THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EMI AT CLIL-BASED PRIMARY SCHOOL: STUDENTS' AND PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: Content Language Integrated Learning has been greatly discussed in recent years as the importance of English as a lingua franca. As a dual-focus approach, many studies found its positive benefits on students' English acquisition. In this study, researchers attempt to investigate the implementation of CLIL in a primary school to know the students' point of view and how parents support their children in acquiring a foreign language. This study is important to be conducted to know the views of the stakeholders that contribute to the success of the CLIL implementation. A quantitative survey study is conducted in one of the CLIL-based primary schools in Surabaya, East Java. The participants of this study are 29 primary students and six parents. Based on the questionnaires, all students agreed that implementing the CLIL approach gave them a rich L2 environment and comprehensible input, promoted extended output, attended to learners' diverse needs, and gave them positive feedback and evaluation. Students mentioned that the implementation of CLIL has a positive impact on their English skills. Moreover, parents fully support their children to learn English in the CLIL classroom. This indicated that the parents' support was one of the factors in students' success in acquiring English.

Keyword: Content Language Integrated Learning, EMI, English language acquisition, ELT

Introduction

In recent years, Content language-integrated learning (CLIL) implementation in Indonesia has been widely discussed because of the importance of teaching English as a tool for communication. Indonesia is actively involved in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and plays a significant role on the global stage, the

importance of English for communication is highly emphasized.[1] In Europe, CLIL has been established and put into practice as a strategy deemed to be efficacious in teaching and learning. Due to its effectiveness, some educational institutions in Indonesia adopted the CLIL approach to their curriculum. Most of them were implemented through the international class program or bilingual education, where English is employed as the medium of instruction (EMI). This adaptation is seen as advantageous and has been supported by scholars such as Turner[2], Rachmajanti et al.[3], Setyaningrum et al.[4], and Farah[5]). The integration of CLIL in Indonesia allows teachers to effectively prepare students for their academic pursuits and future professional endeavors.

Content language integrated learning is an educational approach that combines the teaching of specific subject matter with the practice of language skills.[6] This dual educational approach demonstrates a dual objective, whereby the instructional process places equal emphasis on the subject matter being learned and the language employed. The content subjects are altered and taught in the target language to learn about the content while also improving foreign language skills. In CLIL classrooms, learners can utilize their second language (L2) to gain new knowledge and skills through a dynamic and interactive environment that is used by both teachers and students. Numerous research has been conducted on the application of CLIL in primary school settings on their general English

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proficiency[7,8,9], reading skills[10,11]; listening skills [12,13]; speaking skills [14], [15]; writing skills [16,17,18];and vocabulary acquisition [19,20].

Mehisto and Ting listed a few advantages of CLIL. The CLIL primary students were exposed to an extensive diversity of language that encompasses a wide span of subjects and vocabularies which made learning engaging and meaningful for them. They have a chance to study subject lessons and express their ideas in English which allows them to increase their motivation to learn and deepen their

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understanding of the content subjects.[21] Bayram et al. found that the fifth graders who learned in CLIL classrooms had better reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition than the general EFL students because the CLIL students were exposed to various reading texts from the subject lesson in class. The nature of CLIL instruction and exposure offers more contextualized and relevant topic learning through L2 than typical non-CLIL EFL training. Additionally, learning English through content allows students to "think about the content," "think beyond what they see in experiments," "think about" and "keep" what they have learned.[22] The benefits of using the CLIL approach did not only rely on their English proficiency but also on their content-subject knowledge and skills, for example, Huang examined the impact of students' science comprehension of science in the CLIL lessons from thirty students in one Taiwanese primary school. The results demonstrated that the CLIL approach was effective in increasing the student's vocabulary size and scientific knowledge. He discovered that the newer scientific themes that students learn, the more English knowledge they acquire.

Regarding all the benefits of CLIL implementation at primary schools, many countries are still evaluating and implementing this dual-focused educational strategy to fit their needs and as a means of promoting language learning. Moreover, the rise of English as a lingua franca makes English used as a language of instruction to teach other subjects in many educational institutions. This evaluation is expected to assess the demands of CLIL for both teachers and students, potentially revealing the need for materials, teacher preparation, and detailed knowledge of the approach. Several previous studies researched evaluating the program by investigating the teachers' perceptions to know how teachers' experiences, feelings, challenges, and problems in applying the approach. Hashmi who explored teachers' perceptions of CLIL in the Saudi EFL context discovered that teachers viewed the CLIL approach as a useful tool for establishing and growing a classroom that could support students'

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[21] Coyle, Hood, and Marsh.
[22] Rachmajanti, Anugerahwati, and Unsiah.

language and communication proficiency. Teachers perceived CLIL as a very popular and effective approach in the Saudi EFL context. They argued that students who had a positive attitude toward the implementation of CLIL in the classroom could be encouraged to incorporate the CLIL aspects in their teaching practices. **Czura & Anklewicz** found that teachers felt that teaching subjects was better when it was taught in English. They added that the CLIL approach could inspire students and help them improve their English proficiency. Similarly, Waloyo found in a separate investigation on CLIL implementation in primary schools discovered that teachers had a positive point of view on CLIL.

Even though, previous studies suggest that CLIL is feasible to implement and give positive benefits to students in primary school settings, there is currently little research on the specific application of CLIL especially from other stakeholder's points of view such as students and parents. According to **Lasagabaster & Doiz**, as a pedagogical innovation, CLIL has been avidly and swiftly supported by stakeholders including students, parents, and language/educational policy-makers. **Pladevall-Ballester** added that the introduction of CLIL in primary schools impacts not only students and CLIL teachers but also parents, necessitating collaboration from all stakeholders. Therefore, to fill the gap, this present study is conducted to explore the implementation of the CLIL approach from the students' and parents' perceptions based on the core features of CLIL by **Mehisto et al. Mehisto** et al. defined six core features of CLIL including multiple foci (language and content are intertwined), authenticity (use of authentic materials), active learning (subject-centered), safe learning environment (various strategies used by teachers to improve students' confidence in using language and learn the content knowledge), scaffolding (several strategies used by teachers to help students increase their creativity and critical thinking), and cooperation (collaboration between language teacher and content teachers).

Students' perceptions towards the CLIL program are important as students are the main subjects of teaching and learning. Students' perceptions of the teaching and learning process can be

used as an evaluation to improve the teaching and learning practices. Even though, some studies have tried to investigate the students' perceptions such as students' satisfaction, motives, and attitudes toward the implementation of CLIL in the classroom. Moreover, most of them are conducted at secondary to higher education levels, there is a limited number of exploring the primary students' perceptions of their learning process in CLIL classrooms. In this present study, the researchers focus on investigating primary students' perceptions of the implementation of the CLIL approach based on the core features of CLIL and how parents support their children to learn English through other subjects such as Science and Math.

Literature Review

In the last decades, the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in Indonesia has been increasing. This could increase the impact of EMI on language and content learning, sometimes known as "content-language integrated learning," because cross-curricular ties are integrated into other curricular frameworks. CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning) is one of the approaches that teachers use in teaching English. It is a combination of language and subject matter. Marsh et al. mentioned that CLIL is a dual teaching approach that utilizes the language and the subject at the same learning time. The students acquire the language through the subjects. The portion of students who use the target language is higher. Moreover, Campilo-Ferrer mentioned one important feature of CLIL is that language is taught in a real-world scenario that allows students to improve their intercultural competence, communicative language competency, and interest in learning many languages. Therefore, the students get more chances to acquire the target language naturally during the teaching and learning process.

There are four basic principles of the CLIL approach including content, cognition, communication, and culture. Coyle outlined the four fundamental components of CLIL. Content is associated with understanding the content language and the cross-curricular topics. Communication aims to enable students to construct the language to build an understanding of the content using a foreign language. Cognition relates to the thinking process engaged

with the assimilation and comprehension of content and language. Culture refers to establishing intercultural awareness between cultures and languages. These four basic principles allow students to have the chance and resources they need to acquire the abilities, know-how, and skills needed to complete a variety of tasks to improve the calibre of learning outcomes in both foreign language and content. In primary school settings, CLIL has been widely introduced in many educational institutions. Several ideas serve as the foundation for implementing CLIL with young learners (YLs). As the learning process enables YLs to have more meaningful input and output in L2 or target language, CLIL is based on constructivist and socio-cultural conceptions, according to the pedagogical perspective. [23] According to Mehisto et al., CLIL provides YLs with more realistic and organic possibilities to acquire and utilize a second language, enabling them to pick it up inadvertently while comprehending the subject matter. Therefore, many studies attempt to find out the impact of the CLIL approach on young learners in primary school settings.

Mukminatien et al. viewed CLIL as a perfect learning strategy with enormous potential and efficacy since it incorporates some fundamental principles of a particular approach to task-based learning and communicative language teaching while taking into account the degree of authenticity and meaningfulness in communication. Ouzizi found that students' subject understanding significantly improved as a result of using the CLIL approach. Huang added that after he implemented the CLIL approach, the results demonstrated that the CLIL strategy was effective in increasing the pupils' vocabulary size and scientific knowledge. These studies indicated that the CLIL approach could be impactful to young learners' language acquisition and content knowledge. However, teachers need to consider some aspects when teaching young learners because they still have low capability to read and write in L2 and even in their first language. Additionally, they also have little life experience, but their excitement and desire to learn the world around them is high. They love fantasy,

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[23] Keith Mathew Graham and others, 'Language and Content Outcomes of CLIL and EMI: A Systematic Review', *Latin American Journal of Content & Language Integrated Learning*, 11.1 (2018), 19–38

creativity, and movement. Copland stated that their attention is short so they rapidly feel bored, but when the activity is fun, they can engage in the activity easily.

It is so challenging to teach young learners, however, teachers in the CLIL classroom should consider the six core features of CLIL proposed by Mehisto et al. to effectively apply the CLIL approach. First, multiple focus refers to learning through cross-curricular themes and projects, with topic education supporting language use and language instruction. Second, authenticity involves the use of authentic resources, cases, and information throughout teaching sessions to connect with students' lives and interests. Third, active learning requires students to take a more dominating role compared to teachers. Students should have more opportunities to participate in classroom activities, while teachers function as facilitators. Fourth, a safe learning environment aims to establish several ways that boost students' confidence in applying language and information effectively. Fifth, scaffolding refers to the ways teachers use to assist pupils in developing their skills in creativity and critical thinking. Last, cooperation in CLIL involves CLIL teachers working together with topic teachers, language teachers, community members, and other stakeholders to create their CLIL curriculum. In addition, teachers need to consider what level of students before deciding on the CLIL model that would be implemented for students.

Methods

A quantitative survey research was selected to find out the students' perceptions of the implementation of the CLIL approach and parents' perceptions of their ways to support their children's English acquisition in CLIL programs. Creswell defined a survey design as a quantitative depiction of patterns, sentiments, and viewpoints within a population, or the examination of connections between variables within a population, through the analysis of a sample from that population. As this present study focused on investigating the students' and parents' points of view within a large population, thus, a survey quantitative study was the suitable design to conduct.

This study was conducted in one primary school in Surabaya, East Java which has been implementing the CLIL approach since 2009. The participants of this study were chosen by using purposive sampling because the researchers aimed to find out the lower classes' students and their parents' perceptions as they were foreign language learners but they had been taught other subjects using English since the first grade. Besides that, the students had to take an international young learner's English test every year. The preliminary study conducted by the researchers by interviewing the teachers and looking at their international young learner's English test mentioned that the students showed a satisfactory level of English proficiency. The students were at basic to outstanding levels of English skills.

There were 29 primary one to three-students and six parents who were involved in this study. To find out the students' perceptions, paper-based questionnaires with 21 close-ended items written in Indonesian were delivered to the students. The questionnaires were asked about the implementation of the CLIL approach which includes seven aspects of how teachers created a rich environment, made input comprehensible, promoted extended output, the teacher talk, how teacher attended to diverse learners' needs, gave feedback and evaluated, and the impact of CLIL approach. The questionnaires were developed using a Likert scale with a scale of 1 to 5 (1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: undecided, 4: agree, and 5: strongly agree) for each item. Online questionnaires with six open-ended questions were delivered to parents by using Google Forms to find out their opinions and strategies to support their children in acquiring the foreign language. To test the instruments' validity and reliability, the researchers used SPSS 25 and analyzed it using the Cronbach Alpha validity and reliability test. The results showed that all the questionnaire items were higher than 0.367 (> R table). It meant that the questionnaires were valid and reliable.

After distributing the questionnaires, the results of the questionnaire were analyzed statistically by using Likert scale analysis. The description of Likert score was described as follows:

Strongly Agree   = 5 point
Agree   = 4 point

Neutral	= 3 point
Disagree	= 2 point
Strongly Disagree	= 1 point

To answer the first research questions, the data were analyzed by making diagrams and determining the average score of all items in the questionnaire by using interval analysis. Suppose that there are 29 respondents to answer the questionnaire. The total of the Likert score can be counted as follows:

The total answer of strongly agree= 15 respondents x 5 points = 75
The total answer of agree = 5 respondents x 4 points = 20
The total answer of neutral = 4 respondents x 3 points = 12
The total answer of disagree = 3respondents x 2 point = 6
The total answer of strongly disagree = 2 respondents x 1 point = 2
The total score = 115

The maximum score = (the total of the respondents x the highest score in Likert options x number of items)
$$= 29 \times 5 \times 3$$
$$= 435$$

The minimum score = (the total of the respondents x the lowest score in Likert options)
$$= 29 \times 1$$
$$= 29$$

Index (100%) = (The total score / the maximum score) x 100
= (115/ 435) x 100
Index (100%) = 26,4 %

Index Interval Assessment
Index 0% - 19,99% = strongly disagree
Index 20% - 39,99% = disagree
Index 40% - 59,99% = neutral
Index 60 % - 79,99% = agree
Index 80% - 100% = strongly disagree

It could be seen that the index above was 26,4%, so it can be concluded that the respondents disagreed related to the topic that was investigated.

Results and Discussion
Students' Perceptions

The first set of questions aimed to investigate the students' perceptions of the implementation of the CLIL approach. There were seven aspects discussed to answer the first questions including students' perceptions of how teachers created a rich environment, made input comprehensible, promoted extended output, attended to diverse learners' needs, the way teachers talked, gave feedback and evaluation, and the impact of CLIL on students' English skills and components. The results of the questionnaires are shown below.

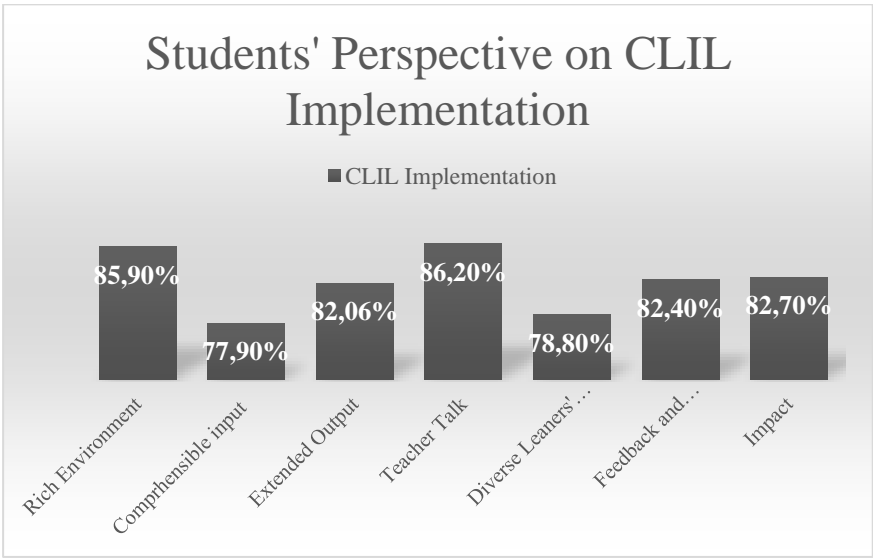Figure 1. Students' perspectives on the implementation of CLIL

Figure 1 demonstrates the results from the questionnaires. Seven aspects were investigated including students' perceptions of how teachers created a rich environment, made input comprehensible, promoted extended output, the teacher talk, attended to learners' diverse needs, teachers' feedback and evaluation, and the impact of CLIL implementation on students.

First, the index interval assessment of creating a rich environment was 85,90%. It indicated that most students strongly agree that they experienced a rich L2 environment during the

implementation of CLIL. Most students strongly agreed that they enjoyed learning English in CLIL class, teachers encouraged them to speak and write in English, and teachers organized the classroom very well. Daraini et al. found similar results where the CLIL students stated that they enjoyed learning English in CLIL lessons. Additionally, Puspitasari et al. & Fitria & Susilawati mentioned that students were excited to learn in the CLIL classroom because the activities provided were fun. Students got new experience in learning English as they learned it through other subjects. It was also in accordance with one of the six core features of CLIL by Mehisto et al. which created a safe learning environment. The safe learning environment aimed to employ several ways to instill students' confidence in applying language and information effectively. In this study, teachers were able to organize the classroom very well and encouraged them to speak and write using English therefore most of them strongly agreed that they enjoyed learning English in CLIL classroom. Moreover, implementing the CLIL approach offered students an environment that was conducive to natural language acquisition.[24]

Second, most students agreed that they received comprehensible input during their learning process in the CLIL classroom. The index interval assessment of making input comprehensible was 77,90% which indicated that students agreed that teachers were able to make a comprehensible input by using authentic materials such as visuals, realia, and manipulatives to communicate the meaning and always checked the students' understanding. Students admitted that they could understand the materials explained by teachers well and could cope with tasks and participate actively in the classroom. Another core feature of CLIL proposed by Mehisto et al. was authenticity. Authenticity pertained to the incorporation of authentic materials, cases, and content into instructional sessions that teachers consistently incorporated with particular aspects of the student's lives and areas of interest. This supported a study done by

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[24] Christiane Dalton-Puffer, 'Content-and-Language Integrated Learning: From Practice to Principles?', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31 (2011), 182–204

Cecilia et al. that found that the activities implemented in the CLIL approach could make students get a better comprehensible, thus, students had better foreign language reading skills. According to Coelho, authentic educational materials and activities should fulfill the CLIL standards by utilizing students' existing knowledge, skills, interests, and experiences. Due to its authenticity, students were helped to understand the materials well so that they were able to cope with tasks and participate actively in the classroom. Dalton-Puffer stated that one of the key benefits of implementing the CLIL approach was authenticity because the content subjects facilitated authentic communication by accessing a vast pool of ideas, thoughts, and meanings, enabling the natural usage of the target language.

Third, in implementing the CLIL approach, students were not only exposed to comprehensible input but they were provided with extended output. This was supported by Rohmah's study which mentioned that the CLIL learners were exposed to a significant amount of linguistic input and output. The results of the index interval assessment for promoting extended output in this study were 82,06%. It showed that students strongly agreed that the CLIL teachers promoted extended output for them. There were three aspects in promoting extended output: students were able to participate in discussions, teachers facilitated students with various activities such as role-playing, debates, presentations, peer cooperative work, peer, and group teaching, and teachers encouraged students to actively participate and speak in group work. One of the six core features of CLIL was promoting active learning. In the realm of active learning, the teacher acted as a facilitator who was responsible for facilitating students to increase opportunities to communicate using the target language. In this study, the teacher promoted this active learning by providing various activities and encouraging them to speak and write in group work. Therefore, students were able to actively use English in the classroom. Additionally, the teacher's role was important in order to provide input and exposure to students. Most students strongly agreed that they could understand and follow teachers' instructions well as teachers used a normal level of volume, articulate, and enunciated clearly.

Fourth, it was essential for teachers to consider students' diverse needs. Based on the results from the questionnaires, it was found that many students agreed (index interval assessment = 78,80%) that teachers took into account students' diverse needs. They agreed if they felt motivated in the CLIL lessons because the teachers were cooperative, communicative, and supportive, they could share their interests, opinions, and wishes, and the activities and tasks given by teachers suited their learning style. This was one of the teacher's roles for scaffolding. Setyaningrum & Purwati collected the CLIL teachers' responses for scaffolding, the results showed similar things to the findings of this study. They mentioned that teachers tried to scaffold by facilitating students with various learning styles with tasks and simplifying the instructions. This helped students comprehend the content or materials.

Fifth, in terms of giving feedback and evaluation, most students strongly agreed (index interval assessment = 82,40%) that teachers gave them positive reinforcement and corrected their mistakes. As a dual-educational approach that focuses on content and language, teachers should consider many aspects to give feedback and evaluation to students whether they focus on giving feedback for the content or the language. Additionally, the index interval assessment of the impact of CLIL implementation was 82,70% which meant that the majority of students strongly agreed that the implementation of the CLIL approach had a positive impact on them. The students felt that their English skills and vocabulary had improved. They also could speak English confidently. This result was in accordance with previous studies done by Czura & Anklewicz which found that students showed positive perceptions towards the implementation of the CLIL approach. Diezmaz stated that implementing the CLIL approach was effective in improving students' English skills. stated the CLIL programs offered students increasing exposure to foreign languages as a result their oral competencies were improved. According to Mede & Cinar, the use of CLIL could help students be more enthusiastic, engaged, and proficient in specific language skills including speaking because the materials could be grasped by students and they could boost their confidence. Therefore, the results of this

study showed the students' positive views on the impact of the CLIL implementation on their English skills.

Parents' Supports

The second research question ought to find out parents' perceptions of the implementation of the CLIL approach and their support for their children. All parents strongly supported their children to study in CLIL programs. They perceived the implementation of the CLIL approach positively. They mentioned their reasons for putting their children in a school that implemented the CLIL approach were because they wanted their children to be able to have good English skills and proficiency, be independent, and creative.

"*Saya ingin anak saya terbiasa berbahasa Inggris, lebih mandiri, dan kreatif, dan yang pasti ingin mendapatkan Pendidikan yang terbaik (I want my children get used to English, more independent and creative, and absolutely I want them get the best education)*", parent 1.

They also supported their children at home by giving additional lessons at home, providing them with media, and inviting them to communicate with their family members using English.

"*Sering diajak komunikasi dengan menggunakan bahasa Inggris dua arah, memberikan tontonan dengan bahasa Inggris (invite them to communicate and use English through two way-communication, giving them medias that uses English)*", parent 2.

"*Mengikutkan les tambahan dan dirumah terkadang kita berdialog bahasa Inggris (giving them additional lessons and sometimes we have an English conversation at home)*", parent 3.

Even though they agreed that the implementation of the CLIL approach had positive benefits for their children, they wanted their children to improve their reasoning, their understanding of specific terms in English, and their vocabularies since they learned new content from Science and Math using a foreign language. Therefore, parents thought that their children needed to improve their vocabulary.

"*Penalarannya dan pemahaman dalam istilah-istilah bahasa Inggrisnya (their reasoning and their understanding of certain terms in English)*", parent 5.

"*Mungkin penguasaan kosa-kata, ada beberapa mungkin kosa-kata baru yang dia belum mengerti artinya (maybe their vocabulary mastery, there are some new vocabularies that they do not understand yet)*", parent 2.

From the questionnaires, the parents highly supported their children to enroll in the CLIL education program. This is in accordance with Padilla's finding that found that many parents highly supported CLIL education since they believed that CLIL could improve their children's cognitive and emotional well-being. There were only a limited number of parents who were not willing to enroll their children in CLIL education. Only 15% of parents believed that their children could decrease their fearlessness or self-confidence levels. Padilla added that students who enrolled in CLIL programs had better English proficiency when they got better psychological support. The role of parents to support their children was important for their children's psychological support to acquire English. They acted as teachers and support systems for their children. According to Ruholt et al. stated that the relationship between young students and their parents affected both the quantity and quality of the learning process for the students. In this study, parents supported their children to improve their English skills by giving them some additional treatments at home. Saputra et al. found that parental support affected their children's English achievement. Abdurrahmansyah et al. added that the relationship between parents and children, such as when parents support their children's learning at home or school, could motivate children to meet their learning objectives and improve their performance.

Conclusion

This present research aimed to investigate the students' perspectives and parent's support for the implementation of the CLIL approach at primary school. The first result showed that most students perceived the implementation of the CLIL approach positively. Most of them strongly agreed that the CLIL class provided them with a rich environment, provide them with comprehensible input, and extended output, the teacher's talk helped them understand the materials well, teachers gave them positive reinforcement and feedback, and students strongly agreed that the CLIL approach gave positive impact to them. Besides that, parents' support mattered to

the success of students' English acquisition as parents were the stakeholders that could give psychological support and additional facilities to students. In this study, all parents strongly supported their children to study in the CLIL program because they wanted their children to be able to be skillful in English, independent, creative, and get the best education. They supported their children by having a conversation using English at home, providing them with learning media, and giving them additional lessons. However, they hoped that their children could improve their content-specific vocabularies. Therefore, this study suggested that future researchers or teachers give students more content-specific vocabulary as they learn Science and Math using English.

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