

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): present and future (as a Finnish innovation)

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Abstract. The paper considers Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as one of the approaches to achieve the purpose of learning foreign languages, represented in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages adopted by the Council of Europe in 2001. To acquire a language means not merely to obtain communication skills in one, two or even three languages, studied separately, but “to develop a linguistic repertoire in which all language skills are present,” as mentioned in the European Recommendations on Language Education. People who possess even little knowledge can achieve a certain level of communication proficiency using all their linguistic “tools”, experimenting with alternative forms of expression in different languages and dialects, using paralinguistic means (mimics, gestures, facial expressions, etc.) and radically simplifying their use of language [1; P. 19]. Researchers in Finland, whose success in the education system is recognized worldwide, are searching for methods and approaches to achieve this purpose of foreign language education. One of their attempts is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The paper reveals: the history and the origins of CLIL. According to C. Nieminen it includes the method of immersion, created and widely used in Canada. This research also outlines the advantages and factors limiting the usage of CLIL, as well as the prospects for further implementation of this approach to the study of foreign languages in different countries. In Ukraine this training method has not yet become widely applied, only some cases of CLIL implementation take place in specialized schools and in higher education institutions at foreign language departments. Therefore, according to national scholars Ukraine focuses on improving the level of foreign language proficiency, profound research and implementation of the CLIL methodology in schools and higher education institutions all over the country.

Keywords: *foreign language learning (FLL), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), immersion method, communicative competence, intercultural communicative competence, learning motivation.*

Introduction. The processes of globalization and migration, which are the peculiar features of the modern world, cover all areas of our lives, including education. Therefore learning foreign languages becomes of particular importance, as it provides getting knowledge and practical skills in foreign languages for people of different ages, especially the youth, as a necessary condition for an adequate response to the challenges of the time.

Nowadays the transformation of the education content, organization and provision of foreign language learning is of great significance. The taxonomy of its purposes is changing; as a consequence, it affects the total choice of educational strategies. The purpose of language acquisition is not a foreign language competence itself, but a communicative speech competence which is based on the needs of specific communication situations. It creates the necessity to develop new models of foreign language teaching which will train a person for multilingual communication. Therefore, the emphasis in learning is shifted from the task of gaining success in obtaining the language skills at the level of certain standards for mastering the ability to use the language to achieve communicative goals, “to develop motivation, skills and confidence among young people in contact with new language experiences in their extracurricular life.”

There is a strong contradiction between the considerable attention paid to the study of foreign languages in Ukraine by the younger generation and the low level of communicative competence among secondary school and HEI graduates. As evidenced by the research and practice of life there is the need to improve foreign language teaching methods. Therefore, the study of methods and approaches that have shown their effectiveness in solving this problem in foreign countries is relevant.

A brief overview of publications on the topic. Con-

tent and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is investigated in the works of Ukrainian researches (N. Hrytsyk, O. Kordiuk, Yu. Rudnyk, O. Hodakovska, I. Shevchenko, etc.) and foreign scientists I. Buchberger, D. Coyle, M. Martin, D. Marsh, K. Nieminen, H. Padilla, M.-L. Peres-Kanjado, M.-L. Rosa, E. Harrop, etc.

The purpose of the article is based on the study of national and foreign scientific sources to reveal the history, essence, advantages and factors which limit the use of CLIL and the prospects of such an approach to learning foreign languages in present day conditions.

Materials and methods. In order to study the essence of CLIL methodology and its use in educational institutions of Finland and Ukraine, theoretical research methods were used: general scientific methods (analysis, synthesis, generalization, comparison); historical, in particular comparative-historical, which allowed to study the process of origin and development of CLIL methodology; prognostic - to determine the further use of CLIL methodology in the development of foreign language education in Finland and Ukraine

Results and their discussion. In the context of functional learning of a foreign language and the principle of integration, the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) methodology is gaining special attention. CLIL is studied in different countries by such researchers as M.-L. Peres-Kanjado, D. Coyle, M. Martin, D. Marsh, P. Mehisto, K. Nieminen, H. Padilla, Yu. Rudnik, L. Harviainen, E. Harrop, A. Hartiala. This term was proposed by the Finnish researcher in the field of multilingual education, D. Marsh, in 1994 to denote the methods of teaching and studying general subjects (or individual sections) in a foreign language [13]. In the Ukrainian language, the abbreviation CLIL stands for subject-language integrated learning.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages states that in the case of using of a non-native language as a means of education in schools or universities (as well as in the teaching of the native language) both the content of the subject and the language are new. [1; P. 229].

O. Kochenkova points out that D. Marsh clarified the essence of this technique in 2001: CLIL considers the study of a foreign language as a means of mastering other subjects, which in turn ensures the formation of the learners learning needs, and allows them to rethink and develop their own communication skills, including their native language [2].

CLIL appeared due to “an unprecedented number of students around the world who study the content of subjects in English. The demand for such training is growing exponentially,” as D. Marsh and M. Martin state [15; P. 1].

Researchers note that while teaching with the usage of one language is regarded as a “drop-in” or “second-level” education, and CLIL is considered as a “great innovation,” a “big step forward,” as a mechanism for changes and success in learning languages. It is a potential support for the implementation of language standards in Europe” [14; S. 8].

D. Marsh and M. Martin identify CLIL as a “two-direction education approach that uses additional language as the tool of learning and teaching content and language to increase language skills and proficiency according to determined levels. This is a methodological approach particularly suitable for contexts where students learn the content in the second language. “In the heart of CLIL” there is “the area of subject teaching, not language teaching.” [15; P. 4]. We use this definition in our study. CLIL has become an example of educational convergence which leads to the creation of innovative approaches and methods that help teachers and students adapt to the needs of the community in which they live and work [15; P. 1-2].

There are several definitions of CLIL (actually forty) represented in the scientific circles. The most common one, according to A. Krasheninnikova, is the following: CLIL is a didactic technique that allows learners to study foreign language and communicative competence in the same educational context in which they obtain general knowledge and skills. Hence the implementation of the CLIL methodology allows to study general education subjects (for example, mathematics, etc.) by means of the English language. The researcher points out that in the scientific findings there are three CLIL models, such as: soft (language-led) immersion, hard (content-led) immersion, partial immersion. The first model focuses on the linguistic features of the special context; the second one means that fifty percent of the specialty curriculum is studied in a foreign language; the third model is considered as an intermediate one and is used when certain modules of the program in the specialty are studied in a foreign language [3].

D. Marsh and M. Martin notice that the diversity of CLIL options is consolidated in the form of interdisciplinary modular approaches, as well as the teaching of coherent subjects [15; P. 7].

In Finland, as K. Nieminen mentions, CLIL can be in-

terpreted in different ways: learning foreign languages, language immersion, content learning [16; P. 20]; that is why the term CLIL is used as an umbrella-type [17].

The Finnish researcher has investigated two methods of language learning: language immersion and CLIL. He believes that CLIL originates from language immersion, “CLIL is its grandson” [16; P. 5]. Language immersion means a voluntary language learning program for all who speak the major language as their mother tongue and do not maintain contact with native speakers. It is assumed that during language immersion the second language is mainly used. The purpose of language immersion is to train students to get functional skills in both written and oral language. At the same time, their native language is developing. Hence, the scientist emphasizes that language immersion is not only the purpose, but also the means of learning.

K. Nieminen notes that this method was developed in Canada and first introduced there in 1965. It was caused by parents’ dissatisfaction with the language training of their children and the necessity to expand the number of languages studied for the successful future of adolescents. Nowadays in all Canadian provinces every student has the opportunity to study in terms of language immersion. It should be noted that in Canada there is a variety of programs providing such training, which differ in certain criteria: the age of learners (early immersion, delayed immersion, late language immersion) and the number of languages used in immersion (full immersion or partial immersion). The most common method of training is full language immersion in the early stages of learning [16; P. 9].

In Finland, the following training was first introduced in 1987 in Vaasa due to the initiative group of politically active women in Vaasa after negotiations between the state and local authorities. They used the so-called full immersion in the early stages of children’s education at preschools for five-year-olds. The language of immersion was Swedish. The teacher spoke only Swedish with the children, but Finnish was the language of comprehension as well. Words and expressions were supplemented by means of non-verbal communication: illustrations, gestures etc. The scientist notes that full early partial language immersion is additionally used in the south of Finland [16; P. 8].

The immersion method is used further in secondary schools, where studying is carried out in Finnish. K. Nieminen considers that it makes impossible for children to lose their connection with Finnish culture. Initially, all training is conducted in Swedish (80-100% language immersion) and only over time Finnish is introduced (up to 50%). Pupils in the immersion class also study English, German and French.

At present language immersion as a method of learning a foreign language is applied in teaching children at the age of 3 to 6 years till the end of ninth grade. This method is used for pupils / students of all ages, including adults.

Finland was the first among the European countries to introduce CLIL, so it is called the motherland of CLIL, as Yu. Rudnik mentions [17].

Finnish scientists A. Hartiala and L. Harviainen note that “CLIL is not a new method of teaching, but today it is very popular again” [9]. The researchers emphasize that

this method combines the study of foreign languages and the study of different subjects so that in the future, scientists become more interested in the subject of study, rather than in the language they use. Thus, the CLIL method involves solving two purposes: to study the subject and apply a foreign language. During lessons foreign and native languages are mostly used simultaneously. The main issues of the topic are often clarified in both languages and only then practical tasks are performed in a foreign language. "Learning in practice is vital for successful learning a foreign language," the researchers state [9; P. 20].

An essential component in the CLIL implementation is to encourage students to apply a new language, even under conditions of poor language skills. As the researches highlight, it contributes to the formation of a positive attitude to learning a foreign language, the researchers [9; P. 22].

CLIL education varies from school to school. A number of languages may be different, as well as a number of subjects taught in a foreign language, but the CLIL curriculum corresponds to the national core curriculum of Finland. Since English is the most common foreign language in Finnish content language integrated education, some primary schools test its knowledge before enrolling students in CLIL classes [5]. Different Finnish schools offer such training in different foreign languages, such as: Swedish, English, German, Russian, French and Spanish. There are also variations in the amount of English used during one lesson. Some CLIL programs recommend the teacher to use only English during the lesson, while others allow the use of the native language from 0 to 75% [17].

An important role in the implementation of CLIL tasks is given to the activities chosen by the teacher in the classroom. Analyzing the results of the survey among students, teachers, lecturers of colleges and universities K. Nieminen draws the following conclusions: the teacher must have good communication skills, be able to explain and tell properly; he must focus on the content and prepare simple clear and explicit instructions. Different types of visual aids should be used in the lesson as well as the teacher's actions should be a little slower than usual; it is necessary to make sure that students understand what they have been told. Lessons should be student-centered; this approach allows students to be involved as much as possible into the process of studying. Tasks should be multi-purpose and relevant to the topic; lessons are organized in such a way that not only the teacher teaches, but also there is mutual studying and communication among students [16; P. 23].

CLIL is also applied in vocational colleges and universities. In vocational colleges, fewer hours are given to learning a foreign language than in secondary schools. This is due to the fact that language learning in secondary school is more general and long-lasting, and it focuses on the prospects in the life of the graduate. In addition, communicative competence is limited to professional vocabulary, which is associated with a specific future profession and real situations in it. Therefore, K. Nieminen believes that practical subjects are the best for the CLIL implementation. Cooperation between a language teacher and a subject teacher has some potential for wider use of CLIL. Such cooperation presupposes that the sub-

ject teacher, who is a "CLIL-thinker", is interested in interactive and communicative learning. It would be ideal to involve production experts for such cooperation", the researcher claims [16; P. 25].

English researcher E. Harrop has conducted a comparative analysis of the CLIL method and immersion learning (or EAL – English as an Additional Language), which opened the opportunity to identify two distinguishing features. The first one is connected with the integration of language and content. In CLIL, these two elements are intertwined and take on the same meaning, although in different cases the accents may differ. The second feature represents the CLIL flexibility to include a wide range of socio-political and cultural issues of the European context. The scientist notes that CLIL flexibility has a theoretical basis, commonly referred to the term model 4 "C". Its essence is in a holistic approach, where content, communication, cognition and culture are integrated [10]. These peculiarities have ensured the widespread popularity of CLIL as a methodology that corresponds to the language policy of European countries; E. Harrop says [10]. Many scientists (M. Greenfell, D. Lasagabaster, P. Lightbown, M. Makurina, M. Martin, D. Marsh, A. Simakova, E. Harrop, etc.) investigate the effectiveness of CLIL, and identified advantages and disadvantages that limit its use. Among the pros of the CLIL methodology are the following ones.

The research of D. Marsh and M. Martin confirms the opinion that "knowledge and usage of several languages have a structural positive effect on thinking processes and the human brain." Laboratory studies conducted by neuroscientists have made a breakthrough which shows that changes in brain functioning can occur even in the early stages of language learning. Nowadays, neuroscience is a driver in the development of innovative approaches to learning, such as CLIL [15; P.7].

M. Greenfell notes that CLIL leads to higher levels of MFL (Modern Foreign Language) due to the usage of built-in context cognitively complex tasks that move the student both in content and language. CLIL improves learning motivation by means of integrating language and non-language content and applying an authentic context in speech. In CLIL, a foreign language becomes a tool, not a final aim, and as a result it reduces the anxiety of students, contributing to their self-confidence and "feeling good and skilled". The researcher differentiates two types of motivation: integrative motivation (the desire to be a part of a holistic language culture for affective reasons) and instrumental motivation (the desire to learn a language for personal benefit). Integrative motivation remains the main determinant of attitudes towards languages; the researcher says [8].

According to R. Litboom by creating a true communicative context CLIL provides natural language environment where a foreign language can be learned more easily, focusing on meaning [12].

In addition to the above mentioned the positive aspects of CLIL, M. Makurina and A. Simakova point out that this technique has no limitations in improving language skills and subject knowledge. CLIL allows the use of other learning strategies, the implementation of innovative methods and technologies, providing opportunities to strengthen foreign language learning without adding extra

hours in the curriculum [4].

D. Lasagabaster also confirms positive attitude of learners, who trained according to the CLIL model, towards a foreign language and its process of study [11].

Analyzing the research data E. Harrop highlights the higher level of students' proficiency in communicative competence, fluency and a wider range of vocabulary compared to those who do not study in terms of the CLIL model. Recognizing language as an important tool in learning, CLIL leads to students' better understanding of a foreign culture, helps their internationalization, intercultural mutual intelligibility. This is the defining feature of CLIL which shows its inherent intercultural spirit. CLIL provides students with an experience that would be impossible in a monolingual or traditional MFL model. E. Harrop notes that not all CLIL models attach equal importance to cultural and intercultural awareness. It is Coyle's "4C" model that puts culture at the center. Other European models recognize the language and communication as the basis, and give consider the culture of secondary importance. With the growing need for a truly global sense of citizenship, this dimension of CLIL is perhaps the most valuable; the scientist says [10].

However, "a very careful approach should be taken to the representation of the studied culture and to the choice of social groups or groups to focus on ... It is necessary to find a balance in order to avoid distortions in achieving the educational purpose in the development of multicultural competence of students, which is mentioned in the European recommendations for language education [1; P. 229].

Despite a number of positive features, D. Marsh, M. Canyado and H. Padilla claim that CLIL is "conceptually incomprehensible", "overinclusive", "covers a wide range of possible alternative programs" [14; P. 10]. As a consequence, there are structural difficulties associated with its implementation, such as: "the lack of the required number of teachers and insufficient training before or after training; difficulties in providing educational materials; the necessity to overcome the reluctance of parents, etc." [10]. D. Lasagabaster notes deterioration of CLIL participants' attitudes towards foreigners, gender gaps in the formation of motivation to learn languages (boys are demotivated) [11].

However, in spite of enumerated disadvantages, modern processes of globalization have made CLIL a timely solution for governments that are interested in developing the language skills of their citizens as a required condition for economic success; E. Harrop says [10]. This is confirmed by the fact that in 2005 the EU formally approved the capacity of CLIL to address intercultural understanding.

In addition to Finland, the CLIL method is successfully used in various countries around the world (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Russia, Hungary, France, etc.). The degree and peculiarities of CLIL implementation in different countries, according to D. Marsh and M. Martin, differ depending on the following factors as: a specific linguistic situation; the language needs of the population; the degree of independence of educational institutions; the quality of educational infrastructure; the flexibility of national curricula; teacher qualifications [15; P. 5]. The Language Development Forecasting Analytical Center for 2010-2020 (Education (CCN: 2010)) provided a number of indicators proving that CLIL will continue its development as a platform for language teaching. Among the supporting factors are the following: socio-demographic changes; scientific and technical innovations; intercultural competence provided by CLIL; new requirements for knowledge and competence; imperatives of sustainable development; globalization processes [15; P.9].

Conclusion. Thus, content and language integrated learning is considered by national and foreign scholars as an innovative educational approach that supports linguistic diversity and aims to form intercultural communicative competence. The study of foreign languages and a non-language subject through their integration becomes an additional means to achieve educational purposes and complements the language study, which takes place in a traditional foreign language lesson. Adopted as an approach to learning a foreign language in different countries around the world, including Finland, due to its advantages over traditional learning, CLIL elements can be used in various educational institutions in Ukraine to improve the process of mastering foreign languages by students, which is one of the primary tasks in modern education system of Ukrainian.

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