

CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract. *This article explores the problems and prospects of implementing Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in English language teaching. It examines CLIL's methodology and approaches, its unique characteristics, and the opinions of methodologists and teachers. The essence and importance of CLIL are discussed, along with debates surrounding its implementation. Authors examine the challenges and prospects of implementing CLIL in English language teaching, exploring its theoretical foundations, pedagogical principles, and diverse methodologies. It highlights CLIL's role as a flexible framework adaptable to different educational contexts.*

Keywords: *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), English language teaching, methodology, bilingual education, language acquisition.*

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an innovative educational approach that combines the teaching of content subjects with a foreign or second language. This dual-focused methodology allows students to learn a subject – such as science or history – while simultaneously acquiring language skills in English or another target language.

Several scholars have made significant contributions to the study and development of CLIL. One of the most notable figures is David Marsh, who coined the term CLIL in 1994 and has played a key role in research on multilingualism and bilingual education at the University of Finland. With over 25 years of experience, Marsh has actively contributed to the development of strategies and innovations in Finnish education.

Another influential researcher is Do Coyle, who introduced the 4C framework, outlining the essential components of a successful CLIL lesson. Her research highlights the importance of team teaching, emphasizing collaboration between content and language teachers. Similarly, Dalton-Puffer has focused on the impact of CLIL on language achievement, defining it as an educational approach where a foreign language serves as the medium for teaching curriculum content [1].

I. Fortanet-Gomez stresses the importance of interdisciplinarity and collaboration among

teachers from different disciplines, particularly in higher education, to effectively integrate content and language. L.L. Salekhova is widely recognized for her work with CLIL technologies and has co-authored a teaching resource on bilingual CLIL education. Meanwhile, O. Polyakova has examined the effectiveness of CLIL implementation, noting that Spain has seen a growing number of studies dedicated to integrated learning in recent years [2].

Together, these scholars have significantly advanced CLIL as a pedagogical approach, shaping its theoretical foundations and practical applications across different educational contexts.

To promote multilingualism and enhance subject learning through foreign languages, a number of countries have emerged as leaders in the implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), integrating this approach into their education systems. Finland has been at the forefront of CLIL adoption since the early 1990s, successfully embedding the method in its curriculum to support language learning. Spain has also adopted CLIL on a large scale, with around 5,000 educational institutions using the approach at different levels of education.

Austria has integrated CLIL into its education system through various bilingual courses and programmes, ensuring flexibility in its implementation. Similarly, Hungary has integrated CLIL

into around 300 schools, strengthening the role of bilingual education in the national curriculum. Belgium has taken a more flexible approach, allowing schools to provide some subject teaching in foreign languages, thus facilitating the gradual introduction of CLIL [3].

Germany has also shown a growing interest in CLIL, with around 700 institutions implementing the approach. Poland has developed a structured two-tier system of foreign language teaching, prioritising English at lower levels and other languages at higher levels. In Slovakia, around 50 schools have adopted CLIL, focusing mainly on English and other foreign languages.

These countries show a strong commitment to the integration of language learning with subject content, reinforcing the importance of bilingual education in modern curricula. Their efforts to extend CLIL methods contribute to the wider goal of promoting multilingual competence and academic excellence among students.

English language teaching encompasses various methodologies, each with its unique focus:

- **Grammar-Translation Method:** Emphasizes grammatical rules and translation exercises.

- **Direct Method:** Focuses on immersive learning through conversation and practical usage.

- **Audio-Lingual Method:** Utilizes repetition and drills to instill language patterns.

- **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):** Prioritizes interaction and meaningful communication.

Among these approaches, CLIL stands out for its distinctive integration of content learning with language acquisition. In CLIL classrooms, teachers collaborate to deliver subject matter through the medium of a foreign language, creating a rich learning environment where students can apply their language skills in context.

The essence of CLIL lies in its ability to foster both content knowledge and language proficiency. Unlike traditional methods that may focus solely on language mechanics or content delivery, CLIL emphasizes the interdependence of these two components [4]. This integrated learning model encourages students to engage with complex topics while developing their linguistic capabilities, thus preparing them for real-world applications of both content and language.

This approach can significantly improve students' language skills, as well as their cognitive

development and motivation to learn foreign languages and cause specific improvements in students. For example:

- Development of intercultural communication skills.

- Improvement of language competence, as well as improvement of oral communication skills.

- Improvement of communication skills, as students using English to communicate in the classroom learn to express themselves more clearly.

- Students become more sensitive to terminology and ideas presented in their native language as well as in the target language, and acquire a larger and more varied vocabulary.

- Development of communicative, critical, collaborative and research skills.

Thanks to this approach students achieve significantly higher levels of foreign language learning compared to traditional foreign language classes in all four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Moreover, students in the CLIL group have a higher level of motivation to learn English than students in the non-CLIL group [5].

On the other hand, the active methodology of CLIL helps to address some gaps a student may have in their native language by creating an immersion environment. This prepares students for real intercultural communication, increases their motivation to learn a foreign language, and creates a stimulating and practical learning environment. CLIL provides students with more opportunities to engage with the language they are learning, helping them overcome language barriers and express their thoughts and ideas with greater confidence. By offering a contextual basis for language learning, CLIL makes the learning process more interesting and practical, ultimately stimulating students [6].

CLIL plays a significant role in enhancing students' motivation and self-esteem through various mechanisms. By integrating language learning with subject content, CLIL fosters increased engagement, making lessons more relevant and practical. This approach encourages active participation and intrinsic motivation, as students see direct applications of their language skills in real-life contexts. Additionally, the immersive nature of CLIL boosts students' self-efficacy, helping them feel more confident in using the language in meaningful situations. As a

result, they become more willing to participate in class discussions and activities.

Furthermore, exposure to CLIL contributes to a more positive attitude toward language learning, with students often expressing a desire to continue studying beyond formal education. Research suggests that specific motivational factors, such as enthusiasm for learning, positive perceptions of the language, and aspirations for self-improvement, are particularly strong among CLIL students. The cognitive demands of learning content through a foreign language also stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which can enhance overall academic performance and further reinforce students' confidence.

Another important factor is the supportive learning environment that CLIL creates. Collaborative peer interactions foster a sense of community, where students support each other in their learning journey, reinforcing motivation and engagement. Overall, CLIL not only improves linguistic competencies but also enhances motivation and self-esteem by providing a dynamic, supportive, and practical educational experience, ultimately encouraging lifelong learning habits [7].

Discussions on CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) encompass several key aspects, with one of the primary challenges being the optimization of both language and subject teaching. Striking a balance between content mastery and language proficiency is essential to ensure that students not only develop linguistic skills but also gain a deep understanding of the subject matter. Maintaining this depth of learning is crucial so that students can achieve the same level of comprehension as they would if the subject were taught in their first language.

Achieving this balance largely depends on the competence of teachers and the effectiveness of their collaboration. Successful CLIL implementation requires well-trained educators who possess both strong language skills and

subject knowledge. To support this, targeted training programs are necessary, along with access to high-quality teaching materials. Furthermore, curriculum design plays a pivotal role in ensuring that language learning is seamlessly integrated with subject instruction, rather than being treated as a secondary outcome.

Beyond classroom practices, CLIL exists within a broader framework of educational policy and practice. It must navigate the intersection of grassroots initiatives and high-level policymaking, particularly in regions that emphasize multilingual education, such as the European context. To enhance its impact, CLIL programs may benefit from explicitly defined language learning objectives, enabling students to fully engage with the foreign language as a medium of instruction and maximize their overall learning experience.

In conclusion, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) represents a dynamic and promising approach to English language teaching. By seamlessly weaving language acquisition with content instruction, CLIL not only enhances linguistic competence but also fosters deeper engagement, increased motivation, and improved self-esteem among students. While challenges remain in optimizing both language and subject outcomes, the versatility of CLIL makes it adaptable across various educational contexts and levels.

As discussions and research around CLIL continue to evolve, it is crucial for educators, policymakers, and researchers to collaborate in developing best practices for its implementation. By addressing key issues such as teacher training, curriculum design, and assessment strategies, the full potential of CLIL can be harnessed to create more effective and enriching learning experiences. Ultimately, CLIL offers a pathway to preparing students for a globalized world, equipping them with the language skills, content knowledge, and intercultural awareness needed to thrive in an interconnected society.

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ИНТЕГРИРОВАННОЕ ОБУЧЕНИЕ СОДЕРЖИМОГО И ЯЗЫКОВОГО: ПРОБЛЕМЫ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

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Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются проблемы и перспективы внедрения интегрированного обучения с содержанием и языком (CLIL) в преподавание английского языка. В ней рассматриваются методология и подходы CLIL, его уникальные особенности, мнения методистов и преподавателей. Обсуждается суть и значение CLIL, а также дебаты вокруг его внедрения. Авторы рассматривают проблемы и перспективы внедрения CLIL в преподавание английского языка, исследуя его теоретические основы, педагогические принципы и разнообразные методологии. Подчеркивается роль CLIL как гибкой структуры, адаптируемой к различным образовательным контекстам.

Ключевые слова: интегрированное обучение предмету и языку (CLIL), преподавание английского языка, методология, двуязычное образование, овладение языком.