

# LIFE 5 TEXTBOOK EVALUATION BASED ON CONTENT LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL) MODEL



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## Abstract

This study explores the application of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) model in evaluating the "Life 5" textbook published by National Geographic within the context of English Language Teaching (ELT) in China, where traditional methods have long been predominant. The primary objectives are to examine how the textbook aligns with the four domains of CLIL: Content, Language (Communication), Learning (Cognition), and Culture, and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its content using CLIL principles. The study employs external and internal evaluations, utilizing checklists and tables to systematically assess the representation of the 4Cs domain in the textbook's instructions and activities. The findings indicate a varied distribution of 4Cs domains in the textbook's texts and activities, with culture and learning prominently represented. *Content* is primarily presented through pictures and articles, *language* through pair and group discussions, *learning* through analytical and creative tasks, and *culture* through diverse instructional activities. The analysis reveals that the "Life 5" textbook effectively integrates the 4C domains, offering a balanced and comprehensive language learning experience. Content-related instructions are consistently promoting academic language skill development. Language-focused activities vary significantly, enhancing oral communication and self-confidence. Learning domain texts are characterized by higher-order thinking and cognitive engagement, while the cultural domain fosters intercultural competence. The study concludes with several pedagogical implications: the need for balanced integration of the 4C domains in ELT materials, emphasis on practical language use, diverse learning strategies, promotion of intercultural understanding, and continuous evaluation and adaptation of teaching materials.

**Keywords:** Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Model, Life 5, Textbook Evaluation, English Language Teaching (ELT)

## Introduction

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a well-established teaching approach that emerged as a by-product of a European multilingual policy in the mid-1990s (Banegas & Hemmi, 2021). It emphasizes the development of content and language skills by instructing school curricula in a foreign language or utilizing this method to enhance foreign language learning. Many textbooks have been published in recent years. According to Darn

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(2006), the modern ELT concept of integrated skills and CLIL are similar; both explore language and are related to content learning. Hence, it is crucial for teachers intending to use CLIL to understand how to apply this teaching method to the textbook. Textbook evaluation is crucial for schools and teachers to select suitable materials for teaching and aid students in knowledge development. Okeeffe (2012) said that textbook evaluation is a method that identifies the advantages and disadvantages of a textbook for teaching and learning. There are many research-based analyzed or evaluated materials that discuss the strengths and weaknesses of a textbook. According to Xue (2018), China is a country where people follow the power holder, so policies encourage the reformation of ELT and the spread of CLIL. CLIL is a new teaching methodology for the Chinese ELT context. Many teachers and researchers study this approach to see what it can bring to the class and how this approach can be used for teaching as a new teaching approach.

However, most research on textbook evaluation and CLIL are separated, which means only a little research combines to fill this lacking brick in the wall of research already done. López-Medina (2021) stated that “The lack of specific tools prevents CLIL teachers and other stakeholders from easily identifying strengths and weaknesses of the textbooks that contribute to conveying content through a foreign language (usually English).” This research delves into the CLIL teaching method by analyzing the *Life 5* textbook from National Geographic. The rationale for researchers selecting this book is explained in this chapter. Additionally, this research discusses the potential functions of the 4C model in the ELT area based on textbook analysis. Figure 1 represents the model this research employs to assess the textbook, sourced from Coyle et al., 2010, p18. According to this model, the 4Cs are content, language (communication), learning (cognition), and culture.

**Figure 1** The model of CLIL

Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple perspectives for study, e.g. modules in history where authentic texts are used in different languages.</li> <li>Preparing for future studies, e.g. modules which focus on ICT which incorporate international lexis.</li> <li>Skills for working life, e.g. courses which deal with academic study skills equipping learners for further study.</li> <li>Accessing subject-specific knowledge in another language.</li> </ul>
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving overall target-language competence, e.g. through extended quality exposure to the CLIL language.</li> <li>Developing oral communication skills, e.g. through offering a wider range of authentic communication routes.</li> <li>Deepening awareness of both first language and CLIL language, e.g. those schools which offer 50% of the curriculum in other languages in order to develop a deeper knowledge and linguistic base for their learners.</li> <li>Developing self-confidence as a language learner and communicator, e.g. practical and authentic language scenarios such as vocational settings.</li> <li>Introducing the learning and using of another language, e.g. lessons which are activity-oriented are combined with language-learning goals, such as in play-oriented ‘language showers’ for younger learners.</li> </ul>
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing learner motivation, e.g. CLIL vocational courses which explicitly target confidence-building through the use of the CLIL language where learners feel they have failed in traditional language-learning classes.</li> <li>Diversifying methods and approaches to classroom practice, e.g. courses integrating learners who are hearing impaired, where the sign language is the CLIL language.</li> <li>Developing individual learning strategies, e.g. upper-secondary courses in science which attract learners who are confident in the CLIL language, but much less confident in science, who might not otherwise have opted for further study in the first language.</li> </ul>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building intercultural knowledge, understanding and tolerance, e.g. module of psychology on causes of ethnic prejudice.</li> <li>Developing intercultural communication skills, e.g. student collaboration on joint projects across nations.</li> <li>Learning about specific neighbouring countries/regions and/or minority groups, e.g. ‘school hopping’, which engages students and teachers in border regions in sharing resources and curricular objectives.</li> <li>Introducing a wider cultural context, e.g. comparative studies involving video links or internet communications.</li> </ul>

Source: Coyle et al., 2010, p18

## Review of Related Literature

### Synthesis of CLIL and Textbook Analysis Studies

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has garnered significant attention as a practical approach to language teaching that integrates language acquisition with subject content. The studies presented in the table above highlight various perspectives on CLIL, its implementation, challenges, and the role of textbooks in language education.

The studies by Darn (2006) and Wei (2013) have provided a comprehensive overview of CLIL, drawing on sociolinguistic and cultural considerations and cognitive development theories. Darn's work aligns CLIL with European language education policies, emphasizing its evolution and support within the educational framework. Wang Wei focuses on the 4Cs framework (culture, content, communication, and cognition), discussing the global role of English and its impact on bilingual education in China.

Handoyo (2007) and Weninger (2018, 2020) focused on textbook analysis, emphasizing the crucial role of textbooks in language learning and teaching. Widodo's analysis of a college academic writing textbook highlights its process-oriented approach and practical assignments, making it suitable for EFL students in Indonesia. Weninger's work discusses interdisciplinary theories, critical curriculum theorists, and multimodal analysis, reflecting on the significance of textbooks in language education.

The table shows that the research purposes vary across studies, reflecting diverse objectives within the CLIL framework. Jaisson Rodriguez Bonces (2012) acknowledges the historical evolution of language teaching methods and the growing importance of innovation in education. Lisa O'Keeffe (2012) investigates the influence of mathematics textbooks on classroom practice, emphasizing their quality and impact within the Irish education system.

Lasagabaster and López Belouqui (2015) explored motivation in primary education students, comparing CLIL and EFL approaches and examining the impact of project work on language learning motivation. Khwanchit Suwannoppharat and Sumalee Chinokul (2015) investigated the challenges and readiness of Thai teachers in adopting CLIL, focusing on its impact on language development and learner motivation.

The methodologies employed in these studies are diverse, ranging from qualitative and quantitative approaches to mixed-methods research. Darn (2006) and Bones (2012) utilized data collection and analysis techniques to understand the alignment of CLIL with educational policies and innovation. O'Keeffe (2012) and Weninger (2018) developed frameworks for textbook analysis, employing both content and critical discourse analysis.

In addition, Lasagabaster and López Belouqui (2015) used a motivation questionnaire with primary education students, while Suwannoppharat and Chinokul (2015) adopted a context-based qualitative approach to explore the challenges faced by Thai teachers in implementing CLIL. Marta Travica (2022) uses surveys to gain insights into teachers' awareness and use of CLIL in lower primary education.

As indicated, the findings across these studies emphasize the effectiveness of CLIL in various educational contexts. Darn (2006) and Wang Wei (2013) conclude that CLIL aligns with modern ELT concepts and supports bilingual education in response to economic globalization. Widodo (2007) and Weninger (2018, 2020) highlight the importance of textbooks in providing structured content and fostering language skills through practical assignments and multimodal analysis.

Lasagabaster and López Belouqui (2015) found that CLIL positively impacts young learners' motivation, mainly through project work. Suwannoppharat and Chinokul (2015) conclude that CLIL provides a natural environment for language development and content learning despite challenges in teacher readiness. Travica (2022) notes that many teachers are familiar with CLIL aspects, suggesting a growing acceptance and implementation of the approach.

As presented, these studies underscore the multifaceted nature of CLIL and textbook analysis in language education. CLIL's integration of language learning with subject content, supported by well-structured textbooks, enhances language proficiency and academic skills.

The diverse methodologies and findings reflect the adaptability and effectiveness of CLIL in various educational contexts, highlighting its potential to innovate and improve language teaching practices globally.

### **Understanding Textbooks as Teaching Materials**

Teaching materials are essential in teaching and learning. They help teachers develop the syllabus and the role of teachers and students in the educational process. Textbooks are the most common and most crucial material. Widodo (2007) cited Cele-Murcia (2001), who pointed out that textbooks or course books provide classroom content and activities, which can shape what happens in the classrooms. Textbooks are the handbook of a class. Textbooks can help teachers plan and process their teaching in a better-organized way.

Okeeffe (2013) defined textbooks in detail in her research *A Framework for Textbook Analysis*. Textbooks are the closest material and the most helpful handbook for students to use in their learning, defined as books for teaching and learning. Textbooks are purposefully developed to promote specific curriculums, and the content of a textbook affects students' learning directly (Okeeffe, 2013). Therefore, she said, "Good textbooks need to consider content, value-forming aspects, motivational elements, accessibility, illustrations, study guides, etc.; they must encourage a thirst for knowledge. (Okeeffe, 2013)"

Weninger (2018) holds the idea regarding textbooks, "Textbooks are one of the most widely used types of learning material in language teaching." Textbooks published by global commercial publishers in recent years seem like magazines with glossy covers, massive pictures, and popular topics (Weninger, 2018). Weninger (2018) said that these textbooks usually conclude with audio-visual, online, and digital supplements, which can help teachers structure their teaching better. The textbook this research evaluates belongs to the type of what Weninger talked about.

Weninger (2018) discussed the characteristics of modern textbooks, and Yang (2020) discussed textbooks in CLIL. In the particular situation of CLIL, textbook design should accommodate the 4C principles, which need to satisfy learners' content knowledge, communication skills, cognitive competence, and cultural awareness (Yang, 2020).

Weninger (2020) pointed out that research about language textbooks can be divided into two main traditions or perspectives: materials development and theoretical examines. In materials development, textbooks are studied in language classrooms as pedagogic aids (Weninger, 2020). In the theoretical examines, language textbooks are cultural artifacts and repositories of meaning about the world that students meet when they are studying the target language (Curd Christiansen, 2017; Risager, 2018; Weninger & Williams, 2005, cited in Weninger, 2020). What the textbooks illustrate can provide massive ideas, culture, and knowledge, significantly influencing learners and teachers. Therefore, textbook analysis or evaluation is integral to textbooks and pedagogy research. The next part discusses some theories about textbook analysis.

### **Understanding Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)**

Both Darn (2006) and Bonces (2012) stated in their papers that content and language-integrated learning was first defined in 1994 and launched in 1996 by the University of Jyväskylä and the European Platform for Dutch Education (UNICOM), which explained a new teaching method which teaches and learn a curriculum through a foreign language to achieve both content learning and foreign language learning simultaneously. In Lasagabaster and Beloqui's study (2015), they said, "In 1995, in the White Paper entitled Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society, the European Commission stated that everyone should be able to communicate in two European languages in addition to their mother tongue." They also showed the earlier history of CLIL in their research. Lasagabaster and Beloqui (2015) said that content and language-integrated learning had an intimate relationship with Canadian French immersion programs in the 1960s. The same point is in the research paper *CLIL: An Overview* of Banegas and Hemmi (2021). The history of CLIL can date back to

bilingual and immersion programs or multilingual education, which were used in Canada, the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden in the 1960s and the 1970s. This research believes that the origin of CLIL was a benefit from the multilanguage situation in Europe and the setting up of the EU in 1993. More than 40 languages are widely used in Europe.

Furthermore, citizens must learn other languages because of the cooperative relationships among EU countries. This can be regarded as one of the fundamental reasons that caused CLIL's birth. Hu (2023) stated that "CLIL was once considered an increasingly acknowledged approach to bilingual education in Europe, while its extensive spread has created an irresistible educational tide for other sociocultural contexts to swim with, one of which is China." On the contrary, China had a different situation from Europe, and the development of CLIL in China could be faster. Wang (2013) summarized that CLIL in China is at an experimental stage and teachers are lacking experience in using CLIL.

Marsh (2003) stated that CLIL could be used in every dual-focused educational context as a non-language content teaching and learning instrument that cannot use the first language. It is dual-focused because no matter whether content or language is predominant, both are finally accommodated (Marsh, 2003). In *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) A European Overview (2006)*, Darn described, "The essence of CLIL is that content subjects are taught and learned in a language which is not the mother tongue of the learners." He thought language acquisition is the essence of CLIL. Language knowledge is a method for learning content; when language is combined with various subjects, learners' motivation and language and the study of contextualized language make learning evolve, then the language learning principles become the center of CLIL (Darn, 2006). Marsh (2003) and Darn (2006) thought the first language should be used outside a CLIL classroom. Learners need to be exposed to the target language completely. Forbidden first language is a virtual hindrance to the development of CLIL in China. The average English level of Chinese students could be higher because of the deep-seated traditional method.

Banegas and Hemmi had the same opinion as Marsh in *CLIL: Present and Future (2021)*. Despite the CLIL model, which is constantly developing and evolving, the crucial target is developing both the content and language of learners. However, in another research by Banegas and Hemmi, they said that although the primary aim of CLIL was to let people with an additional language that is not their mother language, it relates to ELT as a pedagogy (Banegas & Hemmi, 2021, *CLIL: An Overview*). They predicted CLIL would focus more on balancing the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the future (Banegas and Hemmi, 2021, *CLIL: Present and Future*). The same authors expressed different ideas in different papers. In *CLIL: Present and Future (2021)*, Banegas and Hemmi focused on CLIL. While in *CLIL: An Overview (2021)*, they connected CLIL and ELT. They believed that CLIL is not only for teaching subjects in the target language but also for using English to teach the English language. This research agrees with Banegas and Hemmi, who explore CLIL usage in English teaching and learning. Before we discuss CLIL and ELT, let us explore other vital theories related to CLIL: benefits of CLIL, 4Cs, and Bloom's Taxonomy.

#### **4C Model in CLIL**

4C model are the features and principles of CLIL. This research uses the 4C model to evaluate textbooks to discuss how it present 4C domains. Coyle (2005) explained the 4Cs clearly and in detail: "Content- At the heart of the learning process lies successful content or thematic learning and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and understanding. Content is the subject or the project theme." According to Coyle (2005), the second C is communication, which is beyond the grammar system, and the communication in CLIL encourages learners to use language, which is different from conventional language lessons. The third C is cognition, which is about the learning process. The last one, according to Coyle (2005), is culture. Teachers and learners need to be tolerant and understanding through learning a foreign language to realize the potential of the pluricultural and plurilingual world. In addition, raising

awareness of otherness is vital, and culture can be interpreted widely through pluricultural citizenship (Coyle, 2005).

The theory of the 4Cs given by Coyle (2005) concluded almost everything a CLIL classroom wants. It is a guideline for how teachers use CLIL pedagogy to teach. 4C model also concludes the crucial parts of English language teaching:

1. Learning through content is the most helpful method for learning a target language.
2. Language is a communicative tool, so communication skills are crucial for language learning.
3. Learning English is more than remembering vocabulary, listening, reading, and writing.

Understanding and thinking are required. For the culture part, knowing and understanding the culture of English-speaking countries can help learners improve their motivation.

The definitions of the 4C model of Coyle (2005) are brief. In *CLIL Content and Language Integrated Learning* (Coyle et al., 2010), the 4Cs were explained in detail. Coyle et al. (2010) summarized content as "Progression in new knowledge, skills, and understanding." Successful content learning, acquisition of new knowledge and skills, and understanding are the core of content (Coyle et al., 2010). The content is not limited to a particular curriculum; it can include various methods or lessons involving integrated learning (Coyle et al., 2010). Content can be regarded as the knowledge, skills, and understanding teachers want students to get (Coyle et al., 2010). According to Coyle et al. (2010), communication is interaction, language learning, and using. Language is learned for use, and it is used to learn knowledge. In this procession, communication goes beyond the grammar system and lexis, but it does not mean grammar and lexis can be ignored (Coyle et al., 2010). Cognition refers to "Engagement in higher-order thinking and understanding, problem-solving, and accepting and reflecting on challenges. (Coyle et al., 2010, p. 55)" Transferring knowledge is not the idea of CLIL. It requires learners to produce and create understanding, opinions, and knowledge individually (Coyle et al., 2010). Coyle et al. (2010) stated that culture in CLIL is "'Self' and 'other' awareness, identity, citizenship, and progression towards pluricultural understanding." The world we live in is pluralistic and pluralistic, where we need to understand others to understand ourselves better (Coyle et al., 2010). In CLIL teaching, authentic intercultural materials are demanded to help learners know and understand the similarities and the varieties between other culture and their own culture (Coyle et al., 2010).

Peyró, Herrero, and Llamas (2020) stated that content, communication, cognition, and culture combine with the development of cognitive skills to become the central axis that makes CLIL different from other language teaching or other bilingual pedagogies. They believed that CLIL develops learners' communicative skills and cognitive skills, and they summarized seven principles to characterize CLIL:

1. Content learning requires students to acquire knowledge and skills and create knowledge, understanding, and skills.
2. Both content and cognition should be focused equally on providing proper linguistic support or scaffolding.
3. Linguistic requirements analyze cognitive processes.
4. Language should be learned in a meaningful context, and knowledge should be developed through developing cognitive processes.
5. Interaction is necessary for learning.
6. The core is developing intercultural awareness.
7. Contextual variables should be considered carefully so that they can develop advantageously. (Peyró, Herrero, & Llamas, 2020, p. 188)

Banegas and Hemmi (2021) stated that CLIL enables learners to understand the content by communicating with their teachers and other classroom learners, which can be regarded as cultures. They believed that cognition is the center of the CLIL teaching method.

Furthermore, the thinking process is an essential feature of CLIL. CLIL requires simple remembering or reciting knowledge and requires learners to understand knowledge and think individually (Banegas & Hemmi, 2021).

### **CLIL in English Language Teaching Classroom**

Many teaching methods are provided to teach English as new textbooks emerge. Among those pedagogies, CLIL sticks out because it is a dual-focus method that can help students develop content and language knowledge. CLIL can be divided into two types according to what it emphasizes: soft CLIL and hard CLIL. Šulistová (2013) said that hard CLIL focuses more on the subject, and the objective is using language to teach a subject, while soft CLIL emphasizes language acquisition. The CLIL in this research belongs to soft CLIL. Darn (2006) believed that CLIL lessons are neither a language class nor a specific subject taught through a foreign language. It contains many parts of communicative language teaching methodology, which indicates that language should be taught and learned in a meaningful context. CLIL relates to many aspects of ELT, such as CLIL and Situation Learning, CLIL and Language Acquisition, CLIL and the Natural Approach, and CLIL and Motivation. CLIL has many similarities with the trends of ELT. The current trend in ELT shows that lexis is primary instead of grammar, fluency is focused more than accuracy, learners should communicate contents, other skills should be integrated with language input, learners are the center, and learners should be exposed to massive tasks (Darn, 2006). According to Darn's (2006) description of CLIL trends in ELT, we can find that despite combining them with English language teaching, the main trends are still in the framework of the 4C model. Learners have yet to test the accuracy of language, which is the same as the communication principle. Learners communicating with each other based on the contents can develop learners' communication and content as well as cultural awareness. Exposing students to various tasks can help them develop cognition skills.

Darn (2006) elaborated on the relationship between CLIL and ELT through the trends of modern ELT and their similarities. Bonces (2012) expressed the relationship in society: "English has turned out to be the dominant language in our society. Therefore, a need for language and content-integrated learning arises to prepare future professionals to face this changing world." Therefore, many forms of ELT have applied CLIL in recent years, such as English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), Language Across the Curriculum (LAC), curriculum (LAC), Content-Based Instruction (CBI), and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and so on (Bonces, 2012). When teachers use CLIL in ELT, content and language play essential roles in teaching and learning. Bonces (2012) summarized that language and content interact as essential tools for each other.

On the one hand, language helps learners learn and understand the content; on the other hand, learners acquire and use language communicatively through meaningful content. Learning a target language with content helps one understand and use the language. Even vocabulary needs to be learned and used in some sentences or specific contexts.

### **Methodology**

The research incorporates both qualitative methods. It processes the qualitative evaluation of how *Life 5 fulfills* the 4C domains of CLIL with the content analysis of instructions and activities based on the 4C model (Coyle et al., 2010).

### **Research Object**

This research is going to explore CLIL pedagogy by evaluating an English coursebook. Therefore, the research object is *Life 5*, published by National Geographic and written by Dummett et al. (2015). *Life 5* has 12 units in the whole book.

## Research Instruments

The research instrument used in this study is checklists. The instrument is used for content analysis and evaluation of the *Life 5* textbook, particularly about the 4C model of CLIL.

The checklist is a tool that contains specific criteria derived from the CLIL model by Coyle et al. (2010). It serves as a guide to assess the presence and alignment of the 4C model within the textbook's units and activities. Table 1 is the checklist for this research.

## Data collection

To collect data for Research question 1 (How is the CLIL 4C model represented in the *Life 5* textbook?), this research involves a content analysis of the *Life 5* textbook. This analysis evaluates how the 4C model is represented within the textbook's units and activities. For Research Question 2 (In what aspects does *Life 5* help teachers develop students' English proficiency using the CLIL 4Cs domain?), the research tries to find possible methods to develop students' overall English proficiency based on textbook and 4C domains in CLIL. This is achieved by analyzing the results of the textbook evaluation in the context of ELT teaching and learning.

## Data Analysis

For Research Question 1, content analysis is used to analyze the collected instructions and discuss how they present 4C domains.

For research question 2, this research analyzes and discusses the results of research questions 1 and 2 to find out what teachers can do with 4C domains and textbooks to help learners develop overall English skills.

## Research Findings

The Findings of Research Question One: How are 4C domains represented in the *Life 5* textbook?

In this research, the content domain collected the instructions that provided content knowledge from the textbook and presented the characteristics of the content domain (Multiple perspectives for study, preparing for future studies, skills for working life, accessing specific knowledge).

Three extracts are chosen from *Life 5* as examples:

Extract 1. “*Work in pairs. Look at the photo and the caption. Choose the phrase you think best describes the photo.*” (Dummett et.al, 2015, p.9)

*a faithful companion*

*an old friend*

*mutual respect*

*true friends*

*blood relatives*

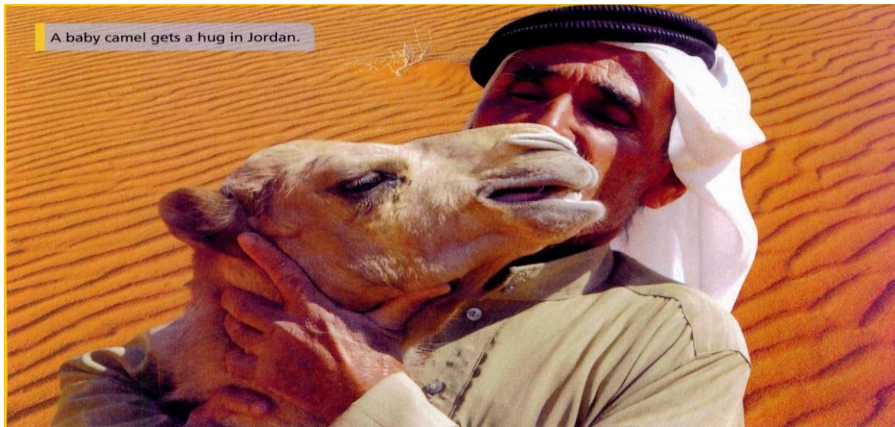
*a passing acquaintance*

*a strong bond*

*an odd couple*

From the first example, the instruction provides an authentic photo and the caption of this unit (relationships) as the content to encourage students to share and compare their interpretations of the photo, promoting the understanding of different viewpoints. It presents multiple perspectives for studying this content domain characteristic.

Figure 2. The photo of Extract 1, Life 5, p.9.



Extract 2. "Read the article. Answer the questions.

1. Which of Madagascar's natural resources is the author most worried about?
2. How is this resource collected and used?
3. What examples of sustainable ways of making money from Madagascar's natural resources are mentioned?" (Dummett et al., 2015, p.86)

According to Extract 2, the instruction provides an article with a picture introducing Madagascar's natural resources. It helps students know the natural resources in Madagascar and shows numerous lexis about natural resources, which presents these content domain characteristics: multiple perspectives for study, preparing for future studies, and accessing subject-specific knowledge in English.

For the language domain, this research collects the instructions that state learners need to communicate with classmates or the teacher explicitly and shows the characteristics of the language domain: improving overall target language competence, developing oral communication skills, developing self-confidence as a language learner, and communicator.

Figure 3. The article of Extract 2, Life 5, p.87.

Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island, at over 225,000 square miles, is a unique place that has been blessed with exceptional riches. Roughly 90 percent of its flora and fauna is found nowhere else on the planet. The spectacle of its carrot-shaped baobab trees and ghostly lemurs makes even the most well-traveled visitors wide-eyed with amazement and delight. But its rare beauty hides the desperate situation of its people. The typical Malagasy lives on about a dollar a day, even though you would not guess this from the cheerful and optimistic Malagasy, the island's main ethnic group. Since the first humans arrived in Madagascar some 2,300 years ago, loggers and developers have destroyed nearly 90 percent of the island's original forest habitat, harvesting it for timber or burning it down to create room for crops and, more recently, cattle. Considering that Madagascar's population is growing by three percent a year, this tension between rich land and poor residents is increasing daily. Alarmed ecologists have named Madagascar a biodiversity hot spot, deploring the practice of slash-and-burn agriculture. In 2005, the global environmental community rejoiced when green-friendly Marc Ravalomanana was elected president. But only seven years later, in the spring of 2009, the military replaced Ravalomanana with a former radio disc jockey who seemed to have little interest in protecting the environment. Needing money, the new government reversed a ban on the export of precious hardwoods, making it legal to sell wood from trees which had already been cut down or had fallen during the cyclones that regularly hit the island. Yet in reality they did little to control the loggers who continued to rob the forests of new wood. The main targets of this environmental crime are the rosewood and ebony trees. The wood from these majestic trees is in high demand. In China, it is used

to make exotic imperial-style furniture for the new middle class; in Europe and America, it is a valued material in the manufacture of expensive musical instruments. The locals are caught in a trap. Poverty and the high value of rosewood—at \$3,000 per cubic meter it is ten times as valuable as oak—have driven them to cut down trees that are traditionally considered sacred. It is dangerous and back-breaking work. Using hand axes, in a few hours they bring down a tree that has stood tall for many centuries. Then they cut the trees into logs and drag them several miles to the nearest river. The rare hardwood trees are not the only casualties. In order to transport the heavy rosewood logs downstream, rafts must be built from other wood. For each raft, the loggers cut down four or five lighter trees near the river, causing the earth to erode and sink up the river. Animals that have also been disturbed, putting their survival at risk. In this bleak landscape, one man's work offers hope. Olivier Behre, who first came to Madagascar from France in 1987, believes that the only solution is to give local people economic alternatives. Almost single-handedly, he has stopped deforestation in the Vohimana forest by encouraging the locals instead to collect medicinal plants, which they never imagined had any monetary value, and sell them overseas. The village lemur hunter has been retrained as a guide for tourists obsessed with lemurs. The same tourists also pay to visit the wild orchid conservatory that Behre has set up. Can small-scale and sensitive initiatives like this compete with the rosewood mafia of Madagascar? Only time will tell.

## A world of its own

**MADAGASCAR IN NUMBERS**

- FOURTH-LARGEST island in the world after Greenland, New Guinea, and Borneo.
- 22 MILLION people from 18 different Asian and African ethnic groups living here.
- 90 PERCENT of its flora and fauna is found nowhere else on Earth.
- 72 different species of lemur found only on Madagascar.
- 300 YEARS: the time it takes a rosewood tree to reach maturity.
- Number 1 producer of vanilla in the world.
- 27,000 TONS of ebony and rosewood exported in 2009, much of it illegally.

Natural resources 87

Extract 3. "Work in pairs. Imagine you meet each other on the street by accident. Act out a similar conversation." (Dummett et al., 2015, p.20)

This example presents three characteristics of language domain: improving overall target language competence, developing oral communication skills, and developing self-confidence as a language learner and communicator. The instruction involves students engaging in a conversation, which contributes to enhancing their overall language competence. Acting out a conversation in pairs actively involves students in oral communication, aiding in developing their speaking and listening skills. Performing a conversation in pairs provides a structured opportunity for students to use the language in a practical context, fostering self-confidence in their language learning and communication abilities.

This instruction encourages learners to use the target language to describe reactions and suggest solutions, which involves vocabulary related to animals, danger, safety, conditionals, and modal verbs. Pair work discussion fosters active speaking and listening. Learners practice expressing their thoughts, negotiating meaning, and responding to their partner's ideas, which are crucial to effective oral communication. By discussing personal reactions and ideas in a safe, pair-based setting, learners build confidence in using the target language spontaneously and effectively. The familiar context of discussing potential real-life scenarios helps reduce anxiety and encourages more fluent and confident speech. Extract 4 shows improving overall target language competence, oral communication skills, and self-confidence as a language learner and communicator.

The learning domain collects data that matches increasing learner motivation, diversifying methods and approaches to class practice, and developing individual learning strategies.

This instruction connects language learning to cultural sayings, combines language learning with cultural exchange, and encourages comparison and personal reflection. It shows the three characteristics of the learning domain: increasing learner motivation, diversifying methods and approaches to class practice, and developing individual learning strategies.

This task is highly engaging as it involves planning a real-world activity that students can relate to and find interesting. Allowing students to use their creativity to design a staycation with a theme makes them more likely to feel enthusiastic and invested in the task. The collaborative aspect of working in small groups also adds a social component that can boost motivation. Meanwhile, this activity moves away from traditional language exercises and incorporates project-based learning. It involves various skills such as research, planning, and presenting, which cater to different learning styles. Group work also introduces a cooperative learning approach, encouraging peer-to-peer interaction and collective problem-solving. In planning a themed staycation, students must use their research skills to gather information about local attractions and activities. They need to organize their findings and create a coherent itinerary, which helps them practice planning and organizational strategies. Additionally, the need to present their plan to the group encourages the development of communication and presentation skills.

The culture domain collects the instructions that provide cultural content and presents the characteristics of the culture domain in CLIL: developing intercultural communication skills, building intercultural knowledge, understanding, and tolerance, learning about specific neighboring countries/ regions/ minority groups, and introducing a broader cultural context.

This example discusses emigration and the challenges faced by immigrants, encouraging students to engage in meaningful conversations about diverse cultural experiences. This helps them develop the ability to communicate and empathize with people from different cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of developing intercultural communication skills.

This roleplay activity requires students to discuss a culturally specific and potentially unfamiliar topic (eating insects). It encourages them to articulate their thoughts, ask questions, and explain concepts clearly, enhancing their ability to communicate across cultural boundaries. By discussing the practice of eating insects, students gain insights into dietary habits that may be common in some cultures but unfamiliar in others. This fosters a greater understanding and tolerance of diverse eating practices and cultural norms. Eating insects is

prevalent in various cultures, particularly in parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Through this roleplay, students learn about these regions' culinary traditions and the reasons behind such dietary choices, thus broadening their knowledge about different cultures and minority groups. This activity situates eating insects within a broader cultural and environmental context. Students learn about insect consumption's nutritional and ecological benefits and how it ties into sustainable food practices. This provides a holistic view of how different cultures approach food and sustainability issues.

## The Findings of Research Question Two

Research Question 2: In what aspects does *Life 5* help teachers develop students' English proficiency using the CLIL 4Cs domain?

Research questions 1 and 2 have shown that *Life 5*'s instructions and activities, which cover the content, language, learning, and culture domains, are highly effective in developing students' 4C domain knowledge and overall English language abilities. This effectiveness instills confidence in the CLIL methodology.

**Content domain:** The Extract provides an article detailing contemporary Chinese society, focusing on the cultural and generational shifts due to economic changes. It introduces students to topics such as family values, materialism, and the impact of modernization on traditional practices. This rich content forms the basis for discussions and deepens students' understanding of the subject matter.

**Language domain:** The instruction requires students to work in pairs and discuss specific questions related to the photo and the article. This promotes active communication and the use of language skills to express ideas, ask questions, and articulate thoughts. The task encourages dialogue and interaction, essential components of language development.

**Learning domain:** The questions prompt higher-order thinking and critical analysis. Students must interpret the photo, connect it to the article, and reflect on their experiences. They need to analyze the situation, compare it with familiar contexts, and evaluate the implications of cultural and societal changes. This cognitive engagement enhances their ability to process and understand complex information.

**Culture domain:** The article explores cultural changes in China, contrasting traditional values with modern influences. It provides insights into the generational differences in attitudes and behaviors, fostering intercultural understanding and tolerance. Discussing these themes helps students appreciate the cultural diversity and the challenges faced by people in different societies, thereby broadening their cultural perspective.

**Figure 4.** *The article and photo of Extract 9, Life 5, p.12*

Change brings problems. Bella lives with her parents in a brand new apartment in Shanghai. Her real name is Zhou Jiaying; Bella is the name that she has been given by her English teacher. Her parents are representative of a confused generation in a confused time. In modern Chinese society, different ideologies are fighting against each other. Enormous material benefits have been brought by China's economic boom, but the debate is not about these; it's about family life and values. Old values—the respect of family and the older generations—are being replaced by new ones which place money as the critical measurement of one's position in society. But at the same time, these new values are also being questioned. Have our lives been made richer by all our new possessions? Is Chinese culture being replaced? As in all changing societies, people are trying to find the right balance between the new and the old.

Recently, Bella's family put their grandfather into a nursing home. It was a painful decision. In traditional China, caring for aged parents has always been an unavoidable duty, but times are changing. Bella's ambition? "I want one day to put my parents in the best nursing home—the best that money can buy, she means.

"When she told us that," Bella's father says, "I thought, is it selfish to think she will be a dutiful and caring daughter and look after us? We don't want to be a burden to her when we get old. This is something my daughter has taught us. Once it was parents who taught children, but now we learn from them." The family can buy many more things these days, and when they go shopping, Bella makes sure that the "right" Western brands are selected. (Pizza Hut is her favorite restaurant.) She also teaches her parents the latest slang.

Her parents want to be supportive, but they no longer help with Bella's homework; in spoken English, she has surpassed them. She has already learned much more about the outside world than they have. "Our advice is not listened to and not wanted," her mother says. "When she was little, she agreed with all my opinions. Now she sits there without saying anything, but I know she doesn't agree with me." Bella glares, but says nothing. "I suppose our child-raising has been a failure." In China there is no concept of the rebellious teenager.



Extract 10. "Work in pairs. Look at the photo. What do you know about the eating habits of the Spanish; when they eat, what they eat?" (Dummett et al., 2015, p.79)

**Content domain:** The instruction focuses on the eating habits of the Spanish, providing a specific picture of a restaurant in Spain. It introduces students to aspects of Spanish culture, such as meal times, types of food, and dining customs. This content knowledge forms the basis for further exploration and learning about Spanish culture.

**Language domain:** Students are instructed to work in pairs and discuss their knowledge about Spanish eating habits. This encourages interactive communication, allowing students to practice speaking, listening, and sharing information collaboratively. Pair work facilitates language practice in a meaningful context, promoting the use of the target language.

**Learning domain:** The questions prompt students to recall what they know about Spanish eating habits, analyze this information, and compare it with their cultural practices. This engages cognitive skills such as memory recall, analysis, comparison, and synthesis of information. It encourages students to think critically about cultural differences and similarities.

**Culture domain:** Discussing Spanish eating habits directly involves exploring cultural practices, traditions, and social norms related to food and dining in Spain. This fosters intercultural understanding and awareness, helping students appreciate and respect the cultural diversity of Spanish people. It introduces a broader cultural context, encouraging students to think globally and understand different lifestyles.

The above excerpts present 4C domains in one instruction. These instructions can help learners develop content, language, learning, and cultural knowledge. By integrating content from various subjects, promoting communication through collaborative tasks, encouraging critical thinking, and fostering cultural awareness, teachers can create a comprehensive learning experience that supports the development of English proficiency.

**Figure 5.** The photo of Extract 7, Life 5, p128



## Discussions of the Findings

This study aimed to analyze the representation of the CLIL 4C model (content, language, learning, and culture) in the *Life 5 textbook* and provide insights into how ELT teachers can leverage these domains to enhance learners' English proficiency. By examining the integration of the 4C domains, the study offers recommendations for optimizing language instruction.

Previous research emphasizes the importance of content knowledge in CLIL (Coyle et al., 2010). In this study, extract 1 exemplifies this with its authentic photo and caption activity, promoting understanding of different viewpoints and encouraging critical thinking.

Language competence is a cornerstone of CLIL, which aims to improve language proficiency and communication skills (Dalton-Puffer, 2011). Extract 3, for instance, enhances oral communication skills and builds self-confidence, which is critical for language acquisition.

The learning domain, extract 2, demonstrates this by requiring students to analyze an article about Madagascar's natural resources, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This finding is consistent with Marsh (2008), who advocates integrating cognitive skills in CLIL to facilitate deeper learning.

Cultural understanding is another vital component of CLIL, promoting intercultural awareness and sensitivity (Mehisto et al., 2008). Activities like Extract 8, which involves role-playing a culturally specific scenario, help students appreciate diverse cultural practices and enhance their global competence. This strong focus on culture aligns with previous studies highlighting cultural knowledge's role in comprehensive language education (Byram, 1997).

## Pedagogical Implications

This research has important pedagogical implications for teachers and learners of English, as well as for materials developers and school administrators in China and the world.

**Balanced integration of 4C domains:** Ensure a balanced integration of the 4C domains in ELT materials to provide a comprehensive language learning experience. This can help address different aspects of language proficiency and keep students engaged.

**Emphasize practical language use:** Focus on activities that promote practical language use, such as role-plays, discussions, and interviews. These activities help students develop oral communication skills and self-confidence using the target language.

**Incorporate diverse learning strategies:** Use various teaching methods and approaches to cater to different learning styles. Project-based learning, collaborative tasks, and real-world scenarios can enhance student motivation and engagement.

**Promote intercultural understanding:** Include activities that expose students to different cultural contexts and encourage intercultural dialogue. This can help students develop a broader perspective and improve intercultural communication skills.

**Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation:** Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of teaching materials and methods. Adapt and update the curriculum based on student feedback and learning outcomes to remain relevant and practical.

This research, therefore, can be crucial for ELT educators in China. Based on this research's 4C domains of CLIL, ELT teachers should know the balance of 4C domains in a textbook: practical language use, diverse learning strategies, intercultural understanding, and textbook evaluation. Most importantly, for English language teachers who want to explore CLIL pedagogy through CLT textbooks, it is practical for them to evaluate their textbooks to develop learners' content, language, learning, and culture skills in English.

## Conclusion

As indicated, this study holds significant value in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT) in China. The evaluation uses the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) model. The primary objective of this study is to assess the alignment of the textbook with the four domains of CLIL: Content, Language (Communication), Learning (Cognition), and Culture. The study also aims to provide practical recommendations for ELT teachers to enhance learners' English proficiency using CLIL principles.

The *Life 5* textbook incorporates the 4C domains, offering a comprehensive language learning experience. These are shown through texts and activities, as well as, instructions throughout the textbooks which help students develop English language skills. The balanced integration of content ensures consistent academic language skill development. The variation in language-focused activities caters to different proficiency levels, promoting flexible language development. The dynamic learning strategies keep students engaged, and the focus on cultural understanding prepares them to communicate interculturally.

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