non-native speakers take Sheltered courses to cope with regular subject classes with English native speakers, it is noticeable that this model might not be adapted in EFL settings.

Alternatively EFL teachers could take advantage of the learning strategies used in sheltered model in order to make any problematic topic more understandable and accessible to EFL learners.

In summary, the five models of CBI offer different ways of how this approach may be better applied in EFL settings and although it is too early to affirm which CBI model is the most suitable to fit the complexity of these contexts.

It is likely that Content-Enriched courses, and Theme-Based model cause less constraints and prompt more opportunities to succeed in EFL contexts.

Requirements for a successful application of CBI in EFL settings

Although, this paper has previously dealt with general requirements needed, so that CBI can take place in EFL scenarios, it is pertinent to deepen in this topic in order to orientate teachers, administrators and students about the requirements they need to satisfactorily apply CBI in their EFL educative institutions. Also, the role of materials from the teacher and student viewpoint, it would be examined.

To initiate this discussion, we should keep in mind that CBI demands a greater level of commitment mainly for language teachers than administrators and students.

For that reason, in this analysis, teachers may be placed as a central ingredient in the implementation of CBI in EFL settings.

First of all, it is relatively easy to see that those language teachers, who might not have any theoretical background, would have to compensate this weakness by attending CBI training courses. As Peterson (1997) explains, CBI teacher preparation programs aim at three major competences: Knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The first one referring, primarily, to the knowledge of the subject matter, the student, and the context. Secondly, the skills, which are divided in microskills and macroskills, according to Peterson (1997, p. 163) the main microskill that teachers should build is "the ability to adapt one's speech to make it more comprehensible for nonnative learners" and also work in the development of the macroskills, which involves relevant TESOL aspects such as needs assessment, lesson planning, preparation and evaluation of materials, among others.

In light of these findings, it is also important to note that language teachers' mastery in the foreign language is taken for granted.

Nonetheless, in some EFL educative institutions, it is possible to find teachers who have a basic knowledge of the foreign language. This might cause that teachers focus on teaching grammar explicitly, combined with translation of sentences into and out of the target language, thus following the principles of GTM (Grammar Translation Method). At the same, this situation could become a serious weakness that should be solved before implementing CBI.

In this sense, it is important to clarify that grammar in CBI is not seen a separate component from the different skills, but grammar is part of the skills, which are also integrated as it happens in real-world language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In order to face these drastic changes in the traditional EFL classrooms, a high level of responsibility and commitment from administrators is also needed, since they are in charge of administering the educative budget and deciding on whether hiring the language teaching personal that would put into practice CBI or invest on preparing their language teachers to the implementation of this approach. In both cases, administrators should keep in mind the recommendation given by Pat Peterson (1997, p.160), who says that CBI requires language teaching

personal demonstrating "professional flexibility and the broadest possible academic preparation".

Related to this, it is worth underlining another skill that should be worked on CBI preparation courses as well, that is collaboration. This feature becomes relevant in CBI implementation, since a close communication between language teachers and content teachers must exist, in order to develop more dependable and lasting CBI courses in EFL contexts.

In a more detailed support to this claim, Horn, Stoller and Robinson (2008) noted that working cooperatively could provide language teachers with key information on the content area, and also content area teachers would benefit from the aid that language teachers provide when tackling with the different subject matter topics.

Nevertheless, it is likely that some content teachers and administrators that would not be willing to collaborate with the application of CBI in EFL settings. In this case, it is expected that language teachers should be prepared with convincing arguments that would exhibit the reasons why it would not be a waste of time the application of an approach that has been successful in diverse ESL and EFL settings in the world.

Until now, we have mainly focused on language teachers, content teachers and administrators requirements to CBI application, because the most relevant decisions are made by them.

This does not mean that learners are not kept in mind, since the main objective of CBI is "to convey informational content of relevance and interest for the learner" (Brown, 2001, p.49).

Supporting what Brown explains, it is worth pointing out that learners may have the opportunity to work with an approach that gives them the chance of selecting some of the topics that could be developed in the language classroom

In so doing, language teachers should motivate students to assume a more active and responsible role towards their own learning.

This might become a tremendous challenge for language learners, who might probably find CBI highly demanding, especially if they compare the combination of content and language with traditional teacher-centered classes usually found in EFL contexts.

A final aspect, also considered as an important requirement in CBI is the role of materials.

In advocating this, Richards & Rodgers (2001) states that materials should display comprehensibility and authenticity. The first one, allows teachers to make some modifications to the written and oral texts in order to facilitate its comprehension. In it, it is imperative that language teachers get acquainted that CBI not only involves the use of informational materials as they come originally, but the adaptation of that material is also needed, to make it more accessible to the students proficiency level in the target language.

On the other hand, the use of authentic materials is an important requisite in CBI to make more real-life language classes.

Keeping in mind this last argument and the fact that language learners' preferences and needs are a priority in CBI, it might become a predicament the decision about the kind of topics are appropriate to be developed in a CBI course. First, it must be considered that typically published materials designed for language teaching purposes, probably do not cater the real learners' interests, this could be mainly due to restrictions imposed to most educative materials.

But as Tomlinson (2001) states, a salient concern could be the fact that published materials are not enough enjoyable for

learning to takes place. In this sense, CBI requires topics and materials that result attractive for learners.

Controversial topics such as drugs, abortion, sex, and politics are certainly more engaging for students, than the traditional teaching of grammar rules; however it is up to the teacher to develop these topics with the responsibility and professionalism needed to have a successful result.

Limitations of applying CBI in EFL settings

Even though, CBI has attained successful results in different ESL settings around the world, the implementation of CBI in EFL contexts can still present some limitations.

According to Tim Murphey (1997, p.117) in the EFL settings "there may be few content area specialists willing to teach in the target language; and there may be few language teachers who have experienced in content teaching". This situation stated by Murphey could be related to the negligence of the language teaching profession in some EFL countries, where teachers might be paid low salaries, which could result in a demotivating attitude towards the work of English teachers.

Furthermore, another drawback that could present in EFL settings is the insufficiency of materials. Snow, Cortés and Pron (1998, p.13) confirm that "the shortage and lack of resources

will no doubt hamper the implementation" The lack of resources in EFL settings could be a considerable obstacle, since the materials in CBI are the tools that facilitate language learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

On the other hand, the change of the traditional language instruction may also entail another weakness, or a great challenge, mainly due to the fact that grammar instruction has always been present in EFL classrooms (Fotos,1998), that is the use of content which is probably not meaningful for learners.

Richards & Rodgers (2001, p.213) reveal that "some students have experienced frustration and have asked to be returned to more structured traditional classrooms". This reaction should be considered as normal since learners would be facing a drastic change when they abandon their passive role as language learners and become autonomous being able to understand their own learning process. Simultaneously, Snow (1996) states that one of the greatest challenges for teachers "is turning theory into practice" Snow (1996, p.10), in this, the cooperation between language and content teachers is needed.

Until now some common limitations to apply CBI in EFL settings have been mentioned, nevertheless, the Government policies are likely to be the crucial factor that could lessen

the possibilities of applying CBI in EFL settings, since educational conditions such as class size, the number of hours dedicated to language instruction, teachers recruitment and even textbooks may be established by Government policies.

Although these limitations could seem difficult to overcome, it is very likely that the worst limitation to CBI implementation is the fear of trying new alternatives that might change the traditional language teaching, which could not require great efforts or demands.

Potentialities of applying CBI in EFL settings

Despite the implementation of CBI in EFL settings probably involving a big challenge, it is likely that taking this risk could serve to enhance learners' level of proficiency in the foreign language, since learners could start to see the foreign language as a medium to convey informational content of interest and relevance to them (Brown, 2001). Thus, learners would get acquainted with the importance of learning English to attain different purposes.

According to Larsen-Freeman (2000, p.140) "when learners perceive the relevance of their language use, they are motivated to learn", this could contribute to lessen some of the limitations previously mentioned.

On the other hand, Snow, Cortés and Pron (1998, p.13) state that "the use of language as a tool for learning content may become overwhelming for most teachers", but they also consider that this "combination is a very powerful tool to make EFL classrooms a more challenging and profitable experience for students, teachers and administrators" (Snow, Cortés and Pron 1998,p.12).

However, Tim Murphey (1997) explains that the EFL settings yearning to implement CBI should consider the issues like choosing an approach and methodology, selecting and orienting teachers, selecting courses, convincing students, staff and administrators of the value of CBI and finally, fostering the continuity of CBI.

If these issues are established and organized, the implementation of CBI could start working and further positive outcomes could be achieved.

Evidence of this is the implementation of CBI in elementary and secondary schools in Argentina (Snow, Cortés and Pron, 1998, p.13) where these "schools develop an EFL curriculum that is keeping with one of the latest trends in English language teaching worldwide".

Equally remarkable is the work developed by Tim Murphey in the Nanzan University in Japan, where Japanese students from first and second year participated in CBI courses.

After this experience Murphey (1997, p.128) concludes that "CBI in EFL context is an exciting endeavor well worth the doing and well worth improving".

Conclusion

CBI is an approach that has demonstrated creative ways of how language can be taught by focusing on content, that results engaging and relevant for learners.

In this way, it is possible to state that CBI is the bridge that connects language Instruction with the learners' closest needs and interests.

This approach has been implemented in diverse ESL contexts, which have offered availability to produce successful results.

In the case of EFL settings, the results could not probably be the same to those obtained in ESL contexts, given that the conditions for language learning and teaching in EFL settings such as: lack of communicative language use, an excessive emphasis on teaching grammar explicitly, shortage of materials, lack of information, a paltry number of hours devoted to language teaching, large classes, not engaging reasons why students should learn languages, and unprepared teachers might be a strong hindrance to a satisfactory application of Content-Based Introduction. Thus a possible CBI implementation in EFL settings is far from being an easy endeavor.

Nonetheless, it should also be considered that the decision of implementing CBI in EFL contexts could become in greater gains

to the almost unexplored EFL settings, since language learning and teaching could awaken the creativity of EFL teachers and students when connecting language instruction with the reality of the world outside. Thus, language students priorities could no longer be pass an upcoming examination, but to learn content they need to know or they simply like to know. As Wesche (1993, cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000 p.142) states "students get two for one"

Thus, a possible implementation of CBI in EFL settings could show the real importance of language teaching which might not have been given the same relevance as other subject matters like Mathematics or Spanish.

It is likely that CBI makes the language teaching profession rewarding to society, since, teachers could become part of the integral education of the learners and although, EFL settings' characteristics could present different obstacles to CBI implementation, it is precisely, the complexity of the EFL contexts that would make the application of CBI more valuable.

Recommendations

It is worth saying that this paper does not intend to describe the negative and positive aspects of CBI as an approach itself, but the constraints to its application in EFL settings and advantages for which it would be worth implementing it.

On top of this, it might be interesting that this theoretical support could be a reference for further research, which can focus on the practical side of the implementation of CBI in EFL settings regarding the positive and negative aspects.

As a starting point, an observational research might be appropriate to be carried out in a particular EFL scenario.

Such a research should focus on the observation of students' attitudes, behavior and reaction towards a possible implementation of CBI, and at the same time, the above-mentioned research could also contribute to verify how theory and practice work in the reality of the EFL classrooms.

Besides, it might be worth describing implementation of the Adjunct model at University of Nariño in Colombia, where two teachers: a content specialist and a language educator, could work coordinately to conduct the subject "Psychology and Language Teaching" to third semester language students.

Finally, given that Content-based Instruction does not specify neither a procedure to follow nor a pre-established assessment parameter to evaluate content and language learning, it might be useful, therefore, to undertake a research agenda focusing on how EFL teachers cover the assessment part in

Content-Based Instruction, which is probably a topic not exploited enough.

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