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‘What did you learn today?’: Analysing teacher-led questions in Asian Chinese-speaking secondary CLIL classrooms

Using teacher-led questions is of utmost importance in the educational setting, as it allows teachers to convey knowledge and ascertain students’ comprehension levels effectively. Educational professionals utilise these tools to facilitate purposeful engagements, foster increased student engagement, and shape cognitive processes, logical reasoning, and active involvement among their pupils. Remarkably, the scholarly investigation of the influence of student inquiry in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) classrooms within Asian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) secondary education remains limited. Consequently, our research examined the frequency and kind of questions CLIL practitioners employ in Taiwanese educational settings. We believed such an investigation would enhance our comprehension of the dynamics between teachers and students, inform our instructional strategies, facilitate student learning, and promote content acquisition. A dataset including 1,405 minutes of recorded material from 39 CLIL classes was analysed. The findings indicate that practitioners employ display, referential, and confirmation checks inside CLIL classes. These practices raise concerns regarding attaining desired pedagogical objectives and hinder learners’ cognitive advancement. The questions employed in the classroom are strongly influenced by factors such as the gender of the teacher, the level of the learners, and the duration of the course. The research has significant pedagogical implications, highlighting the need for CLIL teachers to recognise the value of utilising generative AI (artificial intelligence) tools in promoting effective interactive discourse within CLIL classrooms. Generative AI, like ChatGPT, can be very beneficial in helping teachers select relevant prompts, create diverse questions to encourage students to think deeply and encourage response variation to develop various language skills. We argue the necessity of offering appropriate professional development opportunities for CLIL practitioners to enhance their questioning skills to facilitate interaction, participation, and learning through deploying generative AI tools.

Keywords

teacher-led questions, CLIL, bilingual education, professional development (PD), Taiwan secondary level

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