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Application of CLIL in Online Classes:
Difficulties and Challenges

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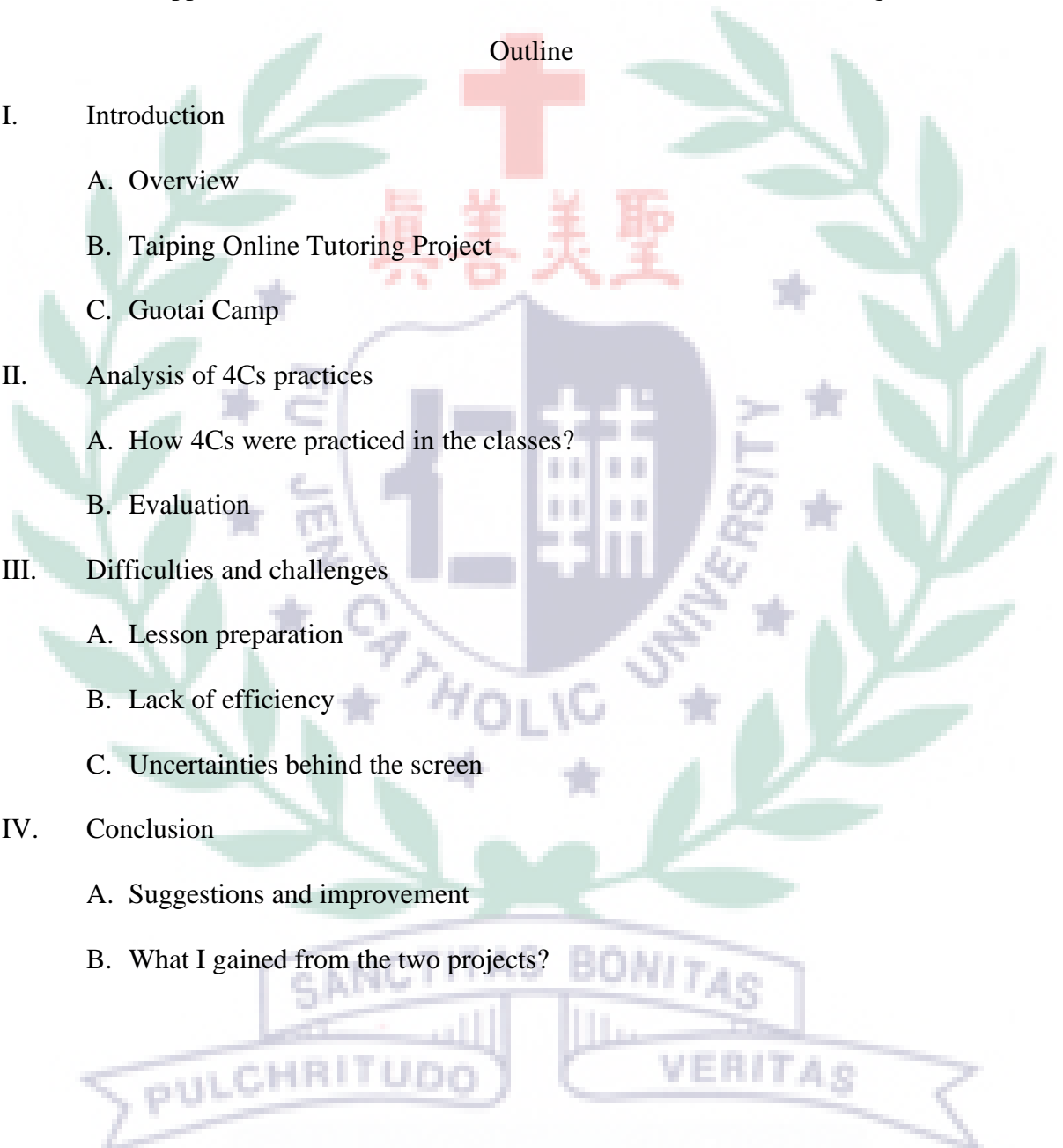Instructors: Lydia Tseng

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<div align="center">**Application of CLIL in Online Classes: Difficulties and Challenges**</div>

Introduction

    TESOL & CCC was a semester course, which was also a practice-oriented class. Each student should dedicate time and provide service to achieve the learning goal. The course could be divided into three parts: Taiping Online Tutoring Project, Guotai Online Demonstration, and Guotai Camp. Each of them would generally experience the same process including preparation, implementation, and reflection. This article would mainly focus on the problems with the application of CLIL in online classes of Taiping Online Tutoring Project and Guotai Camp because the duration of Guotai Online Demonstration is relatively short.

    Taiping Online Tutoring Project lasted for 6 weeks. Student teachers designed courses for two dimensions, culture and daily-life-related issues. In the first part, our group intended to integrate pupils' own aboriginal culture into our teaching. We talked about festivals, clothing, and food in the first part. For the rest of the lessons, we taught students about cyber security and online games, hoping to motivate them to be aware of the hidden dangers on the Internet. We brought out several vocabularies to each topic and sentence patterns that could be utilized in daily life. Our pupils did make big progress. They could gradually recognize some vocabularies we taught and use the sentence patterns with particular templates to make sentences to express their own ideas. More surprisingly, they were even willing to share their personal life.

    Guotai Camp worked in a special way— blend mode. Half of the student teachers stayed online, and the rest of the student teachers attended the camp on-site. The activity could be divided into two parts. Pupils attended the courses designed by student teachers in the morning, and then they joined a tasks-completion game in the afternoon. The main focus of our group was emotion. We used two cartoon characters to teach the pupils to identify different emotions. We listed some common examples in daily life to involve the pupils to join the discussion. We even held a role-play activity to have our students experience

different emotions in a variety of situations. In the afternoon, we designed two games to test students' understanding of our teaching. One was called "Emotion Dice," and the other was called "Super Match." We tried our best to use two different forms to motivate students to utilize what they had learned in the morning to express their ideas in complete sentences.

Analysis of 4Cs practices

The Taiwanese government wants to make Taiwan a bilingual country by 2030. Because of the bilingual policies, there are more and more people paying attention to English teaching. A growing pedagogical trend in bilingual education is the CLIL approach. CLIL stands for Content and Language Integrated Learning, which refers to learning a language while learning a subject, such as combining English with another subject. The definition is broad because it can happen in many different ways. Coyle et al. (2010) suggest that multiple learning outcomes of CLIL should target 4Cs: content, communication, cognition, and culture. The courses of Taiping Online Tutoring Project and Guotai Camp are both designed under the 4Cs framework. The following would simply put down how the 4Cs are implemented in the class.

	Taiping Online Tutoring Project	Guotai Camp
Content	The topics could be generally divided into two categories, including indigenous culture and online words. Students would learn more about their culture and be aware of dangers hidden on the screen.	Students could recognize their emotions and know how to deal with it after our lesson.
Communication	Students are higher level. As a result, we taught them some sentence patterns and asked them to apply the vocabulary we just taught.	
Cognition	Students could know how precious	Students could know how to face

	is their culture and also avoid the dangers of the Internet.	different emotions under various pressure.
Culture	We discussed clothing, food, and festivals in indigenous culture.	We discussed the relationship of multigeneration (the relationship between children, parents, and their grandparents or elderly).

According to a study written by Graham et al. in 2020, content addresses the knowledge students should gain from a lesson, and communication would be connected to language outcomes. As for cognition and culture, cognition involves a higher level of thinking. For example, it might develop critical thinking about culture (Ellison, 2019).

Based on my real experience, cognition would be the most difficult part to fulfill. Having students understand new knowledge would take some time, not alone digesting and organizing learning knowledge with a foreign language. What's more, it's not an easy task for teachers to check if students have developed deeper thinking knowledge or not. Besides, Taiwanese English teaching doesn't put much focus on speaking. As a result, in terms of verbal communication, there's still a long way to go for both teachers and students. According to my observation, most of the students could only say a complete sentence to express their ideas with the templates we provided, having difficulty sharing thoughts with their own words. It's expected that this problem could get much improvement after the bilingual policy is officially practiced.

Difficulties and problems

First of all, to follow the framework of CLIL, we, student teachers, had to consume a lot of energy. I am convinced that it's also hard for even professional educators. Also, teaching different subjects in English is not a simple task. The dual focus of CLIL seems to be both an issue and a challenge since it is not easy for language teachers to teach content and vice versa (Suwannoppharat & Chinokul, 2015). Teachers might not only have to master their professionals but at least be familiar with another field.

Second, according to Suwannoppharat and Chinokul, effective teaching and learning processes through the 4Cs require a considerable amount of time, during which many obstacles may arise. Just like I mentioned in the previous paragraph, in terms of cognition, there are a lot of difficulties evaluating students' learning performance because it doesn't really exist a set of standards and some students just refuse to talk or to share.

Also, there were too many uncertainties behind the screen. When holding an online class, we can't make sure we would successfully start the class before students log into our online meeting rooms. Even though they did come to the assigned classroom, there might sometime be some connection problems. What's more, it would be more difficult for us to interact with the students. Some students are shy or passive, which would make us take more time to be familiar with them and get them involved in the class, especially online classes. More importantly, communication is one of the four components of the 4Cs framework. If students refuse to interact with us, we just don't know the completeness of communication in our classes.

Conclusion

Meyer mentioned some key strategies and principles in his studies finished in 2010. As far as I am concerned, the most useful one to solve the problems with the application of CLIL in online classes would be multi-modal input. Teachers could find extra materials from the Internet to facilitate his/her classes. They could save a lot of time by doing this. Also, with so many different channels of English teaching, students might have a chance to understand the complete context of a foreign language. More importantly, through different kinds of stimulation, it would somehow develop students' cognition to the class.

Besides, to broaden teachers' knowledge in different fields, teachers should be encouraged to participate in a variety of workshops. If the Taiwanese government has a resolution to completely practice the bilingual policy, they should provide more incentives for teachers for extra effort or learning. I deeply hope that the practice of the bilingual policy could rise the English-speaking level of Taiwanese level.

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