

18th PCSF 2018
Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

**CLIL AS AN INTENSIFICATION METHODOLOGY OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGE LEARNING**

Tokareva Elena Yurievna (a)
*Corresponding author

(a) Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (SPbPU), Polytechnicheskaya 29, Saint Petersburg, 195251
Russia, alenuska2@mail.ru, 89046173248

Abstract

The article is devoted to the realization of the idea of content and language integrated learning in the system of higher professional education and analysis of new concepts and approaches developed in methodological sphere, taking into account their influence on students' motivation to learn a foreign language, since motivation is one of the most influential individual factors. The intensification of educational activity has always been one of the primary objectives of learning in general and, in particular, the teaching foreign languages to students of non-linguistic specialties. There are three most common integrated content-language approaches: ESP (English for special purposes); CLIL (Content and language integrated learning); EMI (English as Medium of Instruction). The author considers examples of approaches and models emerging in the Russian higher school for establishing interdisciplinary connections in the teaching of professional disciplines and foreign languages and evaluates their effectiveness in terms of enhancing the study of a foreign language by students of technical specialties.

© 2018 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Content and language integrated learning, foreign language competence, interdisciplinary links, increasing students motivation.



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1. Introduction

Currently in terms of everyday and professional communication, experts who know one or several foreign languages are highly valued. This requirement is due to the rapid process of globalization of society. The new practices of information consumption, selfrepresentation, community organization, manipulations with technological artefacts in everyday life are emphasized to form digital generation representatives' clip thinking and cognitive orientation towards fractal narrative as a way of creating narratives, concepts, and cognitive practices (Gashkova, Berezovskaya, & Shipunova, 2017). Last decade in the European countries the content-language integrated learning has actively developed. In Russian universities this method is just starting its way and striving to take its well-deserved place in the curricula of the best educational institutions. Language-based integrated learning is one of the effective ways of establishing interdisciplinary connections and successfully prepares a future specialist for foreign professional communication (Matukhin, 2011).

Over the past decades content and language integrated learning (CLIL) research has predominantly focused on the language proficiency of CLIL learners. The results are very promising and show that working language skills in learners, especially reading and listening skills, can be improved through a CLIL programme (Meyer, Coyle, Halbach, Schuck, & Ting, 2015).

There are three most common integrated content-language approaches:

- ESP (English for special purposes);
- CLIL (Content and language integrated learning);
- EMI (English as Medium of Instruction).

Some researchers prefer CLIL, replacing the term ESP, which is widely known in foreign language teaching methods. In addition, the terminology is complicated by the concept of EMI that exists in the methodology of higher education. All three terminological concepts are used in the teaching of a professionally-oriented foreign language, in which the linguistic and professional content aspects can be combined in different extents. In connection with the affinity between this three specified methodological categories, there is a need for their differentiation.

English for special purposes (ESP) is a functional variety of language that promotes successful and adequate communication of specialists of different subject areas (Khalyapina, 2017).

The study of English in the framework of the ESP approach includes preparation for studying a certain discipline, a method of immersion in discipline and an advanced course (Marsh, 2002). The main objective of the ESP program is to form the language competence of students. The basis is the improvement of foreign-language communication skills, the level of knowledge of the terminology, the peculiarities of grammar and discourse used in the professional sphere is assessed.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) was developed by a group of scholars from European universities, among which are the following: David Marsh, Do Coyle, Oliver Meyer, Victor Pavon, etc. This methodology implies "content-language integrated learning" that refers to any educational program focused on two subjects (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). In this case, the non-main language of students, on which the whole course of tuition is conducted, is used as a means of teaching discipline (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998).

At first sight, it seems that CLIL has no fundamental differences from other similar methods. In fact, this approach works in the same plane with the language component and the professionally-oriented content of the profile discipline, without distinguishing the more important of the two components.

Western teachers, who were among the first to implement the CLIL approach in their practice, paid particular attention to increasing the motivation of both sides, both as a teacher of a foreign language and as a learner (Pavón & Ellison, 2013). Some students characterize CLIL as an "investment in the development of their personality", especially note the opportunity to learn new disciplines without thinking about language.

Much attention in this methodology is given to the cognitive concept, which is based on the creation of an effective learning environment, within which students develop cognitive abilities. The implementation of CLIL requires serious changes in the competence of the teacher himself, working according to the principles of this approach. According to Ting, the cognitive component of this technique implies the creation of an effective learning environment through which students are encouraged to develop cognitive abilities (Ting, Grandinetti, & Langellotti, 2016).

A new stage in the development of society endows knowledge with a great power in social life, the main creators of which are primarily universities (Almazova, Baranova, & Khalyapina, 2017), so introducing CLIL methodology into university syllabuses, we can significantly improve the effectiveness of educational activities and produce students with more knowledge (Barykin and Kobicheva, 2018).

English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) is actively used around the world in the form of a series of models, such as theme-based courses, adjunct / linked courses, sheltered subject matter instruction, and second language medium courses.

Theme-based courses are thematically oriented courses implemented in a foreign language by a linguistic teacher, who is not required to have knowledge of special subjects. This EMI model includes various subject topics in the content. This approach serves as a tool for integrating the language into the content of the profile course, without overloading the students with subject content to the detriment of linguistic aspects. This course focuses on developing speaking communication skills in the professional, cultural and educational-cognitive spheres of communication, mastering professional terminology and scientific vocabulary, developing reading skills of special and scientific literature in order to extract information relevant to the student (Sánchez & Fernández-Sánchez, 2016).

Linked courses are a variant of the subject-language integrated learning, within which professional disciplines are implemented in a foreign language. The main difference of this model is learning purposes, which cover language skills for the language teacher and conceptual aspects - for the subject teacher.

Sheltered subject-matter instruction is another variant of the professional course in a foreign language integrated into the content of education and aimed at mastering a professional subject in a foreign language. This model is successfully implemented in groups of students, including foreign students. The course can be implemented by a subject teacher with a level of knowledge of a foreign language of at least B2 (CEFR scale), less often by a language teacher with additional education in a specific subject area. For tuition according to this model, a certain level of foreign language competence is required for students, since the priority direction here is the professionally-oriented component, and not linguistic phenomena.

2. Problem Statement

Analysis of the literature showed that there are no ready-made solutions or universal recommendations for overcoming many difficulties on the way to implementing the content-language integrated learning in higher education. The problems are the following: the lack of English proficiency for students and teachers to provide and understand lectures in English as effectively as they do in their native language; difficulties in finding ways for effective cooperation of foreign language teachers and teachers of special disciplines in order to develop teaching materials and improve English language skills, both by students and teachers (Khalyapina, Popova, & Kogan, 2017).

The research on difficulties in finding ways for effective cooperation in the dynamic conditions of modern society represents an interdisciplinary problem that connects different fields of science unified by the cognitive paradigm in the analysis of culture, cogitation and behaviour (Shipunova, Berezovskaya, Gashkova, & Ivanova, 2017).

A new stage in the development of society gives knowledge a great power in public life. Universities should be the main creators of knowledge; moreover they must introduce a new function in modern conditions and act as integrators (Reznik and Kurdova, 2017). The study (Perez Vico, Schwaag Serger, Wise, & Benne, 2017) stated that in order to strengthen ties in the knowledge triangle, Swedish universities perform three key tasks, one of which is directly responsibility for integration processes.

The following ways of implementing approaches and models of interdisciplinary integration were developed in Russia (Khalyapina, 2017):

Creation of interdisciplinary pedagogical tandems and clusters (experience of Tomsk Polytechnic University).

Pedagogical system of support of language studying on the classes of professional disciplines (the experience of the Kazan Federal University, Izhevsk State Technical University named after M.T. Kalashnikov).

Pedagogical system of support of subject teaching in lessons on foreign languages (experience of the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University).

Formation of interdisciplinary themes and projects of the year (experience of the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University).

Development of a specific course in a foreign language integrated into the content of professional education (the experience of the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University).

We consider the features of each of the presented approaches. The first focuses on the content of learning, the development of teaching aids, improving the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of teaching students a professional language. As a result of the work of such tandems, joint teaching and methodological complexes were created. The following types of interaction between the teaching staff proved their effectiveness:

The teachers of the foreign language departments had access to practical classes in specialized disciplines, due to which there was achieved a full-fledged acquaintance with the content of the course.

The teachers from the profiling department develop the teaching and methodological textbooks of the course together with teachers of a foreign language, taking into account the specialization of the graduate.

During the whole teaching period, constant contact with the teachers of profile disciplines is provided when working with the lexical part of the course and selecting vocational-oriented literature for students (Khalyapina, 2017).

Kazan Federal University has experience in integrating mathematical disciplines, as well as native and foreign languages. The peculiarity of this program is the bilingual teaching of a specific academic discipline through foreign and native languages and the formation of bilingual subject competence in the academic discipline. Expected results were achieved, namely, the foreign language was used along with the native language as a means of cognitive activity in the assimilation of professional knowledge in the educational process of teaching future specialists.

Another model, which consists in supporting subject teaching in foreign language classes, is being implemented at St. Petersburg Polytechnic University. Within the framework of this model, a foreign language is studied on the basis of subject-oriented teaching materials. In this model, there is a higher level of motivation for students in studying a foreign language (Khalyapina, 2017). It also clearly illustrates the need to learn a foreign language: to understand and discuss professionally significant topics and problems in a foreign language, full participation in the discussion (Vdovina, 2015).

At St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, another approach is being realized, known as inter-departmental project and called "Formation of interdisciplinary themes and projects of the year". The pilot project "Interdisciplinary engineering within the framework of the didactic triad: EOS (Expert teaching systems) + Introduction to the specialty (preparation for the courses" Probability Theory, Databases ") + Foreign Language" was implemented. The foreign language in this approach is considered by students as a tool for expanding professional knowledge. The project received positive feedbacks from the students. With this approach, the process of learning a foreign language has become much more active, interest in professional terminology in a foreign language has increased. Also, the satisfaction of students with their achievements in using a foreign language as a means of communication in everyday situations is noticed. Especially the overcoming of the psychological barrier in the use of a foreign language in oral speech is noted (Khalyapina, 2017).

At the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, the International Business Program in English is also implemented within the Institute of Industrial Management, Economics and Trade. In the study groups there are both foreign and Russian students. Disciplines under this program are taught in English. Also, classes of English as a foreign language are professionally oriented. Particular attention was paid to the knowledge of a foreign language, both for subject teachers and applicants for entry.

The need for lectures in the EMI format became a real problem for both sides: lecturers and students, since foreign language competencies were not sufficiently developed. While the professors had to repeat their English in specially organized linguistic courses, students also had to be prepared for lectures of specialized disciplines in English.

3. Research Questions

One of the main advantages that are put forward by supporters of this approach is the increased motivation of students as a result of participating in courses with content-language integrated learning. Since motivation is one of the most influential individual factors, when it comes to learning, it is assumed

that the benefits of this approach are obvious. Nevertheless, there are not enough studies that confirm differences in motivation when comparing traditional English language learning as a foreign language and content-language integrated learning.

The main question of the research is the following: how the approach of content-language integrated learning influences on motivation for learning the foreign language of students of non-linguistic specialties?

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the research is the following: to consider the impact of the approach of content-language integrated learning on the process of studying foreign languages by students of non-linguistic specialties.

The main aspects that we should consider are the following:

- The complexity of the perception of professional disciplines in a foreign language.
- The influence of content-language integrated learning on students' level of knowledge of a foreign language.
- The influence of content-language integrated learning on students' psychological barrier in using a foreign language in speech.
- The main motivating factor for studying foreign language.
- The changes in students' motivation over studying time.

5. Research Methods

The survey was conducted in the form of an anonymous questionnaire (the questionnaire was compiled by the author) of the students of 2 and 3 courses within the International Business Program at the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University in the EMI format to determine the influence of this methodology on the development of foreign competence. The students were offered a questionnaire consisting of 11 questions.

6. Findings

According to the results of the survey among the students of the course, 71% of the respondents gave a positive assessment to the foreign language course. 15% of respondents are dissatisfied with the program because of the complexity of the perception of professional disciplines in a foreign language. The rest of the students find it difficult to answer, because they are not studying enough time to evaluate the program.

53% of students note full-fledged mastery of profile subjects in English without using Russian-language literature. 41% of respondents feel the need to use domestic educational materials in preparation for exams and tests.

87% of students said that language-based learning contributes to the activation of the learning process of a foreign language, noting that the level of language proficiency grows with each course of the program. 11% of respondents do not notice the influence of this technique on their level of knowledge of a foreign language. At the same time, 93% of students feel the need to improve their foreign language

competence. 76% of students note that participation in seminars in English contributes to overcoming the psychological barrier in using a foreign language in speech.

According to the results of the survey, 46% of respondents consider the possibility of communication in English abroad as the main motivating factor; 32% believe that English will be useful to them in future work; 11% of students want to improve their knowledge; 6% of respondents like English, which is due to internal motivation; for 5% of students the main motivating factor is passing the exam.

In addition, according to the results of the survey, a change in the students' motivation was revealed with time. Namely, 61% of respondents in secondary school did not attach sufficient importance to foreign language and treated the subject as an obligatory discipline. The basis of motivation in this case was a positive mark. Motivation has changed after six months of studying on this international program. Therefore, 80% of students want to continue to learn English after the third grade, and some students, with high internal motivation, are ready to study it all their lives. At the same time, 5.4% of students do not want to learn English. Low motivation or lack of motivation is due to various reasons: English will not be needed in future work; heavy workload by other subjects; sufficient knowledge; preference is given to another foreign language.

Thus, the survey revealed the predominance of factors of external motivation, namely, the possibility of using their knowledge and skills for communication, both in a broad sense and in future professional activities. The results of the survey also support the author's assumption that the application of the method of content-language integrated learning encourages students to study a foreign language.

7. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that the technology of content-language integrated learning contributes to the activation of the process of mastering foreign competencies based on the active integration of a foreign language with the process of teaching professionally relevant disciplines. For students who have already had an idea of the basic concepts of the subject, since it is part of the curriculum, it is easier to perceive it in a foreign language. This reduces the uncertainty in the use of foreign language resources for the delivery of content and professional opinion. In addition, the attention of students is distracted from the problems associated with the fear of allowing language errors, since their main efforts are aimed at the substantive content of the discipline (Millrood & Maksimova, 2017).

To form the communicative competence of students of non-linguistic specialties, it is important to give them the opportunity to think in a foreign language, to solve any problems that generate thoughts in a foreign language, which acts in its direct function of forming and formulating these thoughts. The obligatory condition of communication is the use of scientific terms in their specialty (Millrood & Maksimova, 2017).

The application of the content-language integrated learning approach is advisable in training students in technical and economic areas, since for them the study of a foreign language is often not a priority. "The purpose of reading for students of non-linguistic specialties is not so much linguistic material, as information contained in them" (Khalyapina, 2017). That is why the use of the format of the content-language integrated learning of students of non-linguistic directions is one of the factors that increase their motivation and stimulate educational and cognitive activity.

In this way, the content-language integrated learning at the systematic use contributes greatly increased motivation as the main mechanism for activating the learning process of foreign language students of non-linguistic specialties of universities, because their attention is inadvertently held at an interesting, new and meaningful language material. Professionally-oriented subject of classes meets the needs of students and leads to the active assimilation of new knowledge. They develop the ability to communicate in a business environment in a non-native language on the issues of their competence. This greatly increases the level of knowledge of foreign language of students at non-linguistics departments, which in turn, increases the competitiveness of the future expert in today's highly competitive job market.

References

- Almazova, N. I., Baranova, T. A., & Khalyapina, L. P. (2017). Pedagogical approaches and models of integrated foreign languages and professional disciplines teaching in foreign and Russian linguodidactics. *Tomsk State University Journal of Philology*, № 39, 116-134. DOI: 10.17223/19996195/39/8
- Barykin, S., & Kobicheva, A. (2018). Logistical approach to universities integration in the Russian innovation economy, *MATEC Web of Conferences*, Vol. 170, 01-20 DOI: 10.1051/mateconf/201817001020
- Coyle, D., Hood, Ph., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Dudley-Evans, A., & St. John, A.M. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gashkova, E., Berezovskaya, I., & Shipunova, O. (2017). Models of self-identification in digital communication environments. *RPTSS 2017 International Conference on Research Paradigms Transformation in Social Sciences, The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioural Sciences EpSBS*, Vol. XXXV, 374-382. doi:10.15405/epsbs.2018.02.44
- Khalyapina, L. P. (2017). Current trends in teaching foreign languages on the basis of CLIL. *Teaching Methodology in Higher Education*, Vol. 6. No 20, 56–52. DOI: 10.18720/HUM/ISSN 2227-8591.20.5
- Khalyapina, L., Popova, N., & Kogan, M. (2017). Professionally-oriented content and language integrated learning (CLIL) course in higher education perspective. In *ICERI 2017 Proceedings: 10th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation* (pp. 1103-1112). Seville.
- Marsh, D. (2002). *Content and Language Integrated Learning: The European Dimension – Actions, Trends and Foresight Potential*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Matukhin, D.I. (2011). The professionally-oriented Foreign Language Teaching of Students of non-Linguistic Specialties. *Language and Culture*, 2 (4), 121-129
- Meyer, O., Coyle, D., Halbach, A., Schuck, K., & Ting, T. A. (2015). Pluriliteracies Approach to Content and Language Integrated Learning – Mapping Learner Progressions in Knowledge Construction and Meaning-making. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 28 (1), 41-57. DOI: 10.1080/07908318.2014.1000924
- Millrood, R. P., & Maksimova, I. R. (2017). Communicative competence or communicative readiness of language learners for communication. *Tomsk State University Journal of Philology*, 38, 250-269. DOI: 10.17223/19996195/38/17
- Millrood, R. P., & Maksimova, I. R. (2017). Learner bilingualism: yesterday, today and tomorrow. *Tomsk State University Journal of Philology*, 37, 187-204. DOI: 10.17223/19996195/37/13
- Pavón, V., & Ellison, M. (2013). Examining Teacher Roles and Competences in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). *LINGVARVMARENA*, Vol. 4, 65–78
- Perez Vico E., Schwaag Serger S., Wise E., & Benner M. (2017) Knowledge Triangle Configurations at Three Swedish Universities. *Foresight and STI Governance*, 11(2), 68–82. doi: 10.17323/2500-2597.2017.2.68.82

- Reznik, G.A., & Kurdova, M.A. (2017). Functions of Russian university during formation of innovation-based economy. *Integratsiya obrazovaniya = Integration of Education*, 21(3), 441-458. doi: 10.15507/1991-9468.088.021.201703.441-458
- Sánchez, M.J., & Fernández-Sánchez, A. (2016). English vocabulary adaptation to the needs of the students. *Iberica*, 32, 133-152
- Shipunova, O., Berezovskaya, I., Gashkova, E., & Ivanova, T. (2017). The Boundaries Of Semantic Barriers In Intercultural Communication. *4th International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM2017, Vol.1*, 371-378. DOI:10.5593/SGEMSOCIAL2017/HB21/S06.046
- Ting, Y.L.T., Grandinetti, M., & Langellotti, M. (2016). How CLIL Can Provide a Pragmatic Means to Renovate Science- Education - even in a Sub-Optimally Bilingual Context. Content and Language Integrated Learning: Language Policy and Pedagogical Practice. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. 16(3), pp. 354- 374. DOI: 10.1080/13670050.2013.777390
- Vdovina, E. K. (2015). Content and language integrated learning: English as an additional language of instruction in non-linguistic higher education. *Humanitarian Newsletter*, 4, 1-11. DOI: 10.18698/2306-8477-2015-4-238