

**The features of introduction of content and language integrated learning
in the educational process
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**Особенности внедрения предметно-языкового интегрированного обучения
в образовательный процесс
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Abstract: *the article is devoted to CLIL (Subject and Language Integrated Learning) – describes teaching methods, where subjects are taught in foreign languages. CLIL has two aims: the study of the subject through a foreign language and foreign language through the subject. Most common today is the following definition: didactic methodology, which allows to form students' linguistic and communicative competences in a second language in the same educational context in which there are formation and development of general learning knowledge and skills.*

Аннотация: *статья посвящена CLIL (Предметно-языковое интегрированное обучение) – описывающая обучающие методики, где предметы преподаются на иностранных языках. CLIL преследует две цели, а именно - изучение предмета посредством иностранного языка и иностранного языка через преподаваемый предмет. Наиболее распространённым сегодня является следующее определение: дидактическая методика, которая позволяет сформировать у учащихся лингвистические и коммуникативные компетенции на неродном языке в том же учебном контексте, в котором у них происходит формирование и развитие общеучебных знаний и умений.*

Keywords: *content and language integrated learning, approach, communication, content, cognition, culture, lesson planning.*

Ключевые слова: *предметно-языковое интегрированное обучение, подход, коммуникация, содержание, когниция, культура, планирование урока.*

CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is the term used to describe a methodological approach to teaching foreign languages in which foreign language teaching is integrated with subject teaching. This is not a new approach in Europe; the term was first officially used in the 1990s. The 2006 EURYDICE publication «Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at school in Europe» shows that CLIL programs have started in most EU member countries and are being developed both at primary and secondary levels as part of mainstream school education or within pilot projects.

The definition of CLIL points to its basic characteristic: «the acronym CLIL is used as a generic term to describe all types of provision in which a second language (a foreign, regional or minority language and/or another official state language) is used to teach certain subjects in the curriculum other than language lessons themselves» [1, p. 8]. Coyle, Hood and Marsh give a more precise definition [2, p. 1]: «**Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)** is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language. That is, in the teaching and learning process, there is a focus not only on content, and not only on language. Each is interwoven, even if the emphasis is greater on one or the other at a given time».

Broadly speaking, the aims of CLIL are to improve both the learners' knowledge and skills in a subject, and their language skills in the language the subject is taught through. Language is used as the medium for learning subject content, and subject content is used as a resource for learning the language. More precise aims for CLIL are often specified in terms of Do Coyle's «**four Cs**»:

- Communication: improving overall target language competence;
- Content: learning the knowledge and skills of the subject;
- Culture: building intercultural knowledge and understanding;
- Cognition: developing thinking skills [2].

Having dual focus in a CLIL lesson means that learning subject content and improving language competences happen simultaneously, making CLIL «neither an approach that belongs to language learning nor one that belongs to subject teaching. It is a unique approach which develops when the two teaching methodologies are merged» [3]. Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou argue that implementation of this approach results not only in improvement of language skills and subject knowledge, but also promotes multiculturalism, intercultural knowledge and understanding, the development of diverse learning strategies, the application of innovative teaching methods and techniques, and increases learner motivation. Moreover, content related instruction supports how the brain makes connections and how learning takes place, thus facilitating students'

cognitive development [4, p. 3]. These characteristics of CLIL make it potentially beneficial in promoting learning in general. Nowadays CLIL appears in many different forms and models and under different names, depending on the context in which it is being implemented. Ramirez Verdugo [3, p. 16-17] distinguishes four broad CLIL varieties which go from content oriented to language-oriented: 1. immersion, from partial to total, where some, most or all subjects are taught in a target language; 2. subject courses, where curricular subjects (like citizenship, environmental studies, design and technology) can be taught through the target language; 3. language classes based on thematic units, where lesson plans involve a topic-based approach including specific content from other curriculum subjects. Often, two terms are used to distinguish two broad varieties of CLIL: soft CLIL, which refers to contexts where topics from the curriculum are taught as part of a language course, and hard CLIL, in which almost half the curriculum is taught in the target language [5, p. 6].

Integration of content and language teaching poses a number of questions and challenges for the EFL teacher. The biggest challenges lie in incorporating development of both students' subject and language knowledge and skills (dual focus), selecting and adapting materials to meet the specific teaching context, and designing activities to meet the CLIL purposes: to communicate subject content orally, to develop listening and reading strategies, and to support written or physical production [5, p. 57]. Yet another challenge lies in providing learners with relevant language support in order to enable them to produce, read and listen to many different text types (genres), to focus on subject content and tasks, and encourage thinking and learning. It is crucial to carefully plan a CLIL lesson, taking into account the CLIL context and teaching aims and objectives by applying the 4Cs Framework: content (subject matter), communication (language learning and using), cognition (learning and thinking processes) and culture (intercultural understanding and global citizenship) [2, 41]. The 4Cs Framework is a theoretical framework that can contribute to maintaining the balance between the language and the content. Coyle, Hood & Marsh argue that proper integration of content learning and language learning in a specific context results in effective CLIL through:

- progression in knowledge, skills and understanding of the content;
- engagement in associated cognitive processing;
- interaction in the communicative context;
- development of appropriate language knowledge and skills;
- the acquisition of a deepening intercultural awareness, which is in turn brought about by the positioning of self and «otherness» [2].

The planned pedagogic integration of contextualized content, cognition, communication and culture distinguish CLIL from other approaches, such as content-based learning or bilingual education.

There are several important factors and considerations that must be taken into account when planning an integrated lesson: the teacher should think about content-area skills and concepts that can interrelate most effectively with the language goals, about the language competences that are needed for studying the content, about the cognitive skills necessary to perform the tasks related both to the content and the foreign language, and finally about the potential for integration of the content with language goals and cultural concepts and goals [6]. It is essential to achieve a balance of language, content and culture. As a result, the first step in planning is related to choosing the content area. The concepts may come from any of the academic subjects in the curriculum: science, mathematics, language arts, social studies, health, music, art, physical education, or civic education. The teacher has to find out which concepts lend themselves best to teaching in English. This decision can be made in cooperation with the subject teacher or the class teacher who teaches respective academic subjects to the class. The next step is choosing a theme or topic. The theme should be motivating, interesting and relevant to the learners and to the teacher. It must be connected to real-life situations and provide a context for meaningful, authentic discourse and interaction and thus facilitate the development of appropriate, useful and real-life language functions and communication modes, and connect to the target culture(s), wherever possible [7, p. 4]. Moreover, the theme should take into account progression in learning, encourage the use of both higher order thinking skills (e.g. problem solving) and lower order thinking skills (e.g. remembering and understanding) [2, p. 76]. These elements determine the learning outcomes in the content area.

After having decided on the content, the teacher needs to consider communication and define language learning and using. Coyle, Hood & Marsh suggest defining content-obligatory language (e. g. key words, phrases and grammar), as well as language functions needed for the discussions and performing language tasks. These elements determine the learning outcomes in the language area. It is now important to make a list of the activities that will facilitate achievement of goals and outcomes in the above two areas. The tasks should appeal to learners of different learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or tactile, to mention the most prominent ones) and provide the context for real-life communication. A big challenge is to make activities communicative, focused on genuine exchange of information. Information gap activities are appropriate for learners as they give them a reason to think, talk, exchange information, and use language for practical reasons. Moreover, activities like games, stories, songs, rhymes, graphing activities, role-plays, dramatizations, dialogues, and presentations in pair and group work, can easily engage students in both the content and the language. Activities should provide the balance of all four skills, starting with pre-listening or pre-reading activities that prepare students for listening

and reading input, and proceeding with while-listening or while-reading input activities, building listening or reading skills, and finally involving speaking and writing activities. Shin [7, p. 5] argues that activities should be organized and ordered by:

- varying the task and language skills;
- choosing the activities that are the most useful to particular group of learners;
- ordering the tasks to mirror the real life application of the tasks;
- connecting one activity to the next (from receptive to productive skills);
- sequencing the content in order to recycle language and scaffold students' learning.

This stage of planning should also involve listing resources and materials. The teacher has to make sure, if there are appropriate materials available, if any adaptations or simplifications should be made, and how. If there are not sufficient materials available in English, the teacher has to provide them by searching the Internet, translating from native language or designing them alone or with students. Materials are crucial for making the new concepts and new language comprehensible. This is usually achieved with the use of contextual clues, like visuals and concrete objects (realia), supported with concrete, hands-on and activity-oriented teaching. A wide range of resources (posters, flashcards, dictionaries, visual or graphic organizers, etc.) that can be provided through ICT and the Internet, can greatly contribute to making the subject content comprehensible.

Finally, assessment should be an integral part of a CLIL lesson. Due to the fact that CLIL has a dual focus, assessment should incorporate assessment of language competences and assessment of content knowledge and thus «account for the goals and objectives of two different subjects, including knowledge, competences, skills, attitudes, and behavior, for both language and content» [7, p. 115]. Therefore, assessment task should be devised to help learners to show both the content and language they have learned, with the teacher's help, if necessary. Massler suggests adapting or varying the assessment tasks, the amount of time for completing the task, and the amount of scaffolding, and using alternative assessment techniques, such as performance-based tasks, portfolios, journals, self and peer-assessment, and projects [7, p. 126-127]. Effective assessment contributes to success in CLIL and to effectiveness of a CLIL lesson.

A CLIL lesson poses a number of challenges for the teacher. The main drawbacks of using CLIL are related to teacher competences required to teach both the content and English and to apply appropriate pedagogical practices involving problem-solving, negotiations, discussions and classroom management. Integration of English with content teaching requires teachers to be competent in another curriculum subject and in English and in their respective pedagogies.

The lack of appropriate CLIL materials and resources can be a serious problem in preparing a CLIL lesson. Selecting and adapting content and CLIL teaching materials can be too time consuming, while the need to develop materials can become a big obstacle for planning for success.

From the language development point of view, there is in a CLIL lesson a need to simplify language, give simple and clear instructions when introducing activities and tasks, and sometimes accept students' use of L1 to describe complex processes or define rather sophisticated concepts. Learners may be discouraged by lack of comprehension and inability to express themselves in English.

However, in spite of all these potential drawbacks and challenges, many benefits cannot be overlooked. Curtain and Dahlberg conclude that using content-based instruction in teaching young learners is beneficial because it:

1. makes instruction more comprehensible because the theme creates a meaningful context;
2. changes the instructional focus from the language itself to the use of language to achieve meaningful goals;
3. offers a natural setting for narrative structure and task-based organization of content;
4. involves learners in real language use in a variety of situations, models and text types;
5. involves activities or tasks that engage the learners in complex thinking and more sophisticated use of language, which supports how the brain makes connections and how learning takes place;
6. avoids the use of isolated exercises with grammatical structures, practised out of context;
7. connects content, language and culture to a «big idea» (with enduring value beyond the classroom) [4].

Thus, CLIL as a fusion of subject didactics opens the possibility of integrating foreign language learning with content learning with benefits like: achieving the best results in the shortest time, raising levels of proficiency; interdisciplinary teaching strengthens cognitive processing through problem solving, facilitates learning by responding to different learning styles, enhances motivation and involvement of students by providing authenticity of purpose.

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