

A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

INTEGRATING THE FOUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH THE CBI
APPROACH IN AN EFL SETTING WITH BEGINNER LEARNERS: A TEACHER'S
GUIDELINE

By

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Resumen

El presente documento presenta las principales características del enfoque Aprendizaje por contenidos (CBI por su sigla en Inglés), como una alternativa para la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera en Colombia. También éste aborda, la importancia de tener en cuenta las necesidades de los estudiantes, los materiales, la forma de evaluación; así como, el papel de los profesores y alumnos para el desarrollo adecuado de este enfoque en el proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje. Además, se analizan diferentes modelos de CBI, con el propósito de proporcionar a los profesores de inglés una visión más amplia de este enfoque, sus implicaciones y retos al momento de aplicarlo en nuestro contexto. Cabe mencionar que el documento se enmarca en diferentes teóricos que con sus contribuciones a este enfoque nos permiten posibilidades para adaptarlo a nuestro entorno en beneficio de la enseñanza del Inglés. Finalmente, se proponen algunas recomendaciones para los profesores de Inglés con el fin de aplicar este enfoque en nuestras aulas.

Palabras claves: Aprendizaje por contenidos, contextos de enseñanza del Inglés como lengua Extranjera, Modelos de CBI.

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Abstract

The present paper presents the main characteristics of the Content Based Instruction (CBI) as it can be an alternative to teach EFL in Colombia. The importance of encompassing the Colombian setting to the students' needs, teaching materials and techniques, as well as, teachers' role and students' assessment is also addressed in the paper. Additionally, the different types of CBI models are analyzed with the purpose to provide English teachers with an overview of this approach, its implications and challenges when applying it in our context. Insights from different theorists supporting this approach are considered in this work as their contributions may allow us to adjust the CBI to our EFL teaching environment and some recommendations to start implementing this approach in our classrooms are proposed.

Key words: Content Based Instruction (CBI) CBI models, EFL settings.

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**INTEGRATING THE FOUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH THE CBI
APPROACH IN AN EFL SETTING WITH BEGINNER LEARNERS: A TEACHER'S
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CBI implies the total integration of language learning and content learning. It represents a significant departure from traditional foreign language teaching methods in that language proficiency is achieved by shifting the focus of instruction from the learning of language *per se* to the learning of language through the study of the subject matter (Stryker and Leaver 1997).

English language teaching has been studied since early times by many educators, linguists and researchers (Nunan 1989, Brown 2007, Harmer, 2007) who sought to find an answer to the question *how should people learn or teach a second language (L2)*. All the way through time different methods and approaches to the language learning-teaching process have been implemented with the intention of answering this question. In this respect, in Colombia “Lineamientos Curriculares de Inglés” (LCI) 2012 have provided English teachers with general guidelines regarding English language instruction in our context through methods and approaches such as The Communicative Approach, Total Physical Response, Natural Method, Task Based Teaching and Content Based Instruction, among others. All of these methods and approaches have contributed to the teaching of English as a foreign language in our country and have been used by teachers in the classroom as they see fit. They focus on a variety of meaningful activities and practice work to help learners develop communicative competences in the target language. However, the Content Based Instruction (CBI) sees the acquisition of new knowledge as important as the acquisition of a language, then, it emerges as a possible alternative to teach

English in Colombia to allow learners to develop their language communicative competences not only to broaden their linguistic knowledge but also their knowledge of the world to be able to have international relations in different areas such as: technology, economy, business, education and culture as proposed by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) through the Plan de Mejoramiento en Lenguas Extranjeras. It seeks to enable citizens to communicate in English and to become competent in this globalized world in order to create connection between Colombia and the rest of the world as stated as follows: “Lograr ciudadanos capaces de comunicarse en Inglés de tal forma que puedan insertar al país en los procesos de comunicación universal, en la economía global y en la apertura cultural con estándares internacionalmente comparables.”

Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006). Through CBI, English learners are exposed to a great amount of meaningful language through subject matter content that helps them develop such competences. Crandall & Tucker state that CBI is “...an approach to language instruction that integrates the presentation of topics or tasks from subject matter classes (e.g., math, social studies) within the context of teaching a second or foreign language”. Similarly, Curtain & Met (1995) refer to CBI as the approach that students use to acquire the second language to learn best the language when there is an emphasis on meaningful content. In the same sense, Sanchez & Obando suggest “that approaches such as content-based instruction, communicative language teaching or competency-based language teaching are needed in Colombian classrooms, whether the goal is to achieve bilingualism or whether we just want to enhance foreign language teaching in this country at all levels”. As it is seen various authors view CBI as one of the alternatives to serve as a language instruction to acquire the four language skills and content to enable learners to communicate in a target language and to learn subject matters at the same time.

Educators must consider the following aspects in order to successfully achieve a good instruction: the learning-teaching goals, the students' needs, the use of meaningful materials, the available class time, the design of an appropriate syllabus, the context and the assessment individuals will be exposed in a content based setting. As it is seen the process of teaching-learning a foreign language should not be considered a well-to-do procedure. Although, it is not impossible to attain good results as long as teachers procure to observe carefully all those aspects and adjust them to the Colombian setting.

In this paper some theoretical aspects in regards to CBI approach as the paramount subject, as well as the integration of the four language skills will be considered. The importance of integrating these skills through CBI approach in an EFL setting encompasses the theoretical view and different perspectives from theorists like: Brown(2007), Crandall & Tucker (1990) , Curtain & Met (1995) (Crandall 1993) Krashen (1985) Swain & Cummin (1982), Lonon-Blanton (1992), Harmer(2007) Stryker & Leaver (1997) , Nunan (1989) Grable& Stoller (1997) , Richards &Rodgers (2001) Celce- Murcia (2000)Snow& Brinton (1997) Briton, Snow and Wesche (1989) Eli Hinkel (2006) Sanchez & Obando (2008) who support this current research teacher paper. In addition, some implications will be stated concerning the challenges that teacher might face when applying CBI in their classrooms and some suggestions for planning classes in a Colombian classroom considering CBI intertwined with the four skills will be explained. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and some recommendations will be addressed for the implementation of CBI in our context.

Importance of integrating the four skills

After having researched and studied the learning-teaching process of a foreign language in the classroom, it has been identified the appearance of the four skills, *Listening, Speaking, Reading* and *Writing* as fundamental aspects to take into consideration when teaching a foreign language (H. Brown, 2007). Regarding this matter, Harmer (2007) states that these four skills are divided up into productive skills (writing- speaking) and receptive skills (reading-listening) claiming that are two sides of a coin that cannot be separated for one skill so it can reinforce another one in different ways. In the same document, Harmer (2007) says that students can learn to speak and write by means of what they hear, see or read. It means that the exposure students experience with the language provides them with useful input that can enrich their future production of the language.

In this sense, Harmer and Brown (2000) argue that the integration of the four skills will promote greater motivation in the students in order to elicit effectively the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Then, it is clearly highlighted that employing the four abilities with the appropriate techniques, strategies, methods are aspects that might be considered to improve the student's performance and at the same time to enrich the work of teachers when teaching English.

Additionally, it is wise to consider the fact that the Post-Method Era has been proposing the way of teaching into a meaningful and complete process so there is not a possibility to isolate skills when indeed they are intertwined. In that regard Brown (2007) mentions that “A course that deals with reading skills, will also deal with listening, speaking and writing skills”. In line with this, Eli Hinkel (2006) points out “in meaningful communication, people employ

incremental language skills not in isolation but in tandem”. That is to say, it does not make any sense to talk about skills in a separated manner; in fact, a lot of thought and research have been devoted to some approaches that propose the idea of using the four skills simultaneously for teaching English as a second language. Hence, CBI will probably be the most important model to be applied in a Colombian context owing to the fact that offers better results by blending the four skills into a content matter. Summing up, CBI and the integration of the four skills will provide students successful future production of the target language conveying subject better results in the process of teaching or learning. Therefore, using the CBI approach might ample the profit spectrum in the teaching- learning L_2 process since it targets two objectives at the same time (language and content).

CBI, facts and types

At this point, it is appropriate to comment that trends concerning CBI have found it to be an effective approach to teaching English as a foreign language; CBI students can develop their language skills as well as gain access to new concepts through meaningful content. As it is known, CBI is hardly a new phenomenon, over the past years foreign language educators have been promoting the benefits of the CBI approach; in fact, it is the most often related with the beginning of language immersion educational programs in Canada in 1975. In this respect, Grabe and Stoller (1997) suggest seven Rationals for CBI that can be summarized in the following points:

1. In content-based classrooms, students are exposed to a considerable amount of language while this incidental language should be comprehensible, linked to their immediate prior learning and relevant to their needs. In content-based classrooms, teachers and students

explore interesting content while students are engaged in appropriate language-dependent activities. The resultant language learning activities, therefore, are not artificial or meaningless exercises.

2. CBI supports contextualized learning; students are taught useful language that is embedded within relevant discourse contexts rather than as isolated language fragments. Thus, CBI allows for explicit language instruction, integrated with content instruction, in a relevant and purposeful context.
3. The use of coherently developed content sources allows students to call on their own prior knowledge to learn additional language and content material.
4. In a content-based classroom, students are exposed to complex information and are involved in demanding activities which can lead to intrinsic motivation.
5. CBI lends itself well to strategy instruction and practice, as theme units naturally require and recycle important strategies across varying content and learning tasks.
6. CBI allows greater flexibility and adaptability to be built into the curriculum and activity sequences.
7. CBI lends itself to student-centered classroom activities.

Equally important, there are some aspects to be considered when speaking about CBI to see it as the medium to be used to enhance English as foreign language quoted them by C CBI is based on three main facts of language: “Language is text-and discourse based” which means that language teaching focuses on how the information coming from meaningful content can be utilized in discourse or text not in single sentences or in insolated way. Thus, “language use draws on integrated skills “ that means that the skills of the target language are not seen in

tandem but simultaneously all of them involved into the wide variety of classroom procedures done during the process of teaching-learning. For instance, students exposed to CBI approach are supposed to read, to take notes, to listen and to write summaries or to respond orally to things that they have already read or written. Lastly,” language is purposeful “students may have different purposes that might vary from academic, vocational, social to recreational ones so they would use the language a means for fulfilling their needs. In sum up, the language is the key to be used to communicate integrally and meaningfully to satisfy the students’ needs.

Next, as the major source to support CBI comes from second language acquisition research, particularly from the work of Krashen, Swain, and Cummin (1982, 1985) on the comprehensible input hypothesis in which their argument is that ... “in content-based instruction, students can acquire the content area of the subject matter with comprehensible input, and simultaneously increase their language skills”. It comes a not surprise that to achieve the goal of language skills, Krashen (1995) suggests that the focus of the teaching must be on the authentic and meaningful input, not on the grammatical form. So it can be understood that in order to enhance the learning of the four language abilities teacher must provide learners with interesting meaningful and comprehensible activities. The more comprehensible input students are exposed; less difficult will be for them to learn the target language resulting in that students can acquire it with ease. In similar respect, (Crandall 1993p. 604) says “Learning a language through academic content, engaging activities, develops proficiency in academic discourse plus fosters the development of effective learning strategies”. Then, it is understood that educators can use CBI as a vehicle of instruction by employing comprehensible-meaningful teaching to grow students’ learning. Beyond understanding the preceding idea, there are various issues educators might also

consider for an effective use of CBI and those include the CBI models, some of their characteristics to finally see theme based- model as the possible alternative to be used in a Colombian setting.

CBI proposes three different models that can be applied in foreign language classes: adjunct model, sheltered model and theme based-model. In this respect, Briton, Snow and Wesche (1989) state that ...“there are at least three distinct models of Content Based Instruction that have been developed in a second language instructional setting; these models tend to be found in elementary, secondary, postsecondary and university settings”. Though, to choose the appropriate model to be implemented in a setting like Colombia the following factors must be considered: audience, needs, interests of learners and teachers. To differ and to understand these models it is wise to consider the following:

Adjunct/Linked Courses (AL)

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, p137). That is, the AL model aims at connecting a specially designed language course to a regular academic course. For instance, AL courses are taught to students who are simultaneously enrolled in the regular content courses, but who lack the necessary competence to follow the course successfully unless some additional aid is provided. Then, both the regular discipline and the adjunct course share a common content base, but differ in the focus of instruction; whereas the content instructor focuses on academic concepts, the language teacher emphasizes language skills using the academic content as a background for contextualizing the language learning process. The adjunct courses work therefore as support classes for regular subject matter courses, and offer excellent

opportunities to develop the academic strategies necessary to cope with real academic content. The language component of the course is directly linked to the students' academic needs and so, they can get help revising notes, writing assignments, preparing for tests, etc. as well as advancing in the conceptual background necessary to understand the content material so students deal with real academic subject matter that enable them earn a passing grade increasing motivation in terms of mastering both the language and the content. Although the benefits of these courses report to be remarkable, the implementation of the AL model demands organizational requirements and coordination efforts that may exceed the possibilities of many institutions. That is, harmony between instructors is essential: the syllabi of the two classes have to be negotiated with respect to each other. In this regard, Lonon-Blanton asserted that "as it is obvious, this model requires a willing interaction and co-ordination among teachers in different disciplines and across academic units and for that reason, may be administratively difficult to arrange" (1992, 287).

Sheltered subject-matter instruction (SSM)

"A sheltered content-based course is taught in a second language by a content specialist to a group of learners who have been segregated or "sheltered" from native speakers" (Brinton, Snow & Wesche 1989, p. 15). That means, in sheltered subject-matter instruction, the class is commonly taught by content instructor, not a language teacher; this content instructor however, has to be sensitized to the students' language needs and abilities, and has to be familiarized with the traits of the language acquisition process. However, in order to meet the desired effect, there has to be an accommodation of the instruction to the students' level of proficiency in the language; and content includes the same components as a regular subject course. Although the

main characteristic of this model is facilitating the development of language abilities for students to meet the course aims. Authors agree that, when properly conducted, sheltered courses can offer a very effective approach for integrating language development and content learning for students whose language abilities may not yet be developed enough for them to progress successfully in demanding content courses designed for native speakers. A drawback for the implementation of courses of this kind however, would be the difficulty to find either content specialist familiarized with the needs and demands of students with limited operational capability in the language of instruction, or language instructor with the adequate background for teaching real content disciplines at university level.

Theme-Based Model

Concerning theme based model (TB), Davies (2003) states “The teacher(s) can create a course of study designed to unlock and build on their own students' interests and the content can be chosen from an enormous number of diverse topics”. This quotation reflects that theme -based model shows to be flexible thanks to its relative ample spectrum of topics that teachers might choose from; thus it brings the possibility to design openly a syllabus to be adjusted to the students’ needs. At the same time, Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) claim on the necessity to distinguish between what they call “weak” and “strong” forms of CBI. TB (Theme-Based) courses would constitute the weakest representation of the CBI models. To put it differently, weaker forms include language courses which the main aim is to develop learners communicative proficiency whereas stronger versions integrates content courses for L2 speakers in non-language disciplines, in which the main goal is to master the subject matter. If Colombia is the context where this CB theme base model could be applied some considerations should be pointed as

teachers have to promote students language proficiency. This is to say, teachers have to take into account among some other aspects achievement of the language objectives derived from the academic subject matter and they have to be connected lexically and functionally to the content matter. In this regard, it is relevant to ponder Stoller & Graber (1997) who claim ...” It is important that those implementing theme units not lose sight of content and language learning objectives and the time allotted to meet those objectives”. By all means, CBI educators should identify achievable objectives (based on state learning standards) interesting themes (according to the students’ needs) comprehensible vocabulary and appropriate materials all aligned to creative instructional activities plus considering the achievable time to develop them. Then, theme based CBI is particularly appealing in this respect because teachers can use almost any content materials that they feel their students will enjoy; also it is believable that its use will increase as teachers continue to design new syllabi in response to students’ needs and interests.

Characteristics of the TB model

- In TB, it is a language teacher and not a subject specialist, that is responsible for teaching content. Although it requires some kind of teacher training.
- The foreign language syllabus in TB courses is organized either around different topics within a particular discipline or including a number of individual topic associated with the relevant general theme or content area. This is to say the language issues have to be in tune with the course main themes .
- Contents or topics have to chosen to be appropriate to students academic and cognitive interest and needs, content resources, and educational aims, and institutional demands and expectations.

- The contents or topics in TB must keep coherence in order to have logic in the language and content learning.
- TB courses have explicit language aims which are usually more important than the content learning objectives.
- TB integrates all four skills.

In sum up, CBI theme based model among the other models can be viewed as the most suitable tool to be implemented in a setting like Colombia. Although, there must taking into a consideration various aspects (students needs, learning objectives) to achieve succesfully both Language and content. So, what can be better than seeing students acquiring knowledge on something and learning language at the same time?

Some challenges teachers must consider when applying CBI in a Colombian context

Although, this paper has previously dealt with a theoretical frame to support CBI as an approach that can take place in an EFL setting, it is pertinent to deepen in some other topics in order to orientate mainly teachers to apply CBI in their EFL educative institutions. To begin with, it must be kept in mind as stated by Stryker & Leaver, 1993; that Content Based Instruction allows learners to express themselves succesfully in another language on aspects related to a variety of subjects. Though, special attention must be paid to issues such as: the presence of CBI teachers ; the design of syllabuses to follow primarily language goals next to the content; the creation of educational materials to teach interesting and comprehensible lessons, and finally the use of a suitable way to assess students' performance.

CBI Teachers' role

To define the role of a CBI teacher it is wise to recall Freeman's quotation (1989 p. 163) cited by Peterson referring to what institutions opting for CBI in their curriculum search for "There is a need for an inventory of the target competences which enable teachers to plan and implement CBI". To understand the target competences there must be followed the design of Freeman which specifies them under the constituents of: knowledge, skills, and attitudes that adequately have to be performed by teachers. The same document defines those constituents as follow:

Knowledge is:

- (a) Subject matter (the "*what*" of teaching).
- (b) Students factors (cultural background, learning styles language levels the "*who*" of teaching)
- (c) The sociocultural, institutional and situational context (the "*where*" of teaching).
- (d) The sociopolitical awareness (the "*how*" and the "*why*" of teaching).

That is to say, teachers need to have knowledge of the students and their places in society, as well as knowledge of the English language. In light with these findings, it is important to note that all the previous issues will together allow teachers to identify the most appropriate model to follow in their teaching- learning process.

Next, as for skills concerns Larsen-Freeman (1983) say that "teacher education subsumes training and education (and thus, both micro- and macro-skills); any consideration of teacher competence for CBI should include both kinds of skills". Put it in another way, micro skills (training) look at teaching behavior which can be observed and evaluated in terms of using some

techniques (drills, pacing, questioning, use of time) which are essential to master in order to provide a comprehensible input. On the other hand, according to Larsen (1983) “macro-skills include needs for lesson planning, preparation and evaluation of materials, students assessment, and giving / accepting feedback; these skills can be developed through group activities developed in methods courses and in pre-practice teaching experience.” In other words, these macro-skills that Freeman cites deal with the main academic competences teachers need to master to perform adequately their role. At the end, teachers should consider deeply the development of both micro and macro skills with a great amount of flexibility, creativity and understanding to become competent. In the same document Freeman (1983, p.32) defines attitude as “the stance one adopts toward oneself, the activity of teaching, and the learners. (It is) and interplay of externally oriented behavior, actions, perceptions, on the one hand, and internal intrapersonal dynamics, feelings, and reactions, on the other”. It is likely to think, that it emphasizes the importance of teachers’ internal and external assertiveness to enhance with their performance successfulness to the teaching-learning process.

Besides the above and similarly important in order to identify the role of the CBI teacher, Tim Murphey (1997) claims that “One critical issue in the EFL context is the lack of content teachers, native and nonnative speakers who can teach in the target language. Three central questions emerge; to what extend can we choose language teachers and have them adapt to content teaching? To what extend can content teachers adapt their language and teaching to make it comprehensible? How can all teachers adjust what they do to be more effective? ” In other words, institutions interested in teaching EFL employing CBI should choose either a content-area teacher proficient in the English language or a Language- area teacher with specific content

area knowledge. In that sense, to be effective in the use of CBI in a Colombian context, English language teachers need to be trained in content-area to be able to conduct properly subject content lessons, or content-area teachers to become proficient in the target language.

After reading the previous issues emerges a demand for a qualify Language-content teachers to contribute to the development not only of linguistic but academic and *administrative* aspects as well. Without doubt, Colombian teachers will be able to overcome any limitations by mastering content-area knowledge, language skills, as well as academic issues and a proper attitude. However, as for administrators concerns they should keep in mind the recommendations given by Pat Peterson (1997, p.160) who suggests that CBI require language teaching personal demonstrating “professional flexibility and the broadest possible academic preparation”: as they also are responsible for the quality of the teaching process. As the paper moves, some ideas about the design of a syllabus to attain successfully objectives will be indicated below.

Syllabus design

In theory a language teaching syllabus can be designed in many different ways depending on the designer`s point of view of the language learning-teaching process. That is why there are various types of syllabus that have been proposed such as: the grammatical syllabus, the lexical syllabus, the skills syllabus, the functional-notional syllabus, the content syllabus, the task-based syllabus among other ones. Obviously, each of the above types of syllabuses has its merits and drawbacks (Nunan, 1988; Richards, 2001). However, the one that would fit properly to be used with the CBI approach is the content-based syllabus due to the fact that with this syllabus, learners are helped to acquire language through the study of a series of relevant topics. According to Hadley (2001) cited by Yi-Chen Chen (2010) “In a content based syllabus the language is the

bones and the skeleton while the content is the flesh and blood; the language could be seen as a means to complete a content task.” Identifying that not only the content but also the four language skills could be taught. The above quote then explains how content works as a vehicle to drive language learning along with the four skills finding in this way a balance between content and language. Besides, the above idea it is wise to consider that by the time of designing content based syllabus there must be taking into consideration aspects such as: a list of topics, language objectives, content objectives, activities and finally time to be used to cover the target situations.

Assessment

Assessing students has always been a challenge no matter who your students are. Although, it is clear to see that CBI teachers primarily might assess both language and content goals. As Davies (2003) recommends “Student progress can then be assessed when classes are underway, continuous assessment is effective”. Then, it is understood that assessment has to be done permanently during the developing of the classes. Next, the same document, Davies (2003) proposes a variety of examples teachers might follow to assess students like for instance:

- Some daily quizzes can be used to check that content information is getting through to the students and that they are remembering important vocabulary.
- Longer tests may also be given at mid-term and at the end of the term.
- A journal is also a useful diagnostic tool.
- Students can be given time at the end of each class to write a summary of the content of the lesson or to answer a specific question given by the teacher.

- Another useful exercise is to allow the students to write freely on any topic; teachers can then read their work and assess their progress indirectly.
- Direct oral feedback during the classes can be useful as long as we are mindful of the proficiency level of the students; it's all too easy to forget how difficult it is to speak a foreign language in front of classmates.

Besides the above recommendations CBI teachers might be able to provide deep feedbacks on students' performance to conduct them toward content- language learning objectives.

Materials

Generally to find the appropriate language-learning textbooks to use by CBI teachers is a challenge given the fact that they rarely treat a topic sufficiently in depth to offer students various opportunities to receive enough input. Also, because what is available to CBI teachers is subject area text-books designed for native speakers which will not probably offer sufficient language input to be developed by EFL students. Having this dilemma in mind, the most advisable idea for CBI teachers is to search for a textbook that follows contents according to a designed syllabus then supplement it with various other sources found for example online for CBI Lessons and materials. Although, the previous constraints it is suggested to follow Davies (2003) who claims ...” there are various textbooks that can be used for theme based CBI classes which usually contain readings followed by vocabulary and comprehensible exercises”. In the same document Davies (2003) suggests that these exercises can be enhanced with additional information from Internet, newspapers and other sources. Apart from the textbook matter, many CBI teachers recommend the use of realia that properly being modified can be useful for the

teaching of taught subjects. In general terms, the assortment of authentic materials like: city maps, brochures, restaurant menus, among some others can be taken in the classroom to provoke success in the students. As these authentic materials can be touched and manipulated they enhance learners to an overall language learning experience. Besides, CBI teachers might anticipate some other alternatives to access a proper material to be used in their work and that is to become material developers as it is suggested by (Swales 2009) "... when they cannot find suitable authentic materials, they have to be able to create purpose-builder materials". Until now, the paper has mainly focused on language teacher's role, the design of the appropriate syllabus, chosen material as the most relevant decision to be made when implementing CBI in an EFL context.

Although, it is proper to highlight that this paper has shown that Content based instruction is a communicative approach to language teaching that: sees language as a vehicle of instruction to convey meaning through subject matter; employs authentic materials; considers specific students' needs, demands highly qualified professionals in language and content-knowledge and recommends constant assessment of the students' performance through diverse types of evaluation. For a proper implementation of CBI the following models noted earlier by Briton, Snow and Wesche (1989) can be considered as alternatives to teach EFL according to the setting and needs the target language is taught: (Adjunct/Linked Courses (AL), Sheltered subject-matter instruction (SSM) and Theme-Based). They generate opportunities to integrate language learning to content learning and facilitate students the use of the target language to speak not only about their own daily experiences but realities of the contemporary world. These models as well provide educators with options for the selection of a suitable model according to

the teaching learning environment they are engaged. However, the Theme-based model appeals to be the most suitable to be used in a EFL context due to some facts such as: language teacher and not a subject specialist can be the responsible for the teaching content so it allows the presence of Language teachers to apply it; language syllabuses can be organized around topics that parallelly follow institutional curricular objectives, thus those English topics strengthen the ones proposed by native language goals; also, those syllabuses can be designed according to the students academic and cognitive interests. In other words, TB model offers a variety of possibilities to be adjusted to any EFL context and Colombia would not be the exception.

CBI, then could be an alternative to teach EFL in Colombian public schools as it is an effective approach that combines language and content instruction to meet both goals suggested by MEN. Though, its implementation is not an easy task considering the constraints that our teaching learning situation faces. The main limitation found in our country is the lack of qualified professionals in language and content-knowledge who can teach specific subject matters especially at high school level. Nevertheless, in contexts similar to ours CBI has been implemented through topics strongly associated to language as illustrated by: Murphy (1997) who recalls the experience in a postsecondary EFL program in Japan; Leaver and Stryker (1989) experience at the Foreign Service Institute for specific topical areas; Lafayette and Buscaglia at Indiana University for language majors (1985). What is seen among these previous example is that all of them share the design of courses based on theme-based to stretch and refine student's foreign language skills. In a similar vein, it is wise to mention the first Immersion program created in Canada in the mid-1960's (Lightbown, 2000) in which the immersion language was French and the student's first language was English. Immersion programs similar to this one exist

in the United States today with a variety of languages offered including French, German, Spanish, Japanese and Chinese (Richard and Rodgers, 2001 p.206) as it is evident in the following two example of current schools with immersion programs in the US that include:

1. Milwaukee German Immersion School is a 4-year old kindergarten through grade 5 elementary school founded by Milwaukee Public Schools in 1977. It serves as a city-wide school to attract children from all parts of Milwaukee with an innovative total language immersion program. M.G.I.S. provides English-speaking pupils the opportunity to learn German in a school where it is the primary language of instruction.
2. Ying Hua International School at Princeton area offers Chinese-English dual language education with an international-focused inquiry-based curriculum. It prepares next generations to engage with a world in which bilingual fluency and international view are not a luxury, but must-have skills.

Equally important it is the fact that there is an interest for applying CBI in some institutions in Colombia as it is shown in the document provided by Rojas Ruiz, Germán Alonso (2011), *The relevance of Content-Based Instruction –CBI-, in the English language teaching at Nuestra Señora de Fátima School in Bogotá* which shows how viable this approach might be implemented in a setting such as ours. Also, it is pertinent to mention the program *Articulating English to specific content areas at Pontificia Bolivariana University* proposed by Maria Isabel Monsalve T, Patricia Moncayo E, and Claudia Posada R. (2005) who set up an experience based on CBI to contribute to the development of academic and linguistics competences for professional in specific fields of study at Pontificia Bolivariana University.

Parallel to the previously mentioned examples of implementing CBI into an EFL setting is my own experience as a head teacher in a bilingual school called “La Quinta del Puente” located in Bucaramanga, Colombia during the years 1985 to 1989. In those years I held a degree of normalista with English Language proficiency however both qualified me to develop efficiently Science and Mathematics subjects for second graders.

The above cases of content-driven, language learning exemplify the integration of language and subject matter through different models around courses or topics that facilitate the teaching learning process in setting comparable to ours and also done in Colombia. These models can be adapted to our real environment making the changes required. Teachers holding a degree in English language education can assume the role in courses such as social studies, language arts and physical education. Their English proficiency allows them to conduct a lesson in the target language and their pedagogical tools become strong aids to facilitate their students gradually acquire the target language. As for the content, English teachers can research and learn about the subject matters they will be teaching as the specific knowledge is not as complex as in high school. They can strengthen their knowledge by sharing information with colleagues and receiving feedback. The Physical Education course may create an excellent environment to expose our students to a great amount of the target language while they develop or strengthen their motor skills through a variety of activities according to their age. This way students are taught useful language embedded with relevant contexts as claimed by Grabe and Stoller (1997), rather than as isolated fragment. Gradually students make progress in the development of the English skills necessary to increase their language proficiency. Lastly, it is important to mention that teaching is an ongoing process that requires constant observation of the class as a whole to adjust or make

changes to achieve successful objectives. teachers must observe a professional growth and interest for investigating on content-based instruction, become familiar with the latest findings related to communicative competence, second language acquisition, and content-based instruction to plan the best instructional activities towards the accomplishment of communication in classrooms around content based topics. The role of the students, the use of suitable material and the design of a proper syllabus are very relevant factors as well to succeed when implementing CBI where contextualized learning facilitates students to make connections with their prior content knowledge while developing English language communicative competence. Finally, this Research Paper provides a useful Lesson plan on bullying as a clear source and example that might be interesting for CBI teachers. (See appendix: A Lesson Plan)

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Appendix: A Lesson Plan

What does Social Bullying look like?

UNIT	AUDIENCE	TIME
Bullying prevention	Fourth Graders at “LA QUINTA DEL PUENTE HIGH SCHOOL”	60 minutes
OBJECTIVES <i>Content</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe examples of social bullying. Identify social behaviors they need to change. Provide emotional support to students who are socially bullied. Discuss the steps to take when they are socially bullied. Discuss the steps to take as bystanders when someone is socially bullied. <i>Linguistics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the use of should. Review the use of the suffix ING as an independent noun. Review the use of past tense in contrast to past progressive tense. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VOCABULARY Adverbs: physically, verbally, socially Nouns: neighborhood, trouble, bullying, sending, ignoring, letting, giggling. Verbs: bully, move(ed) ask (ed) name (ed) add(ed) smile(ed) giggle(ed) turn to (ed) walk away (ed) make (made) find (found), hear(heard). Adjectives: bullied, slumber. Expressions: picking on... 		
PROCEDURE ACTIVITIES		
WARM UP 10` By using a poster where some bullying situations are illustrated: teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the definition of bullying and the key word for the definition. ✓ Provide some examples of 	DURING 30` By Writing on the board the words PHYSICALLY, VERBALLY and SOCIALLY say that bullying can be done in those ways. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Briefly review each 	WRAP UP 20` Teacher will have students play a TIC TACTOE game using some open questions based on the reading and the bullying examples provided by the students as well as by the teacher.

<p>how students physically bully others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide some examples of how students verbally bully others. ✓ Provide some examples of how students socially bully others. 	<p>of those concepts emphasize on social bullying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Distribute the worksheet “<i>Social Bullying</i> “ (emphasize the use of ING as a suffix to form nouns) <p>Encourage students to work in groups to provide more examples and classify them into the three categories.</p> <p>Next, After reading silently “<i>The bullies and Krista’s New Friends</i> “</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students underline the unknown vocabulary to later be explained by the teacher. ✓ T asks students to circle the grammatical structures of simple past tense and past progressive tense. ✓ T provides more examples of those grammatical structures. ✓ Students will form groups to develop a worksheet based on the previous story. <p>Discuss the answers in front of the class.</p>	<p>Teacher will explain what the parent chart <i>What does Social Bullying look like</i> is about to be worked at home.</p> <p>Finally, Teacher will explain how important is to develop the <i>Handout “Self Control “</i> beside the use of the index cards.</p>
<p>HOMEWORK</p> <p>Take home a parent chart <i>What does Social Bullying look like</i> to discuss with parents.</p>		

ATTACHMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Handout of “<i>Social Bullying</i> “✓ parent chart <i>What does Social Bullying look like</i>✓ Copy the short story <i>The bullies and Krista’s New Friends</i> “✓ A worksheet about the previous reading.✓ Handout “<i>Self Control</i> “
MATERIALS NEEDED <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Poster showing some social bullying behaviors plus a copy of a handout of “<i>Social Bullying</i> “✓ Copy the Parent Chart handout “<i>What does Social Bullying look like</i>”✓ Copy the short story “<i>The bullies and Krista’s New Friends</i> “and exercise on the short story worksheet for each student.✓ Copy the worksheet “Self Control” for each student.✓ Small index cards for each of the student.
ASSESSMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Observing peer-assessment.✓ Observing self –assessment done on the <i>Self Control</i> worksheet as well as on the index cards.✓ Providing answers to the given exercises: Worksheet No.1<i>Social Bullying</i> and worksheet No. 2 based on the reading <i>The Bullies and Krista’s New Friends</i>”✓ Participating in class.
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES <p>Allan L. Beane and Linda Beane (2009) Bullying prevention program,</p>