Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestions

5.1 Introduction

There is a conviction that the oral tradition of *U Khasi* can be preserved in the English classrooms in Meghalaya. There is yet another conviction, that through the promotion of the oral tradition among *U Khasi*, the land of *U Khasi* can also be protected and preserved. It is by bringing the learners into the arena of telling stories, singing in tune of the life that is of and in the environment, talking in healthy conversations and gossips of a people and their culture and lifestyle that learning of not only a traditional practice will occur, but the development of the language skills in the second language will also occur. At the root of all this, lies the perception of the learners of the environment and culture they are surrounded with, and the perception that they have of the target language. It is with these thoughts in mind that the study entitled *Content and Language Integrated Learning: An Approach to English Language Education among the Khasis in Meghalaya* has been conducted.

5.2 Overall Conclusion

The entire study was conceptualized along two problem areas that were related to the environment and English Language Learning. The immediate awareness of the degradation of the environment belonging to the indigenous people of Meghalaya was blatant. The results of the secondary school leaving certificate over the years in Meghalaya are, in the opinion of the researcher, appalling. These are two extreme situations that, at the very first glance,
seemed unrelated. However, the assumption of the researcher was that the two could be connected using a third facet which is the oral tradition of *U Khasi*. And the means by which the oral tradition could connect the two extreme situations is by promoting it. The question was how you promote the oral tradition in an English classroom. The study explored means to connect the three facets. Assumptions were laid, and research questions were put forward.

The first chapter focused on the how the integration of Content and Language Integration is conducive to meet the objectives of the study. Exploring the various aspects of CLIL in the first chapter, enabled the researcher to understand that CLIL could promote the learning of vocabulary and the language skills, which would give certain directions to this study in directing the study towards developing and testing the hypothesis, that the promotion of the oral tradition could be enhanced by enhancing the language skill of speaking. In the opinion of the researcher, this seemed possible as the authentic set up for learning which refers to the content for learning, the time and space in learning, the safe environment, and the social surrounding has influence in the learning of language of a learner. In relation to this, it was understood that the focus on the development of the speaking skill using the support of the other language skills, vocabulary building, and critical and creative thinking skills could be developed. Furthermore, it is understood that CLIL supports the development of the oral skill in communication, found in the oral tradition of the indigenous people provided that the language skill of speaking is developed. The literature review on language learning and the oral tradition indicated that, linking the issues of environment to language learning could well produce positive results that would benefit the tribal and
indigenous people who are the language learners of the target language, the
custodians of their environment and the practitioners of the oral tradition. The
various features of the Content and Language Integrated Learning allows for
development of frameworks that consolidates the learning of content and
language through years of formal education of the learners, features that begin
with student autonomy to the sharing of knowledge and practices between
content and language teachers.

The review of literature on Content and Language Integrated Learning
opened the possibility of the integration of knowing and understanding
culture, reflecting on it and opening the possibility that the expression of this
knowledge, understanding and affiliation with the cultural surrounding, can be
expressed both in the native tongue as well as in a target or second language.
Thus, the concept of promoting the oral tradition as well as the language skills
in a second language found its base in the Content and Language Integrated
Learning, an approach to second language teaching. The review of literature
indicated the CLIL approach of it dynamism, and thus a conceptual framework
was designed.

The conceptual framework focused on three areas: cultural awareness
development of the language skills and vocabulary building and problem
solving using the critical and creative ability. Awareness of culture among the
student participants was the prime focus of this approach. In the opinion of the
researcher, cultural awareness forms the basis of content learning and
language learning. The authentic material for learning in CLIL can only
emerge from the reflections and expressions brought out in literary text of
various native writers. These reflections brought out in English as a second language were chosen for study purposes during this study.

To build on this awareness is the ability to understand, express and share in utterances, knowledge, understanding, reflections, and suggestions through various compositions. The development of the language skills was vital for the developing an attitude, positive in nature, towards the learning of cultural content and second language. A positive attitude towards content and language lies in the ability to appreciate the importance and usefulness of both. From an academic perspective, both content and language complement each other in building cultural awareness among student participants for learning of content and language.

The critical ability was related to the content that was culturally related. The student participants were guided through processes that enabled them to be able to look at given situations from various angles, not specifically for problem solving alone but to be grounded in knowledge and understanding before attempting creative compositions.

The creative ability was related to the ability to use the second language well so as to bring out expressions in various creative compositions in various creative genres. Student participants were guided through processes that enabled them to relate creative compositions to creative genres that are in sync with the practices of oral cultures.

The entire conceptual framework was spelt out in the form of a diagram which is found towards the end of the literature review chapter and a module for teaching of content and language was framed under this conceptual framework. The idea of the module was to systematize the working of the
conceptual framework. This module may be looked at as a systematic plan as to how the conceptual framework would be implemented. The module was thus implemented in the class with the aim that it would enable the development of the language skills, particularly the language skill of speaking. In the opinion of the researcher, for the development of the language skill of speaking, the order in which the language skills are taught, while content is being learnt, may not follow the Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) pattern. An insertion of certain other elements in terms of phases and activities was inserted by the researcher. This was to optimize the development of the language skill of speaking seeking the support of the other three language skills.

Enhancing the full potential of the speaking skill was not realized at the end of this study. There was a partial realization of connecting the speaking skill to the oral form of communication using creative compositions. At the end of the development of the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and vocabulary building, the student participants reached a level where they were able to create creative compositions in the form of narratives, songs, gossip. At another level of creative composition, an instrumental piece was composed and arranged and played for an event. The instrumental piece was the outcome of an analysis of folklores given to a student participant.

In most of the cases, the concept was actualized; the refinement of this actualization was absent. What is meant by this actualization is the ability to create and present the creative compositions in a very effective manner. The knowledge and understanding of the content was present. The application of
the knowledge and understanding in a desired manner was lacking. Having stated this however, there have been some very crucial and important processes that student participants and the teacher participants were led through which were decisive moments in the teaching and learning of English as a second language.

From the point of view of the language skills, the realization among the student participants that developing the language skill of listening, was essential to the comprehension of content. In the process, the exposure to the second language through continuous dictation, silent reading and discussions on content resulted in the ability of the student participants being able to set a sound foundation for the learning of both content and language. The dual focus found as a feature in Content and Language Integrated Learning was effective for learning English as a second language and learning the content used for learning of English.

Writing as a language skill has been greatly emphasized through years of schooling of the student participants. The ability to begin the process of writing comes easy to the student participants irrespective of the inaccuracy in grammatical structure or the lack of logical arrangement of thought in their writing. In the area of inaccurate grammatical structure, the errors are identified in the written work of the student participants. However, tutorials in the area were not conducted. Thus, it is clear that the conceptual framework has not given adequate importance to accurate grammatical pattern usage in the learning of content and language integrated learning. The knowledge and understanding of content is sought for when focusing on the language skill of writing.
A little bit more emphasis has however been given to the logical arrangement of thought in the process of writing. The idea of the logical arrangement of thought calls for a thorough knowledge of content that is required to express thoughts in a logical manner. Such points, when elaborated, give the reader an overview of how much content has be learned and understood. The language used in writing is assessed in the elaboration. The student participants are able to grasp the concept of writing better that the idea of arranging of points for speech making.

Taking leads from the Communicative Language Teaching Approach, the researcher is of the opinion that if the student participants’ confidence is being built and there is frequent guidance in the area of grammatical accuracy, the student participants would develop the ability to use a second language such as English appropriately if not to the point of accuracy. This is seen primarily in the area of speech making by the student participants. The speaking skill, though given more emphasis in the beginning of this study, is at this point given secondary importance. From the findings, writing lays the foundation, the blueprint for the utterances of the student participants in all creative compositions irrespective of the genre. It is apparent that the ability of the student participants to create creative compositions is in the form of writing after which, the content, the logical arrangement of thought and the elaboration using appropriate and accurate language is used in speech. Thus in relation to content, writing forms the basis for developing the language skill of speaking. In relation to the manner in which the prepared content is delivered the language skill of loud reading is found to be the base for effective delivery.
The module designed for implementing the conceptual framework allows for the development of the language skill of reading. The researcher has differentiated the concept of silent reading from the loud reading. In the opinion of the researcher, loud reading is a process where the student participants exhibit their learning of the content presented to him or her in the classroom. The use of sense groups, rhythm, tone, pace requires of the student participant to have thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and the language used to present the content. This thorough knowledge and understanding of the language and content begins with silent reading. In the opinion of the researcher, silent reading enables the student participants to make observations of the given literary text, thereby absorbing the sense and meaning that is in the text. In the process, the student participants also identify new and or difficult vocabulary that would require to be understood before the student participant comprehends the entire text. Assessment of silent reading was done by assessing the amount of knowledge and understanding of content that was learnt by the student participants.

The art of making sense of new vocabulary items is a slow process in the building of the student participants’ vocabulary. Hence, the result in this study, of having learnt a good number of new words and phrases has not been reflected by the student participants. The researcher is however of the opinion, that once the process acquired in making sense of a new vocabulary item is rooted as a learning strategy, the repertoire will grow with time, whether or not the exact meaning of the vocabulary items is learned or not.

At the end of the study, the student participants were exposed to various aspects in the learning of English for the promotion of the oral
tradition of *U Khasi*. The aspects were as per the conceptual framework proposed in the study. The student participants were exposed to conventional text, those literary text used in the field of literature when learning English in schools; text with cultural themes, other than translated work in folklore written in English; processes of development of the language skills; and the integration of the content from the cultural text and language skills.

The researcher hypothesised that the development of the language skill of speaking will enable the promotion of the oral tradition. The findings of the study indicated that all language skills need to be developed as well so that the language skill of speaking is enhanced. This can be correlated to the oral tradition where the art of speaking comes from the thorough knowledge of content as well having the ability to articulate thoughts using various genres. Thus, the hypothesis is refuted.

As per the finding, the student participants’ strength developed in two areas of the language skills, namely, the listening and the writing. This is not to say that the other two language skills and vocabulary building did not develop in the process of the study. The focus here is on the writing skill where the students planning and application of what content is learnt is exhibited here. The conceptualization, the brainstorming, the logical arrangement of thought and the elaboration of content is exhibited in their writing. It is the opinion of the researcher, that this would not have been possible, had the cultural content not been integrated with the process of developing the language skills among the student participants. Thus, one may conclude that the foundation of oral passing of content (knowledge) has been laid.
In the case of student participants whose language skills have developed extensively over their years of education, the critical and creative ability comes into play and enable innovations in their field of study. Such an example has been stated in the Instrumental composition of a student participant.

The development of the art of speaking whether in the vernacular or the second language, but here the focus is the second language, has begun. With time, the manner in which the content can develop with little instruction, for what is required now is the using of the sense groups, the rhythmic patterns, the tone, and the pace which may customized to the native tongue or to the second language, depending on what the requirements of the student participants or the community or the curriculum objectives are. The art of speaking develops with time and maturity of the student participants.

5.3 Limitations of the study

The proposed study has its limitations whereby the study does not focus on any particular level of proficiency and competence in the use of English.

The only assessment of this proposed conceptual framework is the impact it may have on the development of the language skills and the ability of the student participants to create creative compositions.

There is no module designed to take care of the student participants with low proficiency and competence in the use of English as a second language. In most cases this is related to grammatical accuracy.
The limitations of the study are only an indication that this Content and Language Integrated approach is applicable to all situations of learning, and all levels of learning. The extent of the CLIL approach has been reflected in the literature review.

5.4 Suggestions and Recommendations

This study has indicated that the conceptual framework and the module are applicable to all tribal and indigenous communities where the students’ medium of education is English as a second language. However careful planning of the learning objectives as well as the design and choosing of materials is required.

The study has indicated the student participants are to be given autonomy in their learning of content and language. For example, how would they like to use the content and language learnt in the classroom for their communities and families? The reflection on the content learnt and metalanguage would enable them relate to the learning objectives of the class and their personal learning objectives.

The study has indicated that completion of a syllabus using this conceptual framework is not a priority, rather the students ought to be given the time and space for learning. However, the space and time requires to be used wisely and be monitored. The language teacher acts as a facilitator for learning.

Thus a separate English curriculum for rural schools would be a positive move. The content for teaching relating to tribal and indigenous communities, the time and space that is to be given to the students to explore
content and language, and in the process of learning, the preservation of the oral tradition can find scope in the English classrooms.

To begin framing teaching modules, similar to the module framed for this study for the teaching and development of the language skills, which is specific to a culture, geographical area and tribal issues of that area.

To design training modules and approaches based on this CLIL approach using well thought of and relevant conceptual frameworks.

The suggestions and recommendations are stated primarily to sound out the possibility that English Language Education has no bounds. Every aspect of education, irrespective of whether the medium of instruction is in the vernacular or English, CLIL is applicable. The study however, focuses on the promotion of English Language Education, using the CLIL approach.

In conclusion, the research states that research questions have been addressed in various ways and at various levels whereby, the language skill of speaking could imbibe the oral characteristics of the oral traditions. The possibility of promoting the oral tradition through the enhancement of the language skills is in the English classrooms is immense. However, the development of all the language skills is imperative, so that knowledge and skills could transferred and imbibe in the oral characteristics of the oral traditions. Mastering the language skills, and mastering content for learning, and in turn developing and mastering the oral skill practiced in the oral traditions, would empower learners and communities to support traditional practices in traditional and indigenous communities.