ESP+CLIL: THEORETICAL INSIGHTS, EXPERIMENTATION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS AT THE SCHOOL FOR ARMY TRAINING SUB-OFFICERS OF VITERBO, ITALY

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Abstract
Moving from the assumption that CLIL is a new trend in the Humanities – or, better said, a recently rediscovered one, at least in Italian universities –, the principal aim of this article is to present a soft CLIL experimentation at the School for Army Training Sub-Officers of Viterbo, Italy, thus suggesting an implementation of the internationalization and teaching innovation in Higher Education which can be basically applied to any discipline taught in a foreign language. Theoretical considerations about ESP vs CLIL differences and their implementation in military academies will be supported by teaching practices and discussion of the results obtained, in order to demonstrate that the implementation of CLIL could help Modern Foreign Language (MFL) and Non-Linguistic Subject (NLS) teachers improve the cadets' linguistic competence while conveying military content-related notions.
Keywords: *CLIL, ESP, content-based approach, military English, military academy*

An overview of English teaching in the L-36 degree course

The first-level degree course in Political Science and International Relations: Political Science Syllabus, formerly known as Organisational and Management Science, reached its twenty-second cycle in AY[13] 2019-2020. The course started following a rectoral decree of August 6th, 1998 as a two-year inter-faculty university diploma at the Tuscia University of Viterbo. The degree course stems from an agreement between the Ministry of Defence and the University of Viterbo. The agreement concerns higher/tertiary education of the cadet students of the School for Army Training Sub-Officers of the Italian Army (Viterbo).

Without going into detail as to the university courses available at the military academy, we will analyse the structure of the English language course taught at the School. Currently, the course awards 8 university credits for a total of 48 hours of frontal classes and is carried out by a team of six university teachers in the first semester of the first-year curriculum. The course's final exam is divided into two graded tests usually administered in the space of two consecutive

[13] The Italian Academic Year (AY) generally runs from October 1st to September 30th and it is divided into two terms or semesters, each of them consisting in a preliminary phase of lectures, seminars, exercises, etc., and a later phase when students are assessed through oral, written or practical exams. Exams are normally evaluated using a common assessment scale mark in thirtieths, and the minimum mark to pass exams is 18/30.

days. The tests measure reading and writing competencies and leave out the listening and speaking skills, as these will be the subject of the lessons of expert teachers specifically selected by the Italian Army Foreign Language School (Scuola di Lingue Estere dell'Esercito, SLEE) for the second semester[14]. The reading comprehension test has seven progressively harder exercises, tailored on the Cambridge Assessment English tests (previously ESOL) and go from multiple choice and fill-in-the-gaps grammar exercises to multiple choice reading comprehensions about military life as well as matching headings exercises. In the writing test students are asked to write a short note of 50-100 words and a longer text of 200-300 words and to summarise/recall the main information of a given text. The core of the whole test is military microlanguage.

Instead of adopting the division into linguistic levels established by the new Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR 2018), the standard in use in military academies is based on a NATO prototype – STANAG 6001 – which stands for NATO Standardization Agreement. The fourth and latest edition of this 1976 model was approved on October 12th, 2010 by the Military Committee Joint Standardization Board (MCJSB). Based on the Dublin Descriptors, the STANAG model has six competence levels ranging from 0 to 5, for each ability (L for Listening, S for Speaking, R for Reading and W for Writing). When a student reaches a level and/or passes a language test, s/he is given four marks between 0 and 5 to indicate his/her language competence based on the four basic skills in the order in which they are listed above[15]. The CEFR B1 level on which the university exam of the first semester is calibrated corresponds to STANAG level 2, based on the correspondence table below:

CEFR level	STANAG 6001 level	STANAG description
A1	0	No proficiency
A2	1	Survival
B1	**2**	**Functioning**
B2	3	Professional

[14] Hrubý refers to the evaluation system of Brno University of Defence as a "light version of NATO STANAG 6001 testing" (2016: 256). The STANAG evaluation strategy is exclusively based on limited, specific aspects of the foreign language, such as written English in the case of Viterbo School for Army Training Sub-Officers.

[15] According to the STANAG 6001 model, the typical structure used to identify the acquired competence level is: "Student's surname Listening Speaking Reading Writing" (e.g. Smith 2314). This is the result of a convention focussed primarily on passive and active oral skills and secondarily on passive and active written skills.

C1	4	Expert
C2	5	Highly-articulate native

Table 1. Correspondence between CEFR and STANAG 6001 levels and descriptors. Emphasis mine.

Similarly to CEFR, there are intermediate levels. These are marked by a "+" sign or by ".1" and ".2" next to the level, depending on the cases: for example, A1+ o A1.2 (CEFR). During an ongoing evaluation, STANAG offers the opportunity to place learners between one level and the next with a series of "+" signs immediately following the mark. This indicates the competence reached by the student (0+, 1+, 2+, 3+, 4+).

ESP vs CLIL[16]: Compare and contrast!

Before dealing with the status of research and other methodological matters, it is worth trying to clarify some terminological distinctions between ESP (English for Specific/Special Purposes)[17] and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)[18]. This will make the reader understand what kind of methodology – or possibly a mixture of both – has been adopted in the experimentation presented here and which aspects can be improved in order to realize effective student-centred syllabuses. To this end, I have decided to borrow from María Ángela Martín del Pozo's comparison between English for Special/Specialized Purposes and Content and Language Integrated Learning methodologies (2017: 60) in Table 2.

[16] For reasons of space and pertinence, this article does not take into account other similar approaches and methodologies such as CBI (Content-Based Instruction) and EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction).

[17] Variously defined since 1960s-1970s, ESP can be synthetically described as a student/learner-centered educational approach which focuses on developing the students'/learners' communicative competence in a specific school subject, discipline, or field of research. The concept of ESP was brought to the attention of the scientific community by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and it was then researched and broadened by Stevens (1988) and Dudley-Evans and St John (1998). These are just some of the ESP pioneers. In Italy, it was Maurizio Gotti (1991) – later translated into English (2003) – who first contributed to the spread of ESP studies and research. Of course, English is not the only language used for specific/specialized purposes, so the acronym LSP (Language for Specific/Specialized Purposes) was coined. For this reason, in this article I will alternate the use of the acronyms ESP and LSP depending on whether each occurrence concerns English exclusively or other languages as well.

[18] The acronym CLIL was coined in 1994 by professor David Marsh who, in his speech at the International Association for Cross-cultural Communication, Language teaching in the Member States of the European Union, held in Paris, defined it as "*situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language". In other words, CLIL is* a dual-focused educational approach in which a foreign language is used for the teaching and learning of both content and language (see Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010 for the first comprehensive study concerning a definition and implementation of CLIL).

The English language syllabus at Viterbo School for Army Training is clearly shaped around ESP, since language is its main focus – and even the main competence of English language teachers – and it involves a language expert instead of a content expert with proficiency in English. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated in the following sections, aspects of CLIL methodology have been considered and put into practice when conducting my experimentation, which made me come to the conclusion that a combination of both approaches is possible and desirable. In fact, a dual task-based focus has been pursued and the content – in this case a patrol debrief template – has determined the language to be learnt in terms of lexical and morphosyntactic choices. For this reason, although no content teacher has been involved, albeit cadet students could be somehow defined as content experts in this case, I would argue that a soft CLIL approach has been used in a sort of CLIL team formed by the language teacher and the content experts.

ESP and CLIL Compared

	ESP	CLIL
Aims	FOCUS ON LANGUAGE: To meet specific linguistic needs of particular disciplines, occupations and activities	DUAL FOCUS: learning subject-matter content through the medium of a foreign language learning a foreign language by studying subject-matter content
Content	Content comes from the student's field of study Content is used at the service of linguistic competences development Students are familiar with content	Specific content and the linguistic competence to communicate this in a foreign language Content determines the language to be learnt
Language	Vocabulary, grammar, register, genres, pragmatic and discursive features Usage of the language in a specific context Content and means Often adapted to the learners' proficiency level	Language is a tool for learning and communicating in content led modalities Language needed to convey content
Teacher	Language expert Teacher "should not become a teacher of subject matter, but rather an interested student of the subject matter" (Micic, 2005, p. 5)	Content expert with an appropriate level of language proficiency.
Students	Want to improve their English in a certain professional field of study Know more content that the teacher	Want to learn content and improve foreign language competence
Lesson	Foreign language lesson	Not a language lesson in the traditional understanding Not a typical subject class (level of language fluency may have an impact on the scope of the content)

Table 2. Comparison between ESP and CLIL (Martín del Pozo, 2017: 60)

ESP/LSP and CLIL in military academies: the status of research

Not much literature focusses on English for Specific/Specialized Purposes in military academies. Al-Gorashi's unpublished PhD dissertation (Indiana University, 1988) was probably the first far-reaching work focussing on the professional English needed by 212 Saudi Arabian army and air force cadets at the King Abdul Aziz Military Academy, based in Riyadh. More recent articles consider updated methodological frameworks and present experimentations of ESP/LSP lectures carried out by language experts in military schools and academies. If Qaddomi (2013), drawing on Al-Gorashi's results, focusses on 91 Palestinian cadets' language needs at Al Istiqlal University (Jericho) especially in terms of listening comprehension skills, Chisega-Negrila and Kraft (2018) of the National Defence University of Romania "Carol I" deal with ESP and its importance in the Romanian military high schools. Finally, Li and Chen (2019) conducted a survey on 120 second-year students of military English and the efficacy of Content-Based and Task-Based Language Teaching (CBLT and TBLT) and Hatziolou and Sofiou (2019), after describing the inductive methodology adopted at the Hellenic military academy in Nafplio, present the benefits of an LSP-based syllabus (both in English and French) in the Greek School for Army Training. All the above-mentioned works present both quantitative and qualitative analyses based on English learners' needs and sometimes introduce experimentations of military ESP-based modules/units to be implemented or which have been already implemented, thus providing results.

On the other hand, the few existing publications focussing on CLIL experiments at military academies follow more or less the same principle, thus showing that in the majority of cases the distinction between ESP/LSP and CLIL is feeble and sometimes not so understandable even by those in the know – possibly because the majority of authors are English teachers who are not the content experts that CLIL requires.

In the short article "Content and Language Integrated Learning or English for Special Purposes", Balagiu and Patesan (2015) make purely theoretical observations and compare CLIL to ESP in order to establish which of the two methodologies is more appropriate to learn English at the Romanian Naval Academy in Costanţa. Another theoretical article based on field investigations on English learning on the part of students and staff at the National Defence

University in Warsaw, Poland, is the one written by Gawlik-Kobylińska and Lewińska (2014). After introducing the concept of CLIL and examining the results of recent Spanish studies carried out by a team of teachers at the Hurtado de Mendoza professional school of Granada, the article recommends the use of CLIL at the National Defence University of Warsaw. Hrubý (2016) – not an English teacher, but an expert of the Military Technology Faculty at the University of Defence (Brno, Czech Republic) – envisages an educational method which employs both CLIL and ICTs for distance learning. In his article "Foreign Language Competence Supported by ICT and Distance Learning", Hrubý analyses strategies for the evaluation of digital and language competencies in a CLIL perspective.

The only article focussing on the practical application and mostly positive feedback of CLIL in a military environment is by Elen Laanemaa (2015). Starting from a pilot study carried out in 2012-2013, Laanemaa provides statistics related to students' language competencies before and after the CLIL pilot project, concluding that these have increased by the end of the project. Of the little literature currently available on the subject, Laanemaa's article is the most lucid analysis of CLIL in a military environment. This is mainly because of her observations about the ever-decreasing number of hours of English in military schools, regardless of the fact that institutions require more and more language competencies, and about the need to train staff on English language and non-linguistic subjects so that the CLIL methodology can be pursued more efficiently.

Teaching English at the School for Army Training Sub-Officers of Viterbo: Combining ESP and CLIL

> *We teach English language by teaching the history of military [sic], the military organization, the differences between branches of the military, the weapons generally and the specific weapons for each branch etc. From this point of view we might say that students are learning a multitude of subjects using English as vehicle, but if we look more closely we can understand that everything is based on the same military vocabulary, which is ESP"* (Balagiu and Patesan, 2015: 285).

Balagiu and Patesan believe that teaching English in military training centres is all about ESP. Their belief is illustrated in the conclusions of their article about the Romanian Naval Academy, although I will adopt their perspective as a starting point for the potential application of CLIL as support to ESP/LSP in military

environments. Indeed, I am firmly convinced that a FL syllabus which combines both approaches is absolutely feasible, as I will explain at the end of this section.

The need to teach students of military academies a type of English that is not general, an English which is not the one taught for the international language certifications, apart from such exceptions of specialised English as BEC or BULATZ, is stressed also by all the other above-mentioned studies. For instance, Laanemaa states that an army officer must be able to "communicate in job-related situations and perform particular job-related functions, read specialist literature, participate in multinational training events, workshops, projects, working groups and in making presentations" (2015: 52). Many students of Viterbo School for Army Training Sub-Officers have been or will soon be faced with missions abroad and they will find themselves having to cooperate and communicate in an international environment. Nearly all the students who have already been on missions in sensitive areas of the world mention that English communication in such contexts needs be fast and effective.

However, one cannot completely rule out teaching general English, especially at lower levels where students lack basic morphosyntactic and lexical notions. Given 48 hours of frontal classes, combining two completely different aspects such as general English and ESP is an extremely difficult task. Many students encounter objective difficulty right from the start, when basic concepts such as subject pronouns and objects or the present tense are introduced. The Macbethian cauldron that is the B1 English course that Tuscia University offers first-year students includes general English and ESP concepts that very often end up being forced hybrids and surrogate versions of such methodologies as CBI (Content-based Instruction) and EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction), just to mention some of the approaches that include a mix of the English language and specific subject content at different levels.

As is evident from what has been said so far, CLIL methodology could be an ideal compromise between learning/consolidating the content of university subjects included in the syllabus of the L-36 degree course and acquiring[19] the English language. If, by using Coonan's words, "language and subject ought to be seen as a single entity [and] both are part of a whole" (2014: 29), then CLIL implementation and its juxtaposition with military ESP courses could improve the

[19] In theory, a good CLIL methodology ought to result in L2 acquisition. Based on Krashen's distinction between 'learning' and 'acquisition', the term 'acquisition' refers to the unconscious process involving the storage of the structures of a foreign language (1982: 10-2).

cadets' linguistic competence while conveying military content-related notions. Therefore, I would also argue that if parts of the non-linguistic military courses were taught in CLIL, provided that content experts had an advanced competence in a foreign language, MFL (Modern Foreign Language) teachers could focus on and reinforce the knowledge of linguistic structures typical of military specialized discourse, such as nominalization, pre-modification, etc., which is basically ESP.

The soft CLIL project at the School for Army Training Sub-Officers of Viterbo: An experiment

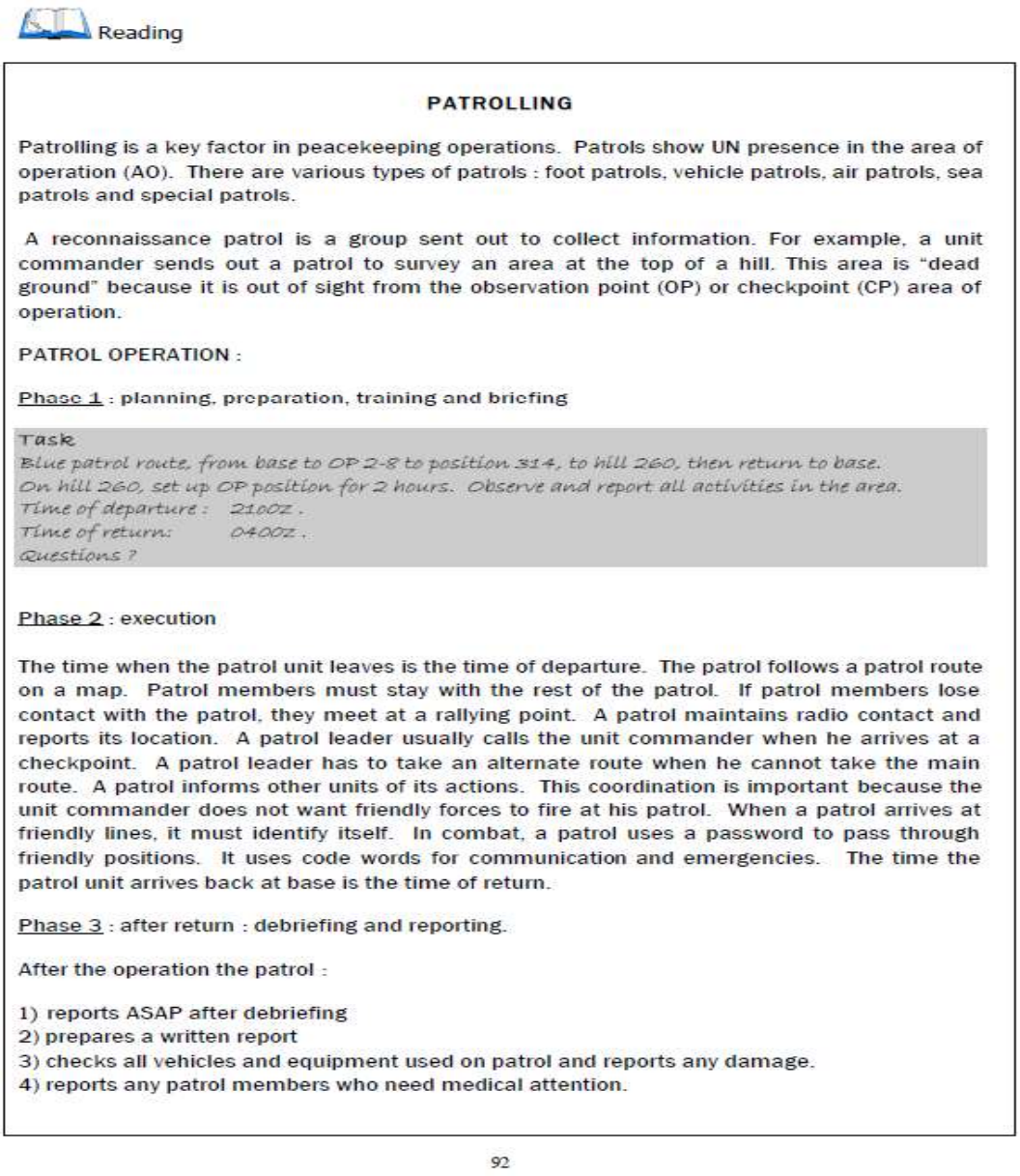
Based on the ideas illustrated so far, the following is a soft CLIL project used for the 23 Italian cadets of the School for Army Training I taught in the AY 2019-2020. The following points are important for the understanding of the project itself:

1. As already mentioned, it has been designed and put into practice by a single English language teacher, without the support of any non-linguistic subject teacher. However, this did not constitute a problem nor was it a hindrance or a limitation, since the teaching objective of the project – a patrol operation – was well known to students, both in theory and in practice. The project had already been analysed in depth in Italian during the army marshal students' military training[20].
2. Unfortunately, because the rooms used for English lessons do not currently have an Internet connection, the use of ICTs was limited to the interactive whiteboard and to the audiovisual material provided by the teacher. Aside from the main PC used by the teacher, all the students had tablets they used to save the material that had been uploaded on the university Moodle platform and/or sent via e-mail and then downloaded during breaks in the dormitories, where the Internet connection is available or, for those who had one, through the mobile network.
3. The programme goes hand in hand with the exam students take at the end of the course. Therefore, more importance was given to reading and writing skills. Because of the obvious lack of time and of the type of exam first-year cadets sit, listening and speaking tasks were solicited less frequently.

[20] In fact, as Barbero and Clegg highlighted (2005), CLIL methodology is particularly flexible, and at least six different collaborative scenarios between MFL and NLS teachers are possible, according to the interaction between content and language. As anticipated earlier, the task I am presenting in this article may be labeled as soft CLIL, where the content is subordinate to empowering linguistic competence.

Pre-output and final output: The structure of a patrol debriefing

After planning the soft CLIL module, cadets were divided into six different groups, thus also resorting to cooperative learning and peer education, and asked to write a patrol debriefing scheme, following a reading activity and a fill-in-the-gap exercise about patrolling both available on their coursebook (see Figg. 1 and 2 below) as guidance. They were given 10 periods (meaning two whole morning classes from 8.15am to 12.30pm) to complete the task.



Reading

PATROLLING

Patrolling is a key factor in peacekeeping operations. Patrols show UN presence in the area of operation (AO). There are various types of patrols : foot patrols, vehicle patrols, air patrols, sea patrols and special patrols.

A reconnaissance patrol is a group sent out to collect information. For example, a unit commander sends out a patrol to survey an area at the top of a hill. This area is "dead ground" because it is out of sight from the observation point (OP) or checkpoint (CP) area of operation.

PATROL OPERATION :

Phase 1 : planning, preparation, training and briefing

Task
Blue patrol route, from base to OP 2-8 to position 314, to hill 260, then return to base.
On hill 260, set up OP position for 2 hours. Observe and report all activities in the area.
Time of departure : 2100Z .
Time of return: 0400Z .
Questions ?

Phase 2 : execution

The time when the patrol unit leaves is the time of departure. The patrol follows a patrol route on a map. Patrol members must stay with the rest of the patrol. If patrol members lose contact with the patrol, they meet at a rallying point. A patrol maintains radio contact and reports its location. A patrol leader usually calls the unit commander when he arrives at a checkpoint. A patrol leader has to take an alternate route when he cannot take the main route. A patrol informs other units of its actions. This coordination is important because the unit commander does not want friendly forces to fire at his patrol. When a patrol arrives at friendly lines, it must identify itself. In combat, a patrol uses a password to pass through friendly positions. It uses code words for communication and emergencies. The time the patrol unit arrives back at base is the time of return.

Phase 3 : after return : debriefing and reporting.

After the operation the patrol :

1) reports ASAP after debriefing
2) prepares a written report
3) checks all vehicles and equipment used on patrol and reports any damage.
4) reports any patrol members who need medical attention.

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Fig. 1. Reading activity about patrolling (Brummel and Page 2001: 92).

⑦ Fill in the blanks with the past simple form of the verbs in parentheses. (There are regular and irregular verbs)

Debriefing Report

The patrol (receive) _____ orders to begin at 2100z on 23 June . Each patrol member (bring) _____ an individual weapon, UN ID card, personal first aid kit, radio and drinking water. The patrol (follow) _____ the Blue patrol route. They (reach)_____target destination hill 260 at 23.30z. The patrol (set up) _____ an OP position at 2400z. Team Bravo (observe) _____ all activities in the area. Team Alpha (maintain) _____ radio contact and (report) _____ activities to the unit commander. The patrol (not find) _____ any unusual civilian activity. The time of return (be) _____ 0400z

- The tracks (be) _____clear.
- There (be)_____ no obstacles on the dirt roads or the paved roads.
- The land (be)_____cultivated so we (not suspect)_____ the presence of minefields.
- There (be) _____no signs of new positions on the ground.
- We (not observe)_____any new airstrips.
- There (be) _____ no civilian activity during the operation.
- We (not meet) _____ any hostile forces.
- We (reach) _____ friendly lines at 0245z
- They (challenge)_____us and we (identify) _____ourselves.
- We (pass)_____through 2 checkpoints.
- The patrol (not need) _____reinforcement.
- One patrol member (need) _____ medical attention for minor cuts.

We have to repeat this operation once a week. We have to observe dead ground in the AO and inform other friendly forces in the area.

Fig. 2. Gap filling exercise about patrolling (Brummel and Page, 2001: 97).

Each group worked autonomously to the writing of the debriefing schemes and in the end, they handed in a copy of the written outputs (see table 4 below):

"Alpha" group
A. Time of departure: _____
B. Equipment: _____
C. Patrol route: _____
D. Mission (type, location, purpose of patrol): _____
E. Results of mission: _____
F. Time of return: _____
G. Description of terrain and enemy position: _____
H. Results of enemy encounters: _____
I. Routes out and back (checkpoints, grid, overlays): _____
L. Condition of personnel: _____
M. Conclusions/Recommendations: _____
"Bravo" group
Time of departure: _____
Individual equipment: _____
Patrol size: _____
Routes out and back (checkpoint, grid, overlays): _____
Mission (type and location): _____
Time of return: _____
Conclusions: _____
"Charlie" group
A. Time of departure: _____

B. Equipment: _____
C. Routes to follow: _____
D. Description of mission/patrol: _____
E. Time of return: _____
F. Routes out and back (checkpoints, grid): _____
G. Description of terrain: _____
H. Condition of personnel: _____
I. Conclusions/Recommendations: _____
"Delta" group
• Time of departure and return: • Equipment: • Routes out and back: • Team's task: • Description of enemy's position: • Conclusions:
"Echo" group
A. Time of departure and date: _____
B. Patrol size, composition and equipment: _____
C. Route to follow: _____
D. Mission (type, location, purpose of patrol): _____
E. Description of the activity: _____
F. Results and goals of the activity: _____
G. Miscellaneous information (ACE report)/Description of terrain: _____
H. Time and date of return: _____
I. Conclusions/Recommendations: _____
"Foxtrot" group
A. Time of departure: _____
B: Equipment and weapons: _____
C. Structure of patrol: _____
D. Routes and destination: _____
E. Time of operation: _____
F. Operations in the area: _____
G. Description of terrain: _____
H. Results of the mission: _____
I. Condition of personnel: _____
J. Conclusions: _____

Table 4. Individual groups' outputs.

Finally, after discussing strong points and critical incidents[21], individual groups' outputs were assembled together and a comprehensive debriefing scheme was created (see Table 5 below):

Final output
A. Date: ___/___/_____
B: Time of departure: _____
C: Patrol type (goal) and size: _____
D: Equipment: _____
E: Patrol route(s) and destination: _____
F: Time and description of operations: 1) _____: _____
2) _____: _____
3) _____: _____
…
G: Description of terrain: _____
H: Enemy encounter(s) and position: _____
I: Results: _____
J: Condition of personnel (ACE report)[22]: _____
K: Misc info: _____
L: Time (and date) of return: _____ (___/___/_____)
M: Conclusions & recommendations: _____

Table 5. Students' final output.

Discussion of the results

The cooperative learning methodology, combined with CLIL (see Guazzieri, 2007; Pistorio, 2010; Martínez, 2011), benefited this teaching experimentation a lot. Following a certain degree of initial bewilderment probably due to the students' frame of mind, which does not agree with CLIL method creativity so much [23], learners appeared to be strongly motivated and groups went as far as competing with one another. Methodologies based on cooperation and groupwork are perfect for such an environment since soldiers are used to think in

[21] Giving immediate oral feedback of critical incidents which happened during the lesson and the realization of the task is part of the LOCIT process (Lesson Observation and Critical Incident Technique), introduced by Do Coyle in 2005 (see Cinganotto, 2019a), although this process normally involves a pair or a group of teachers which record the lesson and then discuss critical incidents.

[22] Ammo Casualties and Equipment.

[23] Notoriously, military discipline is not an environment which facilitates cadets' or soldiers' creativity (see, for instance, van Eekelen, 2018). Nevertheless, creativity is the highest level of Bloom's well-known taxonomy, a model of acquisition which CLIL massively draws on.

terms of cooperation and comradery within their companies and platoons[24]. As expected, each group chose its own leader who took decisions about content and language to be selected for the task and who generally corresponded to the most linguistically competent member of each group. All the groups, except "Delta", perfectly identified the essentials of a patrol debriefing and applied their linguistic competences quite well, thus, for instance, choosing the suited vocabulary correctly and avoiding common B1 level mistakes such as the pluralization of mass nouns (e.g. 'informations' or 'equipments') which are quite widespread in the military ESP.

During the classes, one critical incident occurred. Different groups complained about the fact that the content of the materials provided was too outdated and that patrol debriefings are completely different nowadays. This, however, benefited the experimentation at least in two ways: first of all, cadets showed to be the real content experts any (soft) CLIL module requires. Indeed, they were quite familiar with the disciplinary contents of the module proposed, since patrolling is a basic operation in military environment, whose structure is well known to any soldier. For example, today radios and radio contacts are much more sophisticated than the ones described in the materials provided. From my perspective, since the textbook adopted at the School for Army Training was printed in 2001, I could have provided my students with more updated inputs taken from more recent books or available on the Web. Secondly, the students' complaints stimulated the CLIL class interaction between them and me, a process which proved to develop the students' oral skills (both listening and speaking) concerning both content and language (see Kupetz and Becker, 2014; Evnitskaya, 2018; Cinganotto, 2019c). As a consequence, although the soft CLIL experimentation presented was aimed at developing reading and writing skills, with the purpose of helping students during their final exam, listening and speaking skills were stimulated as well.

Final remarks and feedback

To conclude these considerations about the implementation of CLIL in military academies, it is worth presenting two different perspectives to reflect on the experiment conducted at the School for Army Training Sub-Officers of the Italian Army in Viterbo:

[24] Indeed, part of the first-year students' daily routine consists in being indoctrinated in comradery by sophomores and young non-commissioned officers.

1. According to the students – who mainly meditated on the interactional aspect[25] of this methodology – working with CLIL allowed them to improve both their linguistic competence and relational/soft skills, this latter an often-neglected aspect in such a work/learning environment. First of all, communicating in English enabled students to exercise their speaking (a skill whose level is not assessed during the first year exam) with obvious particular emphasis on military ESP. Secondly, as far as relational/soft skills are concerned, students were satisfied with managing to take important decisions related to the assigned task by using a foreign language and developing the transversal key competence for lifelong learning[26];
2. According to the teacher – whose interest, vice versa, was mainly didactic – the students' performance allowed them to cover all the salient content and language-related aspects of a patrolling operation and debriefing, since their final output was a *summa* of each group's output. Moreover, CLIL interaction enabled both the teacher and the student to simulate a real patrolling environment, a deeply useful occasion for would-be sub-officers to experiment something they will definitely have to cope with in their near future in a multilingual, fast-paced work environment.

Nevertheless, the short duration of the experimentation described in this article did not allow the writer to see substantial improvement of the students' written performance during the exam, even because the exercise about the patrol debriefing was awarded only 10 points over a total of 30.

Ultimately, the experimentation I conducted represents a suggestion to implement internationalization and teaching innovation in Higher Education concerning any discipline. All things considered, ESP and CLIL are a new trend in the Humanities – or, better said, a recently rediscovered one, at least in Italian universities (see, for instance, Leonati, 2015; Graziano, 2018; Cinganotto 2019b) – since they are transdisciplinary approaches with the potential of involving any foreign language and basically any non-linguistic content. Further research and CLIL testing are needed in order to better evaluate the effectiveness of this methodology in military academies.

[25] When dealing with interactional aspects we mean CLIL interaction between students and teachers, and among students themselves.

[26] Rearranged and redefined in 2018 by the Council of Europe, the four transversal key competences for lifelong learning are: Personal, social and learning to learn competence, Citizenship competence, Entrepreneurship competence, and Cultural awareness and expression competence.

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