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CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING: THEORETICAL SKETCHES

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Анотація. У статті проаналізовано основні визначення методики предметно-мовного інтегрованого навчання (ПМІН), розглянуто її ключові концепції, проаналізовано переваги та труднощі реалізації.

Summary. The main definitions of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology are outlined. Its key concepts are considered. The

Аннотация. В статье проанализированы основные определения методики предметно-языкового интегрированного обучения (ПЯИО), рассмотрены ее ключевые концепции, проанализированы преимущества и трудности реализации.

advantages and obstacles of CLIL implementation are analyzed.

Ключові слова: предметно-мовне інтегроване навчання (ПМІН), іноземна мова, зміст, навчальна діяльність, предметна область, комунікативні навички.

Ключевые слова: предметно-языковое интегрированное обучение (ПЯИО), иностранный язык, содержание, учебная деятельность, предметная область, коммуникативные навыки.

Key words: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), foreign language, content, learning activity, subject area, communicative skills.

Statement of the problem. The European Commission has been looking into the state of bilingualism and language education since the 1990s, and has a clear vision of a multilingual Europe in which people can function in two or three languages.

With increased contact between countries, there will be a growth in the need for communicative skills in a second or third language. It means that languages will play a key role in curricula across Europe. Attention needs to be given to the development of frameworks and methods which will improve the quality of language education. Among these methods special attention is given to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

Content and Language Integrated Learning describes a pedagogic approach in which language and subject area content are learnt in combination. The generic term CLIL describes any learning activity where language is used as a tool to develop new learning from a subject area or theme.

The analysis of the recent publications and research. Many foreign scientists focus their attention on different aspects of CLIL. Dalton-Puffer Christiane investigates discourse of CLIL, Banegas Dario L.

focuses attention on the methods and benefits of CLIL, Cenoz Jasone is involved in the investigation process of multilingual education with the accent on CLIL, Coonan Carmel Mary studies impact of CLIL on pupils, Coyle Do investigates learners' motivating mechanisms in CLIL, Lasagabaster David pays attention to teacher's role in CLIL and Marsh David draws the development trajectory on CLIL.

The aim of the article is to investigate the main peculiarity of this language learning approach – simultaneous promotion of subject and language knowledge. The basis of CLIL is that content subjects are taught and learnt in a language which is not the mother tongue of learners.

Ground of scientific results. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a term describing both learning any subject such as economics or finance (content) through the medium of a foreign language and learning a foreign language by studying a content-based subject. This approach has previously been known as “Content-based instruction”, “English across the curriculum” and “Bilingual education”.

E. Harrop mentioned that the acronym CLIL has appeared in Europe in the early nineties “to describe

any dual-focused type of provision in which a second language, foreign or other, is used for the teaching and learning of a non-language subject matter, with language and content having a joint and mutually beneficial role" [4].

CLIL approach has been identified as a very important by the European Commission because: "It can provide effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for use later. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of learners, nurturing self-confidence in young learners and those who have not responded well to formal language instruction in general education. It provides exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum, which can be of particular interest in vocational settings" [1].

The integration of language and content teaching is perceived by the European Commission as "an excellent way of making progress in a foreign language" [1].

David Graddol wrote that CLIL is "...an approach to bilingual education in which both curriculum content and English are taught together. It differs from simple English-medium education in that the learner is not necessarily expected to have the English proficiency required to cope with the subject before beginning study" [3].

In terms of teaching methodology, the way in which one can integrate subject and language work is of central importance for every form of CLIL.

The best way to combine subject and language study is to integrate them into one learning environment. Teaching a subject in a foreign language is first of all subject teaching. It means that subject presents the contents with which a learner has to deal. In this process material objects are used as teaching means to stimulate students' imagination, to encourage them to cognitive, conscious and emotional work with a subject, thus promoting optimal learning processes. Contents of a subject are more appropriate for modern forms of joint learning such as group and project work than the contents of foreign language teaching. When students work in small groups on economics or banking topics their individual learning processes are enhanced, their motivation for dealing with these contents is increased and they are more involved in the learning process. Such learning processes are promoted to a greater extent than in traditional forms of teaching in which the teacher may be actively involved but students are involved only reactively.

But while talking about language peculiarities one should differentiate between language as it is described in foreign language syllabuses and its vo-

cabulary and grammar in subject learning. Grammar for CLIL may be more complex, with more subordination and passives. What appears to be much more important in language work is to develop communicational skills that play a central role in subject lessons. This may be determined for all subjects, regardless of whether they are science, social science or humanities-orientated. The student has to be equipped linguistically for these speech acts in order to be able to act independently. If lessons are held in a foreign language, the relevant linguistic skills in the foreign language must also be provided. These skills include the following: describing (identifying, defining and classifying the partial actions), explaining (using the partial actions to provide examples, to elaborate and to reduce), evaluating (using the partial actions to argue and to provide evidence) and drawing conclusions (concluding and explaining with the partial actions).

CLIL requires students to speak and write, regarding concepts that are often beyond their linguistic range. It is the attempt to express oneself that is the key to language development in CLIL. Learners have to be able to listen to and understand teachers talking about subjects, to talk about subjects themselves – to each other in groups and to the teacher in the plenary classroom, to read subject textbooks and write about subjects. Students have to organize their writing in particular ways required by a subject. They also should have such basic thinking skills as defining, classifying, comparing, expressing cause and effect, time sequence and so on. Fluency is more important than accuracy and errors are a natural part of language learning. Learners develop fluency in English by using English to communicate for a variety of purposes. This means that students have to be able to listen, speak, read and write on a range of topics, making appropriate and accurate use of the language at the level of sounds/spellings, grammar, vocabulary, function and discourse. The difficulty is that most of the biggest language problems have to be solved within the lesson, because if they are not, the learners will not learn the subject matter. To overcome the language barriers, CLIL teachers need to plan their lessons and include language support as well as content teaching.

One of the important factors in promoting language skills is the development of language skills related to subject-based work. Subject work is to a great extent based on work with texts and documents but also refers to other materials, e.g. pictures, graphs and films. Students need to be linguistically prepared to deal with such materials. That means that

their reading skills need to be developed more than in traditional foreign language lessons, for example, where oral interaction plays a greater role. Reading texts and documents is dependent on reading strategies that have to be taught to learners. Work with pictures, graphs and films requires other strategies that also have to be developed and promoted in respect to the linguistic application of the knowledge that has been gained.

Keeping students motivated and interested are two important factors in any educational process. "Motivation and interest are crucial in supporting student success with challenging, informative activities that support success and which help the student learn complex skills" [2]. That's why teacher should try to motivate and to support language activity of the students. Let's examine the main supporting strategies for listening, talking, reading and writing.

Listening. Learners have to understand teachers talking in the plenary classroom and respond to their questions and prompts. Teachers' presentations may consist of well-organized stretches of talk with clear predictive announcements, well-placed organizing signals, examples and summaries, and be supported by visuals. But they might also be poorly organized, difficult to follow and visually unsupported: teachers are imperfect. Learners might also have to take notes as they listen. In addition they have to listen to their peers discussing in small groups: to follow multiple contributions from group members. To help students listen, subject teachers highlight or explicitly teach vocabulary. At the text level they help learners to follow them by using visuals and by adjusting their talking style: they enumerate points, give examples, explain and summarize more than they do in native language.

Talking. Students should use short, infrequent responses to teacher's speech and questions in the plenary classroom. But they also have to talk in groups. The skills of group work talk are complex and many learners cannot easily use them even in their native language. As mentioned above, learners have to follow and contribute to an ongoing discussion, make and support points, agree and disagree with others' points, direct the conversation to some conclusion and report on it in the plenary classroom. They often have to make spoken presentations. Sometimes students need to use various visual means of conveying data: they have to understand, interpret and construct diagrams, charts and graphs. To help students talk in the plenary classroom, teachers adjust their questions (asking, perhaps, some cognitively demanding but short answer questions), they prompt (for exam-

ple they start learners' responses for them), they provide vocabulary, sometimes they may allow students responses in native language. To help students talk in groups, teachers provide support at the word level by listing key words to use; to help with making sentences they can offer supportive task types such as talking frames, sentence starters or substitution tables.

Reading. Reading is the essential skill. Students have to read subject textbooks. These texts are often supported by clarifying visuals (photographs, diagrams, charts etc.). But at the same time many texts consist of dense paragraphs in formal language with long and complex sentences. Learners also have to search for information in reference books and on the internet and need the skills of using tables of contents, indexes, skimming and scanning and using keywords to direct their search. They also have to distinguish central from peripheral information. To help students with reading teachers may check that they understand key vocabulary before they read; they may provide students with pre-reading questions to reduce the reading demands of the text; or they may offer help at the text level by giving reading support tasks, such as a chart to fill in, a diagram to label, etc.

Writing. Students also have to write about subjects: they have to construct formal sentences accurately, to use a vocabulary specific to learning and to organize the sentences into well-formed paragraphs. To write longer note they have to plan, draft and revise. To help students with writing, teachers can offer support at all three levels by providing a vocabulary list, sentence starters, or a writing frame. They can also ensure that the learners talk through their writing at the word, sentence and text level, with each other, probably in native language, before they write.

Using CLIL is a great challenge for a teacher. Fortunately for language teachers, there are "hybrid" teaching materials which, while focusing on professional subject matter, practice the relevant language. For example, Cambridge University Press has the Professional English in Use series, including volumes on Finance, Marketing, Medicine, Law, and ICT (Information and Communication Technology). While pure CLIL is a shift in focus from language to content, the Professional English in Use series focuses on both content and language. As with all the In Use books, the left-hand page introduces content, and the right-hand page consists of comprehension and vocabulary exercises practicing the language and concepts (rather than grammar) presented on the left.

CLIL has numerous advantages: it is based on language acquisition rather than enforced learning.

Students may be more motivated if the focus is on natural language and inherently interesting content that is relevant to their other studies, rather than the language itself (grammar, functions, structures). They are learning as they use the language, and using it as they learn, rather than learning now to use later or learning now to pass an exam. There is a focus on fluency and accuracy is seen as subordinate as errors are a natural part of language learning. Students are expected to develop fluency in English by using it to communicate for a variety of purposes, and to become proficient in English after some years in a good bilingual program.

We should underline that CLIL allows language to be used for real purpose and in context; it can be a very effective way of linking with other subjects. It often involves using real resources from the country whose language is being learnt and discussing other points of view and so can contribute to intercultural understanding. It is often very motivating.

So, the most obvious benefits of CLIL are:

1. Learners are exposed to a considerable amount of language through stimulating content. Learners explore interesting content and are engaged in appropriate language-dependent activities. Learning language becomes automatic.

2. CLIL supports contextualized learning; learners are taught useful language that is embedded within relevant discourse contexts rather than as isolated language fragments. Hence students make greater connections with the language and what they already know.

3. Complex information is delivered through real life context for the students to grasp well and leads to intrinsic motivation.

4. In CLIL information is reiterated by strategically delivering information at right time and situation.

5. Greater flexibility and adaptability in the curriculum can be deployed as per the student's interest.

However, there are important factors which need to be considered before introduction of a CLIL program. These include: the availability of qualified languages teaching staff with the required content knowledge, knowledge of the CLIL approach and the appropriate level of competence in the target language; the need for collaboration between language and subject teachers to teach the target language through a subject area; ensuring that students can also understand the key terms and concepts in content areas in English and so on.

Implementation of CLIL also has some difficulties and obstacles. For example: opposition to language teaching by subject teachers may come from lan-

guage teachers themselves. Subject teachers may be unwilling to take on the responsibility; most current CLIL programmers are experimental; CLIL is based on language acquisition, but in monolingual situations, a good deal of conscious learning is involved, demanding skills from the subject teacher; the lack of CLIL teacher-training programmers; there is little evidence to suggest that understanding of content is not reduced by lack of language competence.

Current opinion seems to be that language ability can only be increased by content-based learning after a certain stage. Teachers using the CLIL approach need to have the skills and language to teach the subjects in combination. Often there is a need for some specific training in methodology and assessment procedures and progression in both subjects needs careful tracking.

Until CLIL training for teachers and materials issues are resolved, the immediate future remains with parallel rather than integrated content and language learning. However, the need for language teaching reform in the face of Europeanization may make CLIL a common feature of many European education systems in the future.

Conclusion. Thus, with CLIL, learners gradually acquire greater control of the English language, enabling them to participate more fully in an increasingly complex academic and social environment. CLIL helps to: introduce the wider cultural context, prepare for internationalization, access International Certification, improve overall and specific language competence, prepare for future studies and / or working life, develop multilingual interests and attitudes, diversify methods and forms of classroom teaching and learning, increase learner motivation.

Knowledge of the language becomes the means of learning content and language is integrated into the broad curriculum. Learning is improved through increased motivation and the study of natural language seen in context. When learners are interested in a topic they are motivated to acquire language to communicate. CLIL is based on language acquisition rather than enforced learning. Language is seen in real-life situations in which students can acquire the language. This is natural language development which builds on other forms of learning. It provides reasons for learning and improving the foreign language level, because the understanding of the subject content is compulsory. It focuses on and assesses the subject content, so the learner is not being assessed on his/her mastery of the Past Simple (for example) but rather his/her ability to use it in the appropriate places. It gives students a feeling of real achievement.

They are coping with, and talking and writing about, complex material in the foreign language.

CLIL effectively increases learners' English language proficiency and teaches them the skills necessary for the success in various professions.

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